



GATEWAY

EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

Local School Wellness Policy



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To help combat childhood obesity and improve children's health, the *Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (PL # 108-265)* required each local educational agency that receives funding for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs to establish a Local School Wellness Policy (LWP) by the beginning of 2006-2007 school year. The *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (PL #111-296)* expanded the requirements to bring in additional stakeholders to periodically assess and ensure the compliance and progress of the LWP.

With this new requirement, the U.S. Congress recognizes that schools play a critical role in creating a healthy environment for the prevention of childhood obesity and for combating other obesity-related diseases, like Type 2 diabetes, which are linked to poor nutrition and physical inactivity. The *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* places the responsibility of implementing and evaluating a school wellness policy at the local level, so the individual needs of each school can be addressed most effectively.

The following minimum requirements are established by the federal legislation. Schools may choose to include additional features or to integrate a school wellness policy with other ongoing programs. The legislation requires:

- **Goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness in a manner that the local education agency determines as appropriate;**
- **Nutrition guidelines selected by the local educational agency for all foods available on each school campus under the local educational agency during the school day with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity;**
- **Assurances that guidelines for reimbursable school meals are not less restrictive than the regulations issued by the USDA;**
- **Ways of measuring how well the local school wellness policy is being implemented, including designation of one or more persons at each school with operational responsibility for ensuring that the school is meeting its goals;**
- **Involvement of parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school board and school administrators, and the public, in developing, implementing and reviewing the LWP.**
- **Public updates on the content and implementation of the LWP.**

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Rationale:

Schools play an important role for providing children a healthy setting and teaching them the importance of lifelong healthy behaviors. The link between nutrition, physical activity, and learning is well documented. Healthy eating and activity patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. These patterns are also linked to reduce risk for certain chronic health conditions, like high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and obesity. Schools share the responsibility to help students learn, establish, and maintain lifelong healthy eating and activity patterns. Staff wellness is also an integral part of a healthy school environment, since these adults can be daily role models for healthy behaviors.

Goal:

All students of GateWay Early College High School (GWECHS) will be provided with the knowledge and skills necessary to choose nutritious food and beneficial physical activity for a lifetime. All staff of GateWay Early College High School will also be encouraged to model and engage students in healthy eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.

To meet this goal, GWECHS adopts this school wellness policy with the following commitments to nutrition, physical activity, comprehensive health education, marketing, and implementation. This policy is designed to effectively utilize school and community resources and to equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in culture.

Commitment to Nutrition

GateWay Early College High School will:

- Offer a school lunch program with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Arizona Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.
- Encourage school staff and families to participate in school meal programs.
- Operate all Child Nutrition Programs with school food service staff who are properly qualified according to current professional standards
- Establish food safety as a key component of all school food operations and ensure that the food service permit is current for the Food Service school site.
- Comply to State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales

- Establish guidelines for all foods available on the school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.
- Integrate a comprehensive health education curriculum through a *Health* course to achieve credit towards graduation.
- Provide parents the opportunity to give feedback on wellness goals through our family engagement activities, parent conferences or surveys.
- Promote staff nutrition education through MCCCD and GWCC wellness initiatives like *Personify Health*, *Wellness Maricopa Webinars*, or *Annual Health Risk Assessments* to encourage staff to model healthy lifelong nutrition behaviors.
- Provide adequate time for students to eat and enjoy school meals (a minimum of 30 minutes at lunch).
- Provide healthy alternative locations to eat and enjoy school meals (like clean tables, well-lighted cafeteria and outdoor benches).
- Encourage students to make food choices based on the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020 - 2025*, by emphasizing menu options that feature baked (rather than fried foods), whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, and reduced-fat dairy products.
- Establish an environment conducive to a positive dining experience, with socializing among students and between students and adults; with supervision of eating areas by adults who model proper conduct and voice level; and with adults who model healthy habits by eating with the students.
- Make school meals accessible to all students with a variety of delivery strategies, such as grab-and-go lunches, or alternate eating sites.
- Add nutritious and appealing options (such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, trail mix, beef jerky, reduced-fat milk, reduced fat-yogurt, reduced-fat cheese, 100% juice, and water) whenever foods/beverages are sold or otherwise offered within our school boundaries, including school stores, concessions stands, celebrations, social events, and other school functions.
- Eliminate use of foods as rewards for student accomplishment.
- Encourage all school-based organizations to use services, contests, non-food items, and/or healthful foods for fundraising programs. The sale of candy as a fundraiser is strongly discouraged.
- Provide nutrition information for parents, including nutrition analysis of school meals and resources to help parents to improve food that they serve at home ie: communications regarding Food Bank events, handouts at parent involvement events and access to Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020 - 2025 Make Every Bite Count With the Dietary Guidelines Ninth Edition • DietaryGuidelines.gov through the school website.

Commitment to Physical Activity

GateWay Early College High School will:

- Implement programs to promote physical activity such as academic incentives for walking/biking to school.
- Provide physical education curriculum taught by a certified highly qualified teacher (*examples are: Rec Life, Fitness, Dance or Yoga class*).
- Provide classroom physical activity opportunities during the regular school day like kinesthetic learning activities.
- Promote physical activity opportunities after school and Saturdays (*examples of Fitness Club, Basketball Club, Volleball Club or Hiking*)
- Incorporate non-structured physical activities into the regular curriculum and lunch times (like *Check and Connect* physical activity matches or student friendly lunch soccer games).
- Phase in structured and non-structured physical activity to include a fitness center and classrooms, an athletic training area, and a wellness education center.
- Promote recreational health runs that highlight health issues in our community such as *Jesse Owens 5K Run and GWCC Veteran's 2.5 mile event*.

Commitment to Activities that Promote Student Wellness

GateWay Early College High School will:

- Offer health presentations or workshops and encourage students and families to participate in them through monthly Coffee Talks and other Family Engagement Events.
- Create a School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) to develop, monitor and review our LWP. The SHAC will consist of required participants such as a teacher, parent, student, counselor and our campus wellness coordinator.
- Incorporate discussions of healthy life style choices into the Check & Connect curriculum.
- Promote healthy choices by prominently displaying healthy foods at the front of the lunch line, use of posters and offering healthy food options at after-school activities.
- Promote the use of the local schools' gym and local Boys and Girls Club to encourage students to participate in physical activities.
- Provide positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal, about healthy lifestyle practices throughout the school setting. All school personnel will help reinforce these positive messages.
- Involve students in planning for a healthy school environment. Students will be asked for input and feedback through the use of student surveys, and attention will be given to their comments.
- Promote healthful eating, physical activity, and healthy lifestyles to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at school events (e.g., school registration, parent-teacher conferences, open houses, health fairs, teacher in-services, and other events).

- Eliminate advertising and other materials within the school boundaries that promote foods of minimal nutrition value.

Commitment to Implementation

GateWay Early College High School will:

- Establish a plan for implementation of the school wellness policy.
- Designate one or more persons to ensure that the school wellness policy is implemented as written.
- Have the SHAC conduct periodic (yearly or bi-yearly) reviews of the progress toward the LWP goals to identify areas for improvement.

Implementation Plan

GateWay Early College High School will:

- In-service teachers on the LWP prior to the start of the school year.
- Include the activities described above in lesson plans when appropriate.
- Reference the LWP when planning any school activity.
- Maintain a SHAC consisting of at least the following representatives or equivalents: school administrator, a health or science teacher, a physical fitness trainer or teacher, a non-science classroom teacher, a student and a parent.

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