

PERSEUS HOUSE CHARTER SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE
ORGANIZATIONAL POLICY AND/OR PROCEDURE

SECTION: Pupils

TITLE: Student Wellness 250

APPROVAL: Board of Trustees

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Purpose

The Charter School of Excellence (CSE) recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' physical well-being, growth, development and readiness to learn. The Board is committed to providing a school environment that promotes student wellness, proper nutrition, nutrition education and promotion, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning experience. In a healthy school environment, students will learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices that can improve student achievement.

Procedure

Authority

The Board adopts this policy based on the recommendations of CSE's Wellness Committee (WC) and in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.[1][2]

To ensure the health and well-being of all students, the Board establishes that CSE shall provide to students:

- A comprehensive nutrition program consistent with federal and state requirements.
- Access to foods and beverages provided to students at no cost that meet established nutrition guidelines.
- Physical education courses and opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day.

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- Curriculum and programs for grades 6-12 that are designed to educate students about proper nutrition and lifelong physical activity, in accordance with State Board of Education curriculum regulations and academic standards.

Definitions

Competitive foods - defined as foods and beverages offered or sold to students on school campus during the school day, are not part of the reimbursable school breakfast or lunch.

Exempt fundraisers - fundraisers in which competitive foods are available for sale to students that do not meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Extended School Day - the time during, before and after school that includes activities such as clubs, intramural sports, band and choir practice, drama rehearsals, etc.

School Campus - means any area of property under the jurisdiction of the school that students may access during the school day.[2][3]

School Day - the time between midnight the night before to thirty (30) minutes after the end of the instructional day.[2][3]

Triennial - recurring every three (3) years.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or designee(s) shall establish the WC, be responsible for the implementation of and updates to the CSE wellness policy (heretofore referred as "wellness policy") and ensure each school's compliance with the policy.[1][2]

The CAO shall be responsible for appropriate oversight of the WC.[1][2]

Each school shall designate a school wellness policy coordinator, who will ensure compliance with the policy and annually report to the CAO or designee regarding compliance in their school.[2]

Staff members responsible for programs related to school wellness shall report to the CAO or designee regarding the status of such programs.

Guidelines

Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership -

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CSE shall establish a WC that meets at least four (4) times per year to serve as an advisory committee regarding student health issues and shall be responsible for developing, implementing and periodically reviewing and updating a wellness policy that complies with law to recommend to the Board for adoption.

The WC membership will represent all school levels (middle and secondary schools), reflect the diversity of the community, and include, but not be limited to: parents/guardians; students; representatives of the school nutrition program (e.g., school nutrition director); physical education teachers; school health professionals (e.g., health education teachers, school health services staff [e.g., nurses, health educators, and other allied health personnel who provide school health services]) and behavioral health and social services staff (e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists); school administrators (e.g., CAO, principal, vice principal); Board of Trustees; health professionals (e.g., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and members of the public. When possible, membership will also include Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) education coordinators.[1]

The CAO shall keep on file the current membership of the WC each school year and indicate on that list: name; title/relationship to the school or CSE; and role on committee.

The WC shall review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques in establishing goals for nutrition education and promotion, physical activity and other school based activities that promote student wellness as part of the policy development and revision process.[2]

Each school within CSE shall establish an ongoing School Wellness Committee (SWC) that convenes to review school-level issues, in coordination with the WC.

Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement

Implementation Plan

CSE shall develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions and timelines specific to each school; and includes information about who will be responsible to make what change, by how much, where and when; as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. It is recommended that the school use the Healthy Schools Program online tools to complete a school-level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's School Health Index, create an action plan that fosters implementation and generate an annual progress report.

Recordkeeping

CSE shall retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy, which shall include:[2][4]

The written wellness policy

Documentation demonstrating that CSE has informed the public, on an annual basis, about the contents of the wellness policy and any updates to the policy.

Documentation of efforts to review and update the wellness policy, including an indication of who is involved in the review and methods CSE uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate in the review.

Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the wellness policy and notification of the assessment results to the public.

Annual Notification of Policy

CSE shall annually inform families and the public about this policy, including its content, updates and implementation of this policy. CSE shall make this information available via CSE website and/or district-wide communications. CSE shall provide as much information as possible about the school nutrition environment. This will include a summary of CSE's or schools' events or activities related to wellness policy implementation; information on how to access the wellness policy; information about the most recent triennial assessment; information on how to participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness policy; and a means of contacting District Wellness Committee leadership.[1][2]

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three (3) years, CSE shall evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:[1][2]

- The extent to which CSE's schools are in compliance with law and the wellness policy.
- The extent to which CSE's wellness policy compares to model wellness policies.
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

At least once every three (3) years, the WC shall update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual School Health Index and triennial assessments and/or as CSE and community needs and priorities change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technologies emerge; and new federal or state guidance or standards are issued.[2]

Nutrition

School Meals

CSE is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and have zero (0) grams trans-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meeting the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

All schools within CSE participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). CSE also operates additional nutrition-related programs and activities including school gardens, Breakfast in the Classroom and Grab 'n' Go Breakfast. All schools within CSE are committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable federal child nutrition programs, that:[5][6][7][8]

- Are accessible to all students.
- Are appealing and attractive to children.
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings.
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal laws and regulations (CSE offers reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards).
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using at least ten (10) of the following Smarter Lunchroom Techniques:
- Whole fruit options are displayed in an attractive manner.
- Sliced or cut fruit is available daily.
- Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students.
- All available fruit and vegetable options have been identified on the serving line with signage. All elementary schools shall have additional signage identifying which part of the plant the item is from.
- Daily vegetable options are bundled into all grab-and-go meals available to students.
- All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal.

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- White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers.
- Alternative entree options (e.g., salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) are highlighted on monthly menus.
- A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (e.g., salad bars, snack rooms, etc.).
- Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development, dining space decor and promotional ideas.
- Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas.
- Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options.
- Menus will be posted on CSE website or individual school websites, and will include nutrient content and ingredients. Parents/Guardians shall have access to the School Cafe Website for nutritional content and ingredients.
- Menus will be created/reviewed by a registered dietitian or other certified nutrition professional.
- School meals are administered by a team of child nutrition professionals. Only authorized staff shall have access to the food service operation.
- CSE child nutrition program will accommodate students with special dietary needs.
- Students will be allowed at least ten (10) minutes to eat breakfast and at least twenty (20) minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they have received their meal and are seated (meets Healthy Schools Program Gold-level criteria).
- Students are served lunch at a reasonable and appropriate time of day.[5]
- Lunch will follow the recess period to better support learning and healthy eating.
- Participation in federal child nutrition programs will be promoted among students and families to help ensure that families know what programs are available in their children's school.
- CSE will implement at least four (4) of the following Farm to School activities, which meet Healthy Schools Program Gold-level criteria:
 - Local and/or regional products are incorporated into the school meal program.

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- Messages about agriculture and nutrition are reinforced throughout the learning environment.
- School hosts a school garden.
- School hosts field trips to local farms.
- School utilizes promotions or special events, such as tastings, that highlight the local/regional products.
- Staff Qualifications and Professional Development -
 - All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff shall meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals. Professional development and continuing education shall be provided for CSE nutrition staff, as required by federal regulations.[6][7][9][10]

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water shall be available to all students throughout the school day and at all meal periods.[5][8][11][12]

Water cups/jugs shall be available in the cafeteria if a drinking fountain is not present. Students shall be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all competitive foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are available for sale to students on the school campus during the school day shall meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards. These standards shall apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, snack or food carts and fundraisers.[2][3][13]

CSE may impose additional restrictions on competitive foods, provided that the restrictions are not inconsistent with federal requirements.[3]

Celebrations and Rewards

Non-sold competitive foods available to students, which may include but are not limited to foods and beverages offered as rewards and incentives, at classroom parties and celebrations, or as shared classroom snacks, shall meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

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If the offered competitive foods do not meet or exceed the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, the following standards shall apply:

Celebrations and parties - CSE will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents/guardians and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas, such as a nutritious party menu, an explanation of the smart snack standards, etc.

Classroom snacks brought by parents/guardians - CSE will provide to parents/guardians a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

Rewards and incentives - CSE will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children. Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

Fundraising

Fundraising activities held during the school day involving the sale of competitive foods and beverages shall be limited to foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, unless an exemption is approved in accordance with applicable Board policy and administrative regulations. Schools shall encourage those fundraisers which promote physical activity (e.g. field day, heart walk, etc.).[14]

CSE may allow a limited number of exempt fundraisers as permitted by the Pennsylvania Department of Education each school year: up to five (5) exempt fundraisers in elementary and middle school buildings, and up to ten (10) exempt fundraisers in high school buildings.[3]

Each fundraiser may not exceed one (1) week. All exemptions shall be approved by the building principal who shall submit the documented form to the business office.

Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff shall receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff, teachers, parents/guardians, students and the community.

CSE shall promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur through at least:

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- Implementing at least ten (10) or more evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using Smarter Lunchroom techniques.
- Ensuring 100% of foods and beverages promoted to students meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Nutrition Education

Nutrition education will be provided within the sequential, comprehensive health education program in accordance with curriculum regulations and the academic standards for Health, Safety and Physical Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences.[15][16][17]

CSE shall teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects.
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits and school gardens.
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods.
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise).
- Links with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services.
- Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing.
- Includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.[10]
- Encourages CSE staff to model healthy eating in front of students and avoid using unhealthy foods in classroom lesson plans.

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CSE shall include in the health education curriculum a minimum of twelve (12) of the essential topics on healthy eating, as established by CSE and in accordance with applicable administrative regulations.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day shall meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.[2][3]

Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing often includes oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product by the producer, manufacturer, seller or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product. This term includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Brand names, trademarks, logos or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or its container.
- Displays, such as on vending machine exteriors.
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on school equipment, such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards or backboards (Note: CSE shall replace or update scoreboards or other durable equipment when existing contracts are up for renewal or to the extent that is financially possible over time so that items are in compliance with Board policy).
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on cups used for beverage dispensing, menu boards, coolers, trash cans and other food service equipment; as well as on posters, book covers, pupil assignment books or school supplies displayed, distributed, offered or sold by CSE.
- Advertisements in school publications or school mailings.
- Free product samples, taste tests or coupons of a product, or free samples displaying advertising of a product.
- Exclusive competitive food and/or beverage contracts shall be approved by the Board, in accordance with provisions of law. Existing contracts shall be reviewed and modified to the extent feasible to ensure compliance with established federal nutrition standards, including applicable marketing restrictions.[18]

Physical Activity

CSE shall contribute to the effort to provide students opportunities to accumulate at least sixty (60) minutes of age-appropriate physical activity daily, as recommended by the Centers for

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Disease Control and Prevention. Opportunities offered at school will augment physical activity outside the school environment, such as outdoor play at home, sports, etc.

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks or physical education) will not be withheld as punishment for any reason.

To the extent practicable, CSE will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active.[19]

Physical Education

CSE shall provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts. The curriculum will support the essential components of physical education.[15][16][20]

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. CSE will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

All CSE secondary students (middle and high school) are required to take the equivalent of one (1) academic year of physical education.

CSE physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments in grades 6-12 and will use the following criterion-based reporting for each student:

- Students will be moderately to vigorously active for at least fifty percent (50%) of class time during most or all physical education class sessions.
- All health and physical education teachers will be required to participate in professional development in education at least once a year.
- All health and physical education classes at CSE shall be taught by licensed teachers who are certified to teach health and physical education.
- Waivers, exemptions, or substitutions for physical education classes shall not be granted.
- Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education -
- Health education shall be required in all grades. CSE shall require middle and high school students to take and pass at least one (1) health education course. CSE will include in the health education curriculum a minimum of twelve (12) of the essential topics on

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physical activity, as established by CSE and in accordance with applicable administrative regulations.

Classroom Physical Activity Breaks (Secondary)

CSE recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered periodic opportunities to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. CSE recommends teachers provide short (3-5 minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time at least three (3) days per week. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

Active Academics

Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into core subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies and others) and aid in limiting sedentary behavior during the school day.

CSE will support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing annual professional development opportunities and resources, including information on leading activities, activity options, as well as making available background material on the connections between learning and movement.

Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

Before and After School Activities

CSE offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after the school day (or both) through a variety of methods. CSE will encourage students to be physically active before and after school through physical activity clubs, physical activity in aftercare, intramurals or interscholastic sports.

Active Transport

CSE will support active transport to and from school, such as walking or biking. CSE will encourage this behavior by engaging in six (6) or more of the activities below; including but not limited to:

- Designate safe or preferred routes to school.
- Promote activities such as participation in International Walk to School Week, National Walk and Bike to School Week.

- Instruction on walking/bicycling safety provided to students.
- Promote safe routes program to students, staff, and parents/guardians via newsletters, websites, local newspaper.
- Use crossing guards.
- Use crosswalks on streets leading to schools.
- Management of Food Allergies in CSE Schools
- CSE shall establish Board policy and administrative regulations to address food allergy management in district schools in order to:[21]
- Reduce and/or eliminate the likelihood of severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reactions.
- Ensure a rapid and effective response in case of a severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reaction.
- Protect the rights of students by providing them, through necessary accommodations when required, the opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities.

Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

Community Partnerships

CSE shall develop, enhance, or continue relationships with community partners (e.g., hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses,) in support of this wellness policy's implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with the wellness policy and its goals.

Community Health Promotion and Family Engagement

CSE shall promote to parents/guardians, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities and will receive information about health promotion efforts.

Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

The WC shall have a staff wellness subcommittee that focuses on staff wellness issues, identifies and disseminates wellness resources and performs other functions that support staff wellness in coordination with human resources staff.

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CSE shall implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. CSE promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost.

Professional Learning

When feasible, CSE will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (e.g., increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or incorporating nutrition lessons into math class). Professional learning will help CSE staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing CSE reform or academic improvement plans/efforts.

Legal

1. 42 U.S.C. 1758b
2. 7 CFR 210.31
3. 7 CFR 210.11
4. 7 CFR 210.15
5. 7 CFR 210.10

6. 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq
7. 42 U.S.C. § 1773
8. 7 CFR 220.8
9. 7 CFR 210.30
10. 24 P.S. § 7-701

11. 24 P.S. § 7-742
12. 7 CFR 220.12
13. 24 P.S. § 15-1513
14. 24 P.S. § 5-504.1
15. 24 P.S. 15-1512.1

- *Adopted by the Board of Trustees of Perseus House Charter School of Excellence at a duly convened meeting on April 21, 2026*

Board Secretary: _____

