

New Designs Charter School

WELLNESS POLICY:FY 2025-2026

NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Substantial research demonstrates a clear connection between nutrition, physical activity and learning. At New Designs Charter School (NDCS) we acknowledge that healthy, well-nourished children are more prepared to learn, more likely to attend school, and able to take advantage of educational opportunities.

Of those NDCS students, parents, teachers and staff surveyed.

- 98% agree that it is important to build a healthy school environment in order to introduce and reinforce for students healthy habits that will last a lifetime;
- 95% of the surveyed community agree that it is important for staff and parents to set a positive example for students through the foods they choose;
- 83% define “healthy” foods as those served in moderate portion sizes, 75% as those low in sugar, 70% as low fat and no packaged “junk” foods;
- 92% believe that only “healthy” foods that fit the criteria listed above should be sold in the cafeteria, while 72% believe they should be the only foods sold in the student store;
- 77% believe that NDCS should sell only “healthy” foods on campus.

We also recognize that physical activity can also have a positive impact on student’s achievement. Schools that offer intense physical activity programs see positive effects on academic achievement, including increased concentration, improved mathematics, reading and writing test scores, and reduced disruptive behavior, even when physical education reduces the amount of time spent on academics.

NDCS is committed to establishing policies and programs that encourage our students to develop and sustain healthy eating and physical activity habits. As such, we have adopted the following Wellness Policy to help students attain full academic potential and optimal health by providing the skills, social support and environmental reinforcement necessary to adopt lifelong, healthy on the feedback of students, parents teacher and staff surveys and discussion groups.

GENERAL WELLNESS

- A. At least 2 nutritious and appealing foods, such as fresh fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy foods and whole grain products, shall be available wherever and whenever food is sold or offered at school.
- B. Food items are not to be used as a reward or punishment, and using or withholding physical activity is not to be used as a disciplinary tool.
- C. NDCS will not sign exclusive contracts with soft drink, fast food, or snack food companies for distribution or marketing of their products on campus.
- D. NDCS will maintain a full service kitchen to allow preparation of foods from fresh ingredients.
- E. NDCS will make every effort to schedule free play before meal times, so that students will not rush their eating or skip a meal altogether in order to have more time at free play.

- F. Moderate portion sizes are required whenever food is sold or offered at school, and are defined as:
 - a. 1 ¼ oz for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit or jerky (about the size of ½ baseball)
 - b. 1 oz for cookies (about the size of four dice put together, or 9V rectangular battery)
 - c. 2 oz for cereal and granola bars, muffins, bagels, and other bakery items (about the size of a baseball)
 - d. 4 fluid oz for frozen desserts (about the size of ½ a small yogurt container)
 - e. 8 oz for non-frozen yogurt (about the size of a small yogurt container)
 - f. 12 fluid oz for beverages, excluding water
 - g. Portion size for other dishes shall be comparable to those offered as part of the school lunch program
 - h. Fresh fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion –size limits.

- G. Beverages and snacks with the following additives will not be sold:
 - a. Monosodium glutamate
 - b. Sodium bisulfate/sodium meta-bisulfite/sulfating agents
 - c. Sodium nitrate
 - d. Tropical oils (such as palm, palm kernel, and coconut oils)
 - e. Added animal fats

- H. NDCS will remain committed to staff and parent health by developing a multifaceted plan to promote staff and parent wellness through educational workshops, opportunities for physical activity and other resources free of charge to support lifelong, healthy eating and physical activity habits.
- I. The Wellness Policy will apply to foods sold on campus at all times.

1) Wellness Team

The Wellness Team has been formed to ensure the creation and maintenance of a school environment which supports healthy lifestyle choices. It is comprised of concerned parents, teachers, staff and students, including the School Health Coordinator. The Wellness team will:

- A. Make the Wellness Policy and all amendments available to school community.
- B. Work to implement requests of the surveyed community around health resources.
- C. Compile materials, resources and training to teachers to assist them in incorporating health education into a variety of subjects across grade levels.
- D. Support NDCS in carrying out their responsibilities as listed below.
- E. Encourage parents to provide healthy food options at home through newsletters, articles, workshops and other means of education.
- F. Maintain a list of healthy snack options for students, parents, teachers and staff looking for alternatives.

- G. Organize monthly activities and lessons around specific health topics throughout the school year.
- H. Maintain an open dialogue with the NDCS community in order to continually improve the school environment's support of health lifestyle choices.
- I. Serve as a resource to the school community on wellness matters.
- J. Evaluate NDCS policies and programs to gauge their effectiveness and ensure that they are responding to the needs of the community.

2) School Food and NDCS

- A. All foods and beverages sold or served will meet, at minimum, the standards set by the State of California
- B. Students will be limited to 1 serving of menu and no a la carte items are offered or sold on campus. NDCS will implement a program to ensure no more than one serving is sold per student per day.
- C. Will offer at least 2 choices of fresh fruits and/or vegetables as a part of meals and/or snacks.
- D. Will provide information about the nutritional content of meals to students, parents, and teachers on monthly food menus; will visibly post nutritional information on placards net to food choices in the cafeteria so that students may make informed food choices.
- E. Will establish linkages between health education and the school meal programs.
- F. Will create a system to engage students, parents and teachers, through means such as NDCS-tests and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs to identify food choices that are new, healthful and appealing to the school community.
- G. Will coordinate with the Wellness Team to ensure the needs of the community are being met.

3) Student Store and Vending Machines

- A. Food and beverage sold on campus must meet the same state laws and school guidelines applied to foods sold on campus through the cafeteria and student store.
- B. NDCS will monitor all vending machines to ensure that all foods vended meet the state & federal guideline
- C. At least 2 nutritious and appealing foods, such as fresh fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy foods and whole grain products, shall be available wherever and whenever food is sold or offered at school.
- D. Student leadership will explore selling items other than food and beverages, such as specialty school supplies and NDCS paraphernalia.
- E. In order to ensure compliance with state and school standards, all fundraisers involving food and beverage sales must be pre-approved by the NDCS Wellness Team through a proposal process.

4) Special Events and Festivals

NDCS supports special classrooms events such as birthday and other celebratory parties. Teachers and parents are urged, however, to keep portions moderate (see **General Wellness**, Section F) and teach students that treats are appropriate in reasonable amounts for special occasions, and not appropriate for everyday (sometimes foods)

- A. Parties where fat/high sugar foods are served will be limited to one per month per classroom (e.g. all March birthdays celebrated with a cake at the beginning or end of the month). After gaining teacher approval, parents may send a treat to be served during such a party.
- B. Additional parties may be held to celebrate a birthday or other occasion on the day of, however food served at these celebrations will be limited to fresh fruits, vegetables and dips and water.
- C. Foods high in fat and sugar must be offered alongside 2 healthier options to provide choice (e.g., ice cream should be served with cut fresh fruit and water or 100% fruit juice, rather than soda or fruit flavored drinks.)
- D. Food is an important part of learning about and enjoying our cultural heritage. Therefore we encourage parents and teachers to share healthy cultural foods during festivals. Again, portion sizes should meet the guidelines for moderation (see **General Wellness**, Section F). For information on remaking cultural recipes in healthier ways, please consult with the NDCS Wellness Team

5) Fundraising

- A. Classrooms, clubs and special projects are encouraged to raise funds through means other than food sales, such as car washes, flea markets, gift wrapping, photographs, student designed cookbooks, and specialty school supplies. For additional ideas, please consult the NDCS Wellness Team.
- B. When food and beverage items are sold for fundraisers, they must meet the same state laws and school guidelines applied to foods sold on campus through the cafeteria and student store (Attachment A.)
- C. At least 2 nutritious and appealing foods, such as fresh fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy foods and whole grain products, shall be available wherever and whenever food is sold or offered at school
- D. In order to insure compliance with state standards, all fundraisers involving food and beverage sales must be pre-approved by the NDCS Wellness Team through a proposal process.

6) Food and Beverages Brought from Home

- A. To ensure that all students maintain good health, NDCS encourages parents to read the labels on the food that they buy. Please send food to school that is:
 - a. **Low in fat**-less than 3grams of fat per serving
 - b. **High in fiber**-at least 2grams of fiber per serving; made with whole grain or whole wheat flour as opposed to white, refined or bleached flour.
 - c. **Low in sugar**-sugar is not listed as one of the first two ingredients (also listed as high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, and sucrose)
 - d. **Low in sodium**-no more than 230mg per serving.

- e. **Good source of vitamins or minerals**-at least 10%RDA of Calcium, iron, vitamin C or A.
 - f. **100% fruit juice or water** –rather than soda, fruit flavored drinks, or “performance” beverages that are high in sugar.
- B. The NDCS Wellness Team is committed to compiling and updating a list of healthy snack options and making it available to students, parents, teachers and staff.
 - C. Teachers are strongly encouraged to develop snack policies in their own classrooms. Some teacher allows students to eat only fruit, vegetables and water, while others reward healthy food choices. Please see the Wellness Team for policy ideas.
 - D. The following items are NOT ALLOWED on the NDCS campus:
 - a. Gum
 - b. Seeds in shells
 - E. Prohibited food and drinks listed above may be taken away from students by any faculty or staff, without being returned. Bringing these items on campus is a Level I misconduct, as described in the NDCS School wide Behavioral Plan.

7) Physical Education

- A. All students in grades 1-12 will receive daily physical education (or its equivalent of 200 minutes/ten days for grades 1-6, and 400 minutes/10days for grades 7-12) for the entire school year.
- B. All students in Kindergarten will receive physical education for 100 minutes/ten days.
- C. All physical education in grades k-6 will be taught by a trained, preferably certified, physical education instructor or classroom teacher trained by a PE specialist.
- D. All physical education in grades 7-12 will be taught by a trained, preferably certified, physical education instructor.
- E. Students will spend at least 50% of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

8) Health Education

- A. The curriculum will be designed to help students adopt healthy eating behaviors and give students the knowledge and skills they need to be “health literate” as delineated by the national health education standards:
 - a. Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention.
 - b. Students will be able to access valid health information and health-promoting products and services.
 - c. Students will be able to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.
 - d. Students will analyze the influence of culture, media, technology, and other factors on health.
 - e. Students will be able to use interpersonal communication skills to enhanced health
 - f. Students will be able to use goal-setting and decision-making skills to enhance health
 - g. Students will be able to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

- B. For young children, nutrition education will focus on concrete experiences (e.g., increasing exposure to many healthy foods, and skills in choosing healthy foods.)
- C. For middle and high school students, nutrition education will be taught by a health education specialist (6th, 9th, 12th grades) and focus on helping students assess their own eating behaviors and set goals for improving their food selection.
- D. Additional health education priorities, as determined by the surveyed NDCS community will be taught to all grade levels: physical activity, personal hygiene, and social skills.
- E. Reproductive health education will be taught by a health education specialist, beginning in the third grade, as students in intermediate grades are now reaching puberty, it will be taught again every three years (6th, 9th, 12th grades) in an age-appropriate manner, building students skills.
- F. Before reproductive health training for students, and educational workshop will also be held for parents to inform them of topics to be covered offer strategies for speaking with their children about the various topics.