



UCC-Acosta Middle School

Wellness Policy

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UCC-Acosta Middle School

Wellness Policy

Purpose

UCC-Acosta Middle School (hereto referred to as AMS) is committed to the optimal development of every student. AMS believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental and social success, we need to create positive, safe and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

This policy outlines the AMS approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in the district have access to healthy foods throughout the school day – both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus—in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active throughout the day;
- Students have opportunities to practice mindfulness activities throughout the day;
- Students have opportunities to develop social emotional skills to promote mental wellness and social emotional well-being;
- Schools engage in nutrition, physical activity promotion, and other activities that foster student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The parents are engaged in supporting the work of AMS in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- AMS establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

This policy applies to all students, staff and schools in AMS. Specific measurable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.

School Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership

The Principal will convene a AMS wellness committee that meets at least one time per year to establish goals for and oversee school health, including development, implementation and periodic review and update of this wellness policy.



Leadership

The designated school official for oversight is **Jose Flores Benitez**.

The members of the AMS Wellness Committee are:

Name	Title / Relationship to the School
Jose Flores Benitez	Principal
Molly Slattery	School Counselor
Zecilia Alamillo-Roman	Youth Programs
David Farin	Health, Physical Education & Athletics
Sonia Pacheco RN, CPN	Carroll University- School Health Center
Tammy Melchart	7th Grade Teacher

I. Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement

Implementation Plan

AMS will 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

AMS will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at the principal's office. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating that the policy has been made available to the public;
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the Local Schools Wellness Policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods AMS uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the AMS Wellness Committee;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the local school wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the Local School Wellness Policy has been made available to the public.

Annual Notification of Policy

AMS will actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, any updates to the policy and implementation status. AMS will make this information available via the school website and/or school-wide communications. AMS will provide as much information as possible about the school nutrition environment. This will include a summary of AMS events or activities related to wellness policy implementation. Annually, AMS will also publicize the name and contact information of the school officials leading and coordinating the committee, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the school wellness committee.

Triennial Progress Assessments

AMS will evaluate compliance with the Wellness Policy no less than once every three years. The assessment will include the extent to which each school is in compliance with the policy and how the policy compares to a model policy, as established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The individual responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is Jose Flores at jflores@uccacostams.org.

AMS will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

AMS Wellness Committee will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual School Health Index and triennial assessments and/or as AMS priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. **The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.**

Community Involvement, Outreach and Communications

AMS is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. AMS will actively communicate ways in which representatives of AMS wellness committee and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for AMS. AMS will also inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply, and a description of and compliance with [Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards](#). AMS will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the district's website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy. AMS will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that the district and individual schools are communicating important school information with parents.

AMS will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum. The District will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

II. Nutrition

School Meals

Our school 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 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 AMS participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP)

All schools within the District are committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, that:

- 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 statutes and regulations. (The AMS offers reimbursable school meals that meet [USDA nutrition standards](#).)
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using at least ten of the following [Smarter Lunchroom techniques](#):
 - Sliced or cut Fresh fruit and vegetables are available daily.

- Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of 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.
- White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers.
- A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (e.g., salad bars, snack rooms, etc.).
- No junk food* vending machines are located in the school facilities.
- **food that has low nutritional value, typically produced in the form of packaged snacks needing little or no preparation*

Cold Lunch - Schoolwide Expectations

- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations.
- Students will not be allowed to bring soda or candy.
- If bringing food items of low nutritional value, students will be limited to individual serving sizes.
- Parents will be encouraged to bring whole foods versus processed foods.
- AMS will provide healthy lunch ideas.
- If bringing an unhealthy lunch AMS will provide students with a hot lunch option.

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the [USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals](#). These school nutrition personnel will refer to [USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website](#) to search for training that meets their learning needs.


Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day. AMS will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

Students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

AMS is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus* during the school day* support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (e.g., “competitive” foods and beverages) will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits. A summary of the standards and information, as well as a Guide to Smart Snacks in Schools are available at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>.



To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

Celebrations and Rewards

All foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards including through:

1. Celebrations and parties. AMS will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. AMS will provide parents a [list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks](#) nutrition standards.

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 will 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, students and the community.

AMS will 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:

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

Nutrition Education

AMS will 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);
- Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and
- Includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

AMS is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. AMS strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health and physical activity. These efforts will be weakened if students are subjected to advertising on AMS property that contains messages inconsistent with the health information the AMS is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. It is the intent of AMS to protect and promote student's health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus, consistent with the AMS wellness policy.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus* during the school day* will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Food and beverage marketing are defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing often include oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made 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.
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on school equipment, such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards or backboards (Note: immediate replacement of these items are not required; however, AMS will 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 following the marketing 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 AMS.
- 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.

Schools will restrict food and beverage marketing to only those foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards set forth by USDA's Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools (Smart Snacks) rule.

III. Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. AMS shall provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical activity in addition to physical education.

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. The AMS will provide teachers and other school staff with a [list of ideas](#) for alternative ways to discipline students.

To the extent practicable, AMS will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. AMS will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

Physical Education

AMS will 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.

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

Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

AMS will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues and physical activity facilities. AMS will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development and strong educational outcomes.

Community Partnerships

AMS will continue relationships with community partners (e.g., hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, SNAP-Ed providers and coordinators, etc.) 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

AMS will promote to parents/caregivers, 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 (e.g., health fair, nutrition/physical activity open house and will receive information about health promotion efforts.)