

# **Westpark Christian Academy Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition**

## **Wellness at Westpark!**

We all agree that children need to eat healthy and be physically active to grow, learn, and succeed. Good health fosters student attendance and learning. Over the past two decades as children have become more sedentary and increased calorie intake, obesity rates have doubled for elementary students and tripled for adolescents. In response, Westpark Christian Academy is implementing the following wellness policies.

- The academy will engage students, parents, staff, and board members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Trained staff will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- Westpark will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the National School Lunch Program [including after-school snacks).
- Westpark will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs.

## **TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:**

### **I. School Health Team**

Westpark School Health Team will develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The team will consist of students, parents, staff, and school board representatives.

### **II. Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus**

#### **School Meals**

Meals served through the National School Lunch will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

**Free and Reduced-priced Meals.** Westpark will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.

**Meal Times and Scheduling.** Westpark:

- will provide students with at least 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- will take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages.** Students are discouraged from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

**Fundraising Activities.** To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities will limit foods that do not meet the approved nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. We will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity.

**Snacks.** Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage.

**Rewards.** Westpark will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

**Celebrations.** Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Parents will be encouraged to provide fruits and vegetables instead of a sugary snack.

### **III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing**

**Nutrition Education and Promotion.** Westpark aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students by provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for staff.

**Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting.** For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.*, at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

**Communications with Parents.** Westpark will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. Parents are encouraged to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages.

Information will be provided about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

**Staff Wellness.** Westpark highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

#### **IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

**Physical Education (P.E.) K-12.** All students in grades K-12, including students will receive bi-weekly physical education for the entire school year.

**Daily Recess.** All elementary students will have at least 30 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, encouraging moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

#### **V. Monitoring and Policy Review**

**Monitoring.** The administrator will ensure compliance with established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

School food service staff, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the administrator

**Policy Review.** Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, Westpark will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements.



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