



# RIVER CITY SCIENCE ACADEMY

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## Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

River City Science Academy (RCSA) is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. RCSA is committed to providing a school environment that enhances learning and development of lifelong wellness practices of each student and to provide guidance in the areas of nutrition, health, physical activity and food service. It is the goal of RCSA to improve the overall health of students by decreasing the number of students identified as overweight or at risk of becoming overweight by promoting healthy eating choices, nutrition education and physical activity.

Therefore, it is the policy of River City Science Academy that:

- The school will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students will have opportunities, support, 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 *National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Guidelines*.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals 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.
- To the maximum extent practicable, River City Science Academy will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the National School Lunch Program).
- River City Science Academy assures that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by USDA.



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- River City Science Academy 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, and with related community services.

## TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

### I. **Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus**

Academic performance and quality of life issues are affected by the choice and availability of good foods in our schools. Healthy foods support student physical growth, brain development, resistance to disease, emotional stability and ability to learn.

Nutrition guidelines that require the use of products that are high in fiber, low in added fats, sugar and sodium, and served in appropriate portion sizes consistent with NSLP standards.

#### **School Meals**

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program 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; Menus will meet the nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the State of Florida Department of Education, conforming to appropriate menu planning principles, and featuring a variety of healthy choices that are tasty, attractive, the best possible quality, and are served at the proper temperature.
- 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 NSLP); and
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.



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River City Science Academy will engage students and parents in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, the school will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students.

## **Free and Reduced-priced Meals.**

River City Science Academy 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. Toward this end, schools may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; promote the availability of school meals to all students;

## **Meal Times and Scheduling.**

River City Science Academy will make every effort to:

- provide students with at least 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 10:45 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.;
- not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

## **Qualifications of School Food Service Staff.**

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will require continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals. Professional development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility is applicable.



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## **Sharing of Foods and Beverages.**

River City Science Academy will discourage students 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.

## **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, will be based on NSLP standards. The school will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations.

## **Rewards.**

River City Science Academy will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually, 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.**

River City Science Academy will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per week. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually.

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

### **Nutrition Education and Promotion.**

River City Science Academy aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. The school will make an effort to provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;



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- is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- 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);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- encourages training for teachers and other staff.

## **Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting**

For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity 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 may be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers may provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.



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In order to measure and evaluate physical education and nutrition education program, physical/health education classes will be the primary sources, River City Science Academy will make sure;

- physical education/health classes are taught by a certified teacher
- students receive formal instruction in physical/health education based on course requirements
- physical education/health class size is similar to other content areas to ensure safe, effective instruction
- there is adequate equipment for every student to be active
- appropriate technology is incorporated on a regular and continuing basis
- indoor and outdoor facilities are safe and adequate (so that physical education classes need not be displaced by other activities)
- there is a curriculum based on state and/or national standards for physical/health education
- formative and summative assessments of student learning are included in the physical education/health program
- the program provides for maximum participation for every student (e.g., inclusion, no elimination games, all students active at once, developmentally appropriate activities, etc)
- physical education teachers regularly participate in physical education professional development activities and have memberships in related professional organizations
- there is regular periodic evaluation by administrators of the physical education/health program and teacher performance

## **Communications with Parents.**

River City Science Academy will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school will encourage parents 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. The school may provide parents a list of foods that meet the school's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the school may provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

The school will provide information 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.



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## III. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

### Physical Education (P.E.) 6-8.

All students, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive required physical education course. All physical education will be taught by a certified teacher. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

### Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School.

River City Science Academy will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. Additionally, River City Science Academy, will offer interscholastic sports programs. The school will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage – verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

## IV. Monitoring, Policy Review and Partnership

### Monitoring.

At River City Science Academy (RCSA), the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school. School food service staff, at the school level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter (to the school principal). The effectiveness of the RCSA wellness policy will be evaluated and the results will be presented to the Governing School Board with the recommended revisions annually.

### Policy Review and Implementation.

Assessments will be repeated every year (annually) to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, River City Science Academy 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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The school will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

## **Procedures for public input and revisions**

RCSA put announcements to the school newsletter, website and place signs in school to inform the parents about the wellness policy. The policy has also been sent to designated teachers, PE, Health, and Science for feedback.

For ongoing input; the policy will be placed to the school website where the public will have access to view the board approved policy. In that website, the public and school staff will have a chance to provide ongoing input for areas in need of improvement by writing to school administration. Those who do not have web access may turn-in their input to the school office. Annually, all feedback coming from public and school staff will be evaluated and incorporated to the policy and will be presented to the Board. After getting final inputs from the Board, the reviewed policy will be on effect.



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## **Wellness Committee**

A primary goal will be to engage family members, students, the Governing Board, school administrators, and the public in development and regular review of this school policy.