



LIFE Academy Wellness Policy

LIFE Academy School Wellness Policy

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LIFE Academy Wellness Policy

Preamble

LIFE Academy is committed to the optimal development of every student. The School 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.

Research shows that two components, good nutrition and physical activity before, during, and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. For example, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) School Breakfast Program is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores, lower absenteeism, and better performance on cognitive tasks.^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7} Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.^{8,9,10} In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education, and extracurricular activities – do better academically.^{11,12,13,14}

This policy outlines the LIFE Academy's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students at LIFE Academy have access to healthy foods throughout the school day—through reimbursable school meals—in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during, and after school;
- LIFE Academy engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of the LIFE Academy in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- LIFE Academy establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about, and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

I. School Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership

LIFE Academy has assembled a school wellness committee (hereto referred to as the SWC) that meets once per year in February to establish goals for and oversee school health and wellness policies and programs, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of LIFE Academy-local wellness policy (heretofore referred as “wellness policy”).

SWC membership includes: parents/guardians, students, school administrators, physical education teachers, classroom teachers, school health professionals, school support personnel, FSMC staff members, and community members. To the extent possible, the SWC will include representatives from each school building and reflect the diversity of the community.

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

Implementation Plan

LIFE Academy 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.

This wellness policy and the progress reports will be posted online at: <https://life3academy.com>

Recordkeeping

LIFE Academy will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at each school location.

Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including (1) Efforts to actively solicit SWC membership from the required stakeholder groups; and (2) These groups’ participation in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy;

Documentation of annual policy progress reports for each school under its jurisdiction; and
Documentation of the triennial assessment* of the policy for each school under its jurisdiction;
Documentation demonstrating compliance with public notification requirements, including: (1)
Methods by which the wellness policy, annual progress reports, and triennial assessments are made available to the public; and (2) Efforts to actively notify families about the availability of wellness policy.

Annual Progress Reports

LIFE Academy will compile and publish an annual report to share basic information about the wellness policy and report on the progress in meeting wellness goals. This annual report will be published around the same time each year in May. This report will include, but is not limited to:

The website address for the wellness policy and/or how the public can receive/access a copy of the wellness policy;
A description LIFE Academy's progress in meeting the wellness policy goals;
A summary of LIFE Academy's events or activities related to wellness policy implementation;
The name and position title of the designated LIFE Academy policy leader(s) identified in Section I; and
Information on how individuals and the public can get involved with the SWC.

LIFE Academy will actively notify households/families of the availability of the annual report.

The School Wellness Committee will establish and monitor goals and objectives, specific and appropriate for each instructional unit, for each of the content-specific components listed in Sections III-V of this policy.

LIFE Academy will track, analyze, and report on any correlations between improvements in health-promoting environments with education outcomes, such as absenteeism, disciplinary referrals, test scores, average grades, or health measures such as consumption of whole grains, fruits, or vegetables through the school meal programs or other school climate measures.

LIFE Academy will also track and annually report other related information, such as findings from food safety inspections, aggregate participation in school meals programs, fundraising revenues, and other such information, as feasible.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, LIFE Academy will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

The extent to the school is in compliance with the wellness policy.

A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the LIFE Academy's wellness policy.

The person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is the Wellness Coordinator/ Operations Director in conjunction with the Director of Child Nutrition.

The School Wellness Committee will monitor compliance with this wellness policy.

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

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The SWC will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual progress reports and triennial assessments, and/or as LIFE Academy 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

LIFE Academy is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. LIFE Academy will actively communicate ways in which representatives of SWC and others can participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for that school. LIFE Academy 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. LIFE Academy will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the school'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. LIFE Academy will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that the school is communicating other important school information with parents.

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

III. 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; moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and zero grams *trans* fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meet

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.

Our school participates in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP). Our School is committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP 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 LIFE Academy offers reimbursable school meals that meet [USDA nutrition standards.](#))
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices

In addition,

- Menus are posted on the school's website and will include nutrient content and ingredients.
- Menus are created/reviewed by a Registered Dietitian or other certified nutrition professional.
- School meals are administered by a team of child nutrition professionals.
- LIFE Academy child nutrition program accommodates students with special dietary needs.
- Students are allowed at least 15-20 minutes to eat breakfast and 30 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they have received their meal and are seated.
- Participation in Federal child nutrition programs is promoted among students and families to help ensure that families know what programs are available in their children's school.

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. All professional development is documented and records are retained on-site.

Water

To promote hydration, free unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day. LIFE Academy makes drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. All water sources, including drinking fountains, will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene standards. In addition, students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

LIFE Academy does not sell any food items on campus during school operation that are in competition with the National School Lunch or Breakfast Program. No competitive foods are sold as a la carte during meal time.

Celebrations and Rewards

Our school aims to implement policies where all food and beverages offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards and the ANS including:

1. Classroom snacks brought by parents. LIFE Academy encourages healthy foods and snacks to be brought by parents.
2. Rewards and incentives. LIFE Academy does not allow food as a reward by teachers and other relevant school staff. Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

Fundraising

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks for school nutrition standards may be served or sold through fundraisers on the school campus. However, LIFE Academy will use non-food fundraisers and encourage those promoting physical activity (such as walk-a-thons, jump rope for heart, fun runs, etc.) when possible. All food-related fundraisers will be documented on the approved fundraiser form and approved by the Director of Child Nutrition.

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. LIFE Academy will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all by:

Promoting foods and beverages that meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Nutrition Education

LIFE Academy aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. LIFE Academy will strive to 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;

Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods;

Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);

Link with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services.

IV. Physical Activity

The LIFE Academy is committed to providing: physical education, recess, classroom-based physical activity, and out-of-school time activities students are allotted 30 minutes each day.

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, physical activity breaks, or physical education) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason. (This does not include participation on sports teams that have specific academic requirements.)

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

Physical Education

LIFE Academy 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, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts (discussed in the “Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education” subsection).

All School students in each grade will receive physical education for 30 minutes per day 5 days per week throughout the school year. LIFE Academy will strive to increase this amount to the national recommendation of 150 minutes for grades K-4. Students will be moderately to vigorously active for at least 50% of class time during most physical education class sessions. LIFE Academy will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

Waivers, exemptions, or substitutions for physical education classes will not be permitted. Students will be excused from class only for extenuating circumstances (i.e. an IEP, 504 plan, doctor’s note). All physical education teachers are required to participate in at least one professional development in physical education session a year.

Recess (Elementary)

LIFE Academy provides **30 minutes of recess** for all grade levels on all or most days during the school year. Recess **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason. For students participating in before lunch, LIFE Academy will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms located just inside/outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time will be built in to the recess transition period/timeframe before students enter the cafeteria.

Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. In the event that the school or school must conduct **indoor recess**, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable.

Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

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 do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.

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

V. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy. All school-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity opportunities.

Community Partnerships

LIFE Academy will develop, enhance, and continue relationships with community partners in support of this wellness policy's implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be reviewed to ensure that they are consistent with the wellness policy and its goals.

Community Health Promotion and Engagement

LIFE Academy 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 and will receive information about health promotion efforts.

Professional Learning

When feasible, LIFE Academy 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 LIFE Academy staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing school or academic improvement plans/efforts.

Appendix A: School Level Contacts

School	Name	Title	Email Address	Role
LIFE Academy	LaQuita Redditt	Operations Director		Wellness Coordinator
LIFE Academy	Danielle Streeter	Principal		Wellness Committee Member
	Laliah Thomas	Student		Student Council Support
	Jim Hunter	Athletic Director		Wellness Committee Member
	David Myles	P.E. Teacher		Wellness Committee Member
	Oliver Fitzpatrick	Board Member		Wellness Committee Stakeholder
	Brittney Martin	School Counselor		Wellness Committee Member
	Vanessa Boyd	CNP Director		Director of Child Nutrition

Definitions:

School Day – midnight the night before to 30 minutes after the end of the instructional day.

Extended School Day – time before and after school when activities such as intramural sports, band, choir, drama, and tutoring occur

School Campus – areas that are owned or leased by the school and used at any time for school-related activities

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

Program.Intake@usda.gov