

## **Doctors Charter School Wellness Plan**

To help combat childhood obesity, Congress passed a law requiring each local educational agency participating in the United States Department of Agriculture's school meals programs to establish a local wellness policy by the beginning of the School Year 2006-2007. The law places the responsibility of developing a wellness policy at the local level so the individual needs of each school can be addressed.

In accordance with the Vision, Mission and Values of the Doctors Charter School of Miami Shores (DCS), the school is committed to providing a healthy environment for students and adults within the school environment, recognizing that all students must be physically healthy in order to achieve academic success.

DCS also recognizes that there is a strong link between academic performance and health literacy, nutrition education, physical education, physical activity, environmental awareness, and the food served in schools.

### Introduction

The school will make every effort to engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing the school's nutrition and physical activity policies.

All students in grades 6 – 12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis. Physical education and physical activities are offered to enable students to develop healthy lifetime habits conducive to cardiovascular conditioning, flexibility, coordination, balance, physical strength and leisure time activities.

Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the minimum nutritional requirements set forth by federal and state guidelines. Qualified child nutrition professionals will make every effort to provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; and attempt to accommodate the diversity of student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

Health literacy and nutrition education equip students to make the most health-enhancing decisions about the food choices available to them, and to understand health-related influences in the environment. DCS currently has two teachers which are certified nutritionists. The school will provide nutrition education, along with 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.

### Nutrition Education

The main goal of nutrition education is to influence students' eating behaviors and to promote lifelong health eaters. Administrators, staff, and extracurricular groups shall ensure that all school activities, including classroom practices and incentive, are consistent with sound nutrition practices taught in the classroom and implemented in the school meal program. The curriculum will include to the extent possible, health, with emphasis on importance of proper nutrition and exercise. DCS shall offer opportunities for the students to taste different fruits and vegetables as part of nutrition education. Professional development will be offered at least annually by staff certified in the nutrition field at least annually on basic nutrition, serving, handling and marketing and promotion of nutritious foods.

Good health fosters student attendance and increased educational outcomes. All students shall have ample opportunity, support and encouragement to make healthy choices that will promote lifelong wellness through the implementation of a comprehensive health education curriculum that aligns with national standards, is research-based in includes nutrition education.

- (1) Classroom teaching: All students will receive health education instruction that includes nutrition education as part of a planned, sequential and comprehensive school health education program. The program will be aimed at giving students the knowledge and skills necessary to be health literate as defined by national and state education benchmarks. Health curriculum will be reviewed yearly by staff members certified in health and nutrition. Health and nutrition issues will be integrated across the curriculum in science, language arts, the social sciences, mathematics, physical education and elective courses.
- (2) The classroom teaching of health and nutrition education will include links to the community and outside resources. Teachers certified in nutrition will provide ongoing training, resources and strategies to promote best practices in health, wellness and nutrition education.
- (3) Qualified nutrition professionals (school's caterer) will administer the school meal program.
- (4) DCS will make every effort to schedule meal periods at appropriate times and student will be provided at least 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch.
- (5) DCS will make every effort not to schedule tutoring, club or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes.
- (6) DCS will make every effort to provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before meals.

- (7) Foods (snacks and beverages) sold via vending machines on school property will include healthy choice food items and will not be sold during the school day until one hour after the last lunch shift ends.
- (8) Rewards, celebrations and fundraises involving the selling of foods and/or beverages will include items produced by a retailer and sealed or individually wrapped prior to service to students. Foods will be sold only before and/or after the school day.
- (9) Food or beverages will not be withheld for student as punishment.
- (10) DCS discourages 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.
- (11) Students will be encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast.
- (12) The school district will provide information to families that encourage them to teach their children about health and nutrition and to provide nutritious meals for their families. Nutrition information will be shared with families and the broader community to positively impact students and the health of the community.

### Physical Education/Activities

Because of the unique and important contribution to the total development of all students, Doctors Charter School believes that physical education and health are part of the total educational process and are fundamental subjects in the school's curriculum. To become skillful movers, children need quality instruction, a variety of opportunities for practice and positive reinforcement. A child's full and proper development depends on activity and includes not only physical but also social, emotional, and intellectual development.

DCS has developed a physical education program that encourages physical fitness and that promotes a healthy, active lifestyle and expects all students to participate in physical education. Physical education shall consist of physical activities of at least a moderate intensity level and for a duration sufficient to provide a significant health benefit to students, subject to the differing capabilities of students.

- (1) Participation in physical education will be regularly scheduled for students. The physical education program is design to develop the following learning priorities:
  - (a) Motor skills and other movement concepts
  - (b) Positive attitudes toward individual fitness, a healthy lifestyle and lifelong physical activities
  - (c) Health-enhancing levels of physical fitness
  - (d) Responsible personal and social behavior in physical activity settings
  - (e) Appreciation of cultural and individual differences in physical activity settings
  - (f) Safety skills for physical activities

- (2) Opportunities for participation in physical activities may be scheduled during the school day, before or after school and should reflect the “Best Practices” of recent brain research.
- (3) The high school will offer one (1) credit for graduation to include one (1) semester of Personal Fitness (.5 credit) and one (1) semester of an approved Physical Education course (.5 credit).
- (4) Students shall be supported in establishing and accomplishing personal fitness goals that result in the achievement and maintenance of a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.
- (5) Students shall be provided varied opportunities for enjoyment, challenge, self expression and social interaction that will lead to a physically active lifestyle.
- (6) Physical activity will be integrated across the curriculum throughout the school day. Movement can be made a part of science, math, language arts and the social sciences.
- (7) Policies ensure that state-certified physical education instructors teach all physical education classes.
- (8) Policies ensure that physical education classes have a student/teacher ratio similar to other classes.
- (9) Time allotted for physical activity will be consistent with research, national and state standards.
- (10) Physical activity participation will take into consideration the “balancing equation” of food intake and physical activity. Physical education includes the instruction of individual activities as well as competitive and non-competitive team sports to encourage life-long physical activity.
- (11) Adequate equipment is available for all students to participate in physical education. Physical activity facilities on school grounds will be safe.
- (12) DCS provides a physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students, including those who are not athletically gifted.
- (13) The district provides information to families to help them incorporate physical activity in their children’s lives.
- (14) DCS provides community access to use the school’s physical activity outside of the normal school day.
- (15) The school encourages family and community members to institute programs that support physical activity.

### Other School-based Activities

Doctors Charter School promotes increased participation in a school-based nutrition program by making the participation and the return of the application a high priority. The school 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-priced meals. All students are provided an identification card for students (whether pre-paid, reduced-price or free) to use during the lunch line. Toward this end, the school will promote the availability of meals to all students.

Teachers will not use identifiable brand names in their instruction unless they are found to be necessary to the lesson being taught and any commercial advertising on the school campus will comply with the developed Nutrition Standards. School personnel serve as nutrition educators and role models for healthy lifestyles. School staff is encourage to model healthy eating by offering healthier choices at school meetings and events, and to refrain from using candy and snacks of minimal nutritional value as snacks or rewards to students.

Doctors Charter School is currently participating in the local community recycling project, “Go Green”, and in conjunction with the project, the students are encouraged to either walk or ride their bicycles to and from school. With current environmental issues in the region (e.g., air pollution, traffic congestion) and economic factors (e.g., fuel prices, community accessibility), this is an opportune time for our students to contribute to their community, while building life-long physical fitness habits. All children, including those with disabilities, benefit from walking or bicycling regimen, which will improve childhood health and reduce obesity. Safety education (bicycling and walking safety rules) is integrated through the Health and Physical Fitness curriculum. The local law enforcement agency partners with the school to assist with safety education and to ensure traffic laws are obeyed in the vicinity (e.g., enforcement of speeds, pedestrian right-of-way). Doctors Charter School has made application to the federal “Safe Routes to School Program” (SRTS) through the Florida Department of Transportation for infrastructure funds to build sidewalks and bicycle paths surrounding school grounds to ensure safety for the students’ travels.

After-school programs will encourage physical activity and healthy habit formation. The local wellness policy goals are considered in planning all school-based activities (e.g., field trips, dances, assemblies). The school’s wellness committee comprises of family members, teachers, administrators, office staff, and students to plan, implement and improve nutrition and physical activity in the school environment.

#### Nutrition Guidelines for all Foods on Campus

Good health fosters student attendance and improved student performance. District and school authorities shall establish healthy school nutrition environments that support reduction of childhood obesity and diet-related chronic disease. Healthy options for foods sold or served in the school will be consistent with the goals of the wellness policy.

- (1) During each school day, the food service program shall provide lunches under the nutritional guidelines of the USDA’s National School Lunch Program. Any school snack should be based on the nutrient guidelines from the USDA’s After School At-Risk Snack Program to those students in after-school education or enrichment programs. Each student is encouraged to participate in the lunch program. In particular, the school shall make efforts to ensure that families are aware of need-based programs for free or reduced-price meals and those eligible

- families are encouraged to apply. The program shall maintain the confidentiality of students and families applying and/or receiving free or reduced-price meals.
- (2) The school food service program shall operate in accordance with the National school Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1996 as amended and applicable laws and regulations of the state of Florida when developing the school menu. Varied and nutritional food choices will be consistent with the federal government's Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
    - (a) Selected menu items may allow input from students, family members, and other school personnel. The school's diverse population should be taken into account.
    - (b) Food pricing strategies, including those for a la carte items, shall be designed to encourage students to purchase nutritious items.
  - (3) The dining room facility shall be conducive to eating in a safe, orderly and pleasant environment. Supervisory staff (teachers, paraprofessionals, custodial staff, etc.) shall receive training in appropriate dining practices from the school principal or designee.
  - (4) Access to safe drinking water and facilities for hand-washing must be available during throughout the school day.
  - (5) All foods on campus shall be divided into the following categories:
    - (a) Vending Machines – Healthy choices in beverages and snacks
    - (b) School events – Classroom instruction, celebrations, meetings, concessions, intramural functions, fund raisers, and extracurricular activities
    - (c) A la carte – Extra portions of foods that are served from the menu
  - (6) All food categories will comply with the USDA regulations 7CFR 210 and 220 and Florida State Statue regarding food sales and procurement in schools.
  - (7) All food categories comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations.
  - (8) The school principal and/or designee shall ensure compliance with the competitive foods regulations issued by the Florida Department of Education. CRF 210.11

### Monitoring and Policy Review

The school principal and/or designee will ensure compliance with established the school's nutrition and physical activity wellness policy. Doctors Charter School will utilize the district's wellness assessment instrument to monitor compliance. On an annual basis, the school will use this instrument to assess the nutrition and physical activities environments and policies. School food service staff members will ensure compliance with nutritional policies for the school food service area and will report this matter to the school principal.

The school's Wellness Committee will assist with the development, implementation, monitoring and review and, as necessary, revise the school nutrition and physical activity

policies. The Coordinated School Health Model will serve as a representation for the eight components:

- (1) Health education
- (2) Physical education
- (3) School health services
- (4) School nutrition services
- (5) School counseling
- (6) Psychological and social services
- (7) Healthy school environment
- (8) School-site promotion for staff, family and community involvement in school health

At the end of the school year, the principal or a designee will complete a report on evaluating and measuring the implementation, effectiveness and maintenance of the Wellness Policy. The report shall be submitted to the board of directors for approval and then sent to the appropriate area superintendent to be forwarded to the district superintendent or designee.