

Wellness Policy for Willits Charter School

This policy is a reflection of the Willits Charter Schools K - 12 commitment to the well-being of all students. This policy puts in place:

- Nutritious meals in compliance with USDA Requirements to demonstrate proper diet needed to maintain health and proper body weight;
- Education that emphasizes whole foods, organic foods and local produce so that students are taught the quality of food and its bearing on health;
- Healthy physical activity to support health and well being;
- Classroom discussion of education that establishes links between health education, exercise and the school meal programs to foster lifelong habits of a healthy lifestyle.

I. SCHOOL HEALTH COMMITTEES AND SUPPORT GROUPS

The Willits Charter Schools (K - 12) will develop a committee to implement, monitor, review and, as necessary, revise school nutrition, nutrition education and student physical activity in consultation with health councils, community groups, health professionals, local farmers, teachers and students. At the Willits Charter School, the Wellness Committee is shared out at the Parent Association meetings.

II. NUTRITIONAL QUALITY OF FOODS AND BEVERAGES SERVED AND SOLD ON CAMPUS

School Meals

The Willits Charter Schools K - 12 will work with food service providers who themselves have required wellness and nutritional policies to assure that their meals, served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- In accordance with law, WCS and WECS shall provide free and reduced priced meals for students whose families meet federal eligibility;
- Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- Food preparation areas have the capacity to prepare meals to meet the student population;
- Follow strict sanitation practices in safe food handling, preparation and storage
- Offer a variety of fruits, vegetables and, where possible, organic and whole foods;

- Serve only nonfat flavored milk, fat free milk or 1% regular milk will be offered;
- Ensure whole grain rich products are served;
- Be appealing and attractive to students;

Foods and Beverages

The Willits Charter Schools K - 12 will work with the the food service departments of WCS and WECS on all the reimbursable school meal programs during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards required by law. As of the 2018-2019 school years, meals are provided free of charge to all students on campus.

Foods Available on Campus

Only compliant foods and beverages will be sold or offered during the school day including but not limited to:

- No trans fats or hydrogenated oils in any food products;
- Only nonfat flavored milk, fat free milk or 1% regular milk will be offered;
- Priority will be given to serving non processed foods;
- Low fat/lean meats will be served in meals;
- Vegetarian options will be provided every meal;
- Whole wheat and whole grain bread products and brown rice are staples;
- Organic produce will be used when economically feasible;
- Produce from the school's garden will be used whenever possible;

Beverages Available on Campus

- Allowed: water, fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain 100% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy beverages (to be defined by USDA);
- Filtered drinking water will be available at all times;
- **Not allowed:** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; sweetened iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 100% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be available with the meals at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items may include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 100% fruit juice and that do not contain additional

caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables.

Snacks

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

Rewards, Celebrations and Fundraising Activities

Rewards

Willits Charter Schools K - 12 strongly encourage use of non-food incentives to reward students' academic performance, accomplishments, classroom behavior or classroom celebrations.

Celebrations

In circumstances where food cannot be avoided at celebrations, those responsible for bringing foods (whether school staff, parents/guardians, volunteers) should select food items described in the "Allowable Foods" section below.

Allowable Foods

Willits Charter Schools would prefer that all foods brought onto campuses be healthy; low fat, fruits, vegetables and/or whole grain baked products. Food brought on campus by parents/guardians, volunteers or school staff for student celebrations must be store bought and commercially packaged with a label listing ingredients for the safety of all students especially those with food allergies and other health concerns.

Fundraising Activities

Fundraising activities must use allowable food and beverage items or non-food items. Willits Charter Schools encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. Only student organizations may sell food or beverages to students on school campuses from midnight through one half hour after school hours including minimum days.

Evening and Community Events

The schools promote nutritious allowable foods and snacks at evening and community events on school grounds.

III. NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROMOTION AND FOOD MARKETING

The Willits Charter Schools (K - 12) aim to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating and exercise by students through the process of providing, promoting and selling appropriate food and beverage as defined by this policy.

IV. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Daily Physical Education (P.E.) K-12

Recess that is safe and well supervised offers cognitive, social, emotional and physical benefits. Students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive daily physical education as required by law, for the entire school year. When activities such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain seated for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Daily Recess

All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

Physical Activity and Punishment

Teachers and other school and community staff will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, push-ups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess or physical activities) as punishment.

Promote Student Exercise When Coming To and From School

The Willits Charter Schools (K - 12) will promote physical activity by encouraging and facilitating students to walk, ride a bike or take public transportation to school. We also have access to The City of Willits' Safe Routes to School Plan (SRTS).

V. WELLNESS EDUCATION

Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that includes:

- WCS Culinary Arts programs incorporation of "Garden to Table" practices including taste testing, to provide students with opportunities to prepare and consume and enjoy fresh locally grown produce in their school meals.

- WCS & WECS Garden Programs support of students by continued development of their organic school gardens that provide students with the opportunity to plan, plant, harvest, prepare and consume produce they have grown.
- Incorporate produce from school garden programs in school meals and snacks when possible.
- Networking with local farmers & sources for organic fruit and vegetables to procure fresh locally grown produce for school meals and snacks.
- Fruits, vegetables, whole grain and whole wheat products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices.



** Above and to the right: High school student Jasmyn Rosado bringing in cucumbers from the garden for school salads.*

Communications with Parents

The Willits Charter Schools K - 12 will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their student. WCS and WECS will post school menus on their websites.

VI. REVIEW

Once a Wellness Committee has been selected and in operation, a review will be conducted and a report made to the Willits Charter Schools K - 12 once a year in which progress toward these policy goals will be reported.

The nutritional quality of the food served, physical activity, nutrition curriculum, and other program elements will be reviewed. The overall school environment will also be evaluated to determine if it supports student education and nutrition toward a healthy lifestyle.

Safety

WCS complies with all applicable state and federal safety laws and regulations. WCS adheres to the health, safety, and risk management guidelines as described in Section 6 of the WCS charter document including; complying with all insurance company inspections/findings, Mendocino County Environmental Health requirements, conducting

monthly fire drills, conducting periodic staff trainings on lock down procedures and complying with state/federal mandated reporting statutes.

This policy was approved by the WCS Board of Directors on 10/2/18.