



# Wellness Policy

## School Year 2021/2022

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# FIELD/EPIC de Cesar Chavez Charter High School, EPIC

## Preamble

EPIC de Cesar Chavez (hereto referred to as EPIC) is committed to the optimal development of every student. EPIC 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.<sup>1,2,3,4,5,6,7</sup> Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.<sup>8,9,10</sup> 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.<sup>11,12,13,14</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bradley, B, Green, AC. Do Health and Education Agencies in the United States Share Responsibility for Academic Achievement and Health? A Review of 25 years of Evidence About the Relationship of Adolescents' Academic Achievement and Health Behaviors, *Journal of Adolescent Health*. 2013; 52(5):523–532.

<sup>2</sup> Meyers AF, Sampson AE, Weitzman M, Rogers BL, Kayne H. School breakfast program and school performance. *American Journal of Diseases of Children*. 1989;143(10):1234–1239.

<sup>3</sup> Murphy JM. Breakfast and learning: an updated review. *Current Nutrition & Food Science*. 2007; 3:3–36.

<sup>4</sup> Murphy JM, Pagano ME, Nachmani J, Sperling P, Kane S, Kleinman RE. The relationship of school breakfast to psychosocial and academic functioning: Cross-sectional and longitudinal observations in an inner-city school sample. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*. 1998;152(9):899–907.

<sup>5</sup> Pollitt E, Mathews R. Breakfast and cognition: an integrative summary. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 1998; 67(4), 804S–813S.

<sup>6</sup> Rampersaud GC, Pereira MA, Girard BL, Adams J, Metz J. Breakfast habits, nutritional status, body weight, and academic performance in children and adolescents. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. 2005;105(5):743–760, quiz 761–762.

<sup>7</sup> Taras, H. Nutrition and student performance at school. *Journal of School Health*. 2005;75(6):199–213.

<sup>8</sup> MacLellan D, Taylor J, Wood K. Food intake and academic performance among adolescents. *Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research*. 2008;69(3):141–144.

<sup>9</sup> Neumark-Sztainer D, Story M, Dixon LB, Resnick MD, Blum RW. Correlates of inadequate consumption of dairy products among adolescents. *Journal of Nutrition Education*. 1997;29(1):12–20.

<sup>10</sup> Neumark-Sztainer D, Story M, Resnick MD, Blum RW. Correlates of inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption among adolescents. *Preventive Medicine*. 1996;25(5):497–505.

<sup>11</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *The association between school-based physical activity, including physical education, and academic performance*. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, 2010.

<sup>12</sup> Singh A, Uijtendewilligne L, Twisk J, van Mechelen W, Chinapaw M. *Physical activity and performance at school: A systematic review of the literature including a methodological quality assessment*. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med*, 2012; 166(1):49–55.

<sup>13</sup> Haapala E, Poikkeus A-M, Kukkonen-Harjula K, Tompuri T, Lintu N, Väistö J, Leppänen P, Laaksonen D, Lindi V, Lakka T. *Association of physical activity and sedentary behavior with academic skills – A follow-up study among primary school children*. *PLoS ONE*, 2014; 9(9): e107031.

<sup>14</sup> Hillman C, Pontifex M, Castelli D, Khan N, Raine L, Scudder M, Drollette E, Moore R, Wu C-T, Kamijo K. *Effects of the FITKids randomized control trial on executive control and brain function*. *Pediatrics* 2014; 134(4): e1063-1071.

15 Change Lab Solutions. (2014). *SFA Policy Restricting the Advertising of Food and Beverages Not Permitted to be Sold on School Grounds*. Retrieved from <http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/SFA-policy-school-food-ads>.

This policy outlines EPIC’s approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in EPIC have access to healthy foods throughout the school day—in accordance with Federal and State nutrition standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before, and during school;
- Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of EPIC in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- EPIC establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about, and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

This policy applies to all students, staff, and schools in EPIC.

## **I. School Wellness Committee**

### **Committee Role and Membership**

EPIC will convene a representative school wellness committee (hereto referred to as the SWC or work within an existing school health committee) that meets at least twice per year to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this EPIC-level wellness policy (heretofore referred as “wellness policy”).

The SWC membership will represent all school levels and include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: caregivers; students; representatives of the school nutrition program (ex., school nutrition director); physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals (ex., health education teachers, school health services staff [i.e., nurses, physicians, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel who provide school health services], and mental health and social services staff [i.e., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists]; school administrators (ex., superintendent, principal, vice principal), school board members; health professionals (ex., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public. To the extent possible, the SWC will include representatives from each school building and reflect the diversity of the community.

## Leadership

The Superintendent or designee(s) will convene the SWC and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure each school's compliance with the policy.

Name:	Title:	SWC Role:
Lisa S. Tabarez	Executive Director, EPIC de Cesar Chavez	
Ruby Torres	EPIC High School Teacher	
Elizabeth Tapia	Student Services Manager	
Helena Villarino-Wright	Director of Nutrition Services	

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

### Implementation Plan

EPIC 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 can be found at:

<https://www.farmworkerinstitute.org>

### Recordkeeping

EPIC will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at the school office. 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 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.

### **Triennial Progress Assessments**

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

- The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of EPIC are in compliance with the wellness policy;
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of EPIC's wellness policy.

The SWC, in collaboration with individual schools, will monitor schools' compliance with this wellness policy.

### **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 EPIC's 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**

EPIC is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. EPIC 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 EPIC. EPIC will also inform students 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. EPIC will use electronic

mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on EPIC’s website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to students, or sending information home with students, 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. EPIC will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that EPIC and individual schools are communicating other important school information with students.

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

### III. **Nutrition**

#### **School Meals**

Our school, EPIC de Cesar Chavez, is committed to serving healthy meals to students, 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 students within their calorie requirements. The school meal program aims to improve the diet and health of students, help mitigate 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.

All school sites within EPIC participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and *any additional programs the school may elect*. All schools within EPIC are committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to students;
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations. (EPIC offers reimbursable school meals that meet [USDA nutrition standards](#).)

#### **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](#). These school nutrition personnel will refer to [USDA’s Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website](#) to search for training that meets their learning needs.

## **Water**

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day and throughout every school campus. EPIC will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

## **Competitive Foods and Beverages**

The SFA is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus\* during the school day\* support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (i.e., “competitive” foods and beverages) will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day, and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits.

A summary of the standards and information are available at:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>.

## **Celebrations and Rewards**

All foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards including through:

1. Celebrations and parties. EPIC will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents.
3. Rewards and incentives. 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 in Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus\* during the school day\*. EPIC will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas.

## **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. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff and teachers, students, and the community.

EPIC will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs.

## **Nutrition Education**

EPIC aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating for students and the FIELD community. Schools will 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;
- Include enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, and participatory activities;
- 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);
- Include nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

## **Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools**

EPIC is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. EPIC strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health, and physical activity. These efforts will be weakened if students are subjected to advertising on EPIC property that contains messages inconsistent with the health information the EPIC is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. It is the intent of the EPIC to protect and promote student's health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus, consistent with EPIC's wellness policy.

#### IV. Physical Activity

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to physical activity breaks, or physical education) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason.

To the extent practicable, EPIC will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and EPIC will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

##### **Physical Education**

EPIC will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. EPIC will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

**Outdoor recess** will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play.

In the event that the school or EPIC must conduct **indoor recess**, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable. *Each school will maintain and enforce its own indoor recess guidelines.*

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.

#### V. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

EPIC will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, other food and beverage venues, and physical activity facilities. EPIC will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition, and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development, All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy. All school-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity opportunities.

## **Glossary:**

**Extended School Day** - time during before and after school activities that includes clubs, intramural sports, band and choir practice, drama rehearsals, etc.

**School Campus** - areas that are owned or leased by the school and used at any time for school-related activities such as the school building or on the school campus, including on the outside of the school building, school buses or other vehicles used to transport students, athletic fields, and stadiums (e.g. on scoreboards, coolers, cups, and water bottles), or parking lots.

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

**Triennial** – recurring every three years.

## **Nondiscrimination Statement**

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(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;  
(2) fax: 202-690-7442; or  
(3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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