



## VOA EDUCATION CENTER WELLNESS POLICY

### I. **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to develop healthy learners through a school environment that promotes and protects students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

### II. **GENERAL STATEMENTS OF POLICY**

- a. VOA education center recognizes that nutrition education and physical education are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters student attendance and education
- b. The school will involve students, parents, teachers, food service staff and community partners and industry experts in implementing, monitoring and reviewing our school Wellness Policy and Guidelines
- c. The school environment will promote and protect students' health, wellbeing and ability to learn by providing opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity
- d. All students in grades 10-12 will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis
- e. All students will have access to a variety of affordable, nutritious and appealing foods that meet their health and nutrition needs
- f. All foods and beverages made available in vending machines will meet and strive to exceed USDA Dietary Guidelines where appropriate
- g. The religious, ethnic and cultural diversity and food allergies of the student body will be respected in meal planning, nutrition education and physical activity; and school sites will provide clean, safe and pleasant settings with adequate time for students to eat
- h. All schools in the district will fully participate in the federal school meal programs to the maximum extent practicable

### III. **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The administration of VOA education center shall execute administrative procedures that ensure the implementation of and compliance with the Wellness Policy and Guidelines. These procedures shall include adoption of guidelines, designation of district level and site-based staff responsible for policy implementation and the development of a work plan, timeline and evaluation indicators. An annual report will be made to ensure compliance with the policy and guidelines.

#### **IV. COMMUNICATIONS**

The school will develop and implement a communications plan which includes communication to families to ensure understanding of the rationale for the wellness policy and needs and actions of the wellness policy.

#### **Wellness Policy Implementation GUIDELINES**

##### **A. Foods and Beverages in Schools**

###### **1. School Meals**

a. The school will provide healthy and safe school meal programs that comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations.

b. The Food Services Department will aim to be self-supporting; however, budget neutrality or profit generation will not take precedence over the nutritional needs of students.

c. The school will accommodate the changing special nutrition needs of students; and will accommodate the cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity of our community.

d. Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables
- Serve only low fat (1%) and fat free milk except when whole or 2% milk is recommended for students with special nutritional needs; offer lactose reduced milk when requested by students and/or parent/guardian;
- Work towards ensuring that at least half of served grains are whole grain;
- Continue to exclude deep fried foods and strive to replace higher fat main entrée items with lower fat items as appropriate;
- Continue to replace menu items that contain trans fats with foods that do not contain trans fats.
- Be served in portion sizes that meet National School Lunch Program and Breakfast program requirements.
- Meet current USDA nutrition requirements.

###### **2. Food Safety**

a. All foods sold or served to students will be prepared in health inspected facilities under the guidance of food safety certified staff.

b. The school will provide student access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before students eat any meals.

### 3. Scheduling of Meals

a. VOA education center will make every effort to provide sufficient time for all students to eat in the school cafeteria and will schedule meal periods at appropriate times during the school day.

This includes:

- Providing students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 15 minutes to eat after sitting down for lunch; and
- Arranging for accommodations for students who need more time to finish their lunch; and
- Scheduling meal periods at appropriate times i.e. breakfast should be served at 8:00 AM and lunch should be served at 12:00 PM

### 4. Food and Behavior

a. VOA education center will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior (unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan, behavior intervention plan, or a 504 Individual Accommodation Plan).

b. VOA education center will not withhold foods or beverages as punishment.

### 5. Fundraising

a. Fundraising efforts will be supportive of healthy eating by emphasizing the sale of healthy food items or of non-food items.

b. Fundraising activities which involve the sale of food will take place outside the school day (school day is defined as ½ hour before school starts until after the school bell rings at the end of the school day).

c. Students and staff will be prohibited from personal fundraising efforts that include the sale of foods or beverages on campus.

### 6. Celebrations

a. Classroom celebrations should encourage healthy choices and portion control.

b. Administration at VOA education center will encourage healthy choices when addressing student celebrations and food in the classrooms.

### 7. Portion Sizes

a. Except in cases where the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program require a larger serving size to meet meal pattern requirements, portion sizes of the following items will be limited to:

- One and one quarter ounces for baked chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, and dried fruit;
- One ounce for cookies;
- Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, and other bakery items;
- Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, lowfat or fat free ice cream;
- Eight ounces for non frozen yogurt;
- Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, except 16 fluid ounces for milk; Unlimited for water
- Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion size limits.

## 12. Food Marketing

a. School based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals sold outside of the reimbursable meals menu.

b. School based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruit, vegetables, whole grains, and low fat dairy products is encouraged.

## B. Nutrition Education

VOA education center will provide nutrition education as a part of a holistic, sequential, age appropriate, comprehensive program designed to provide students and their families with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health for a lifetime.

a. Develop and deliver a sequential, interdisciplinary comprehensive 10-12 health education program that will be included as part of a 10-12 comprehensive curriculum delivered by a Health Educator.

b. Be offered as a part of an early and consistent program that is integrated throughout the school day and after school programs;

c. Be culturally relevant and teach students about cross-cultural nutrition;

d. Be reviewed annually by school administration and school health education instructors.

## C. Physical Activity

### 1. Physical Activity

a. VOA education center will provide students physical education courses.

b. The district will maintain graduation requirements of two credits of both Health and Physical Education in high school.

c. Students are encouraged to participate in physical activity through ALC courses after school and during the weekends.

d. Physical education courses will provide an opportunity for students to learn, practice and be assessed on developmentally appropriate motor skills, social skills and knowledge.

e. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

### 2. Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

For students to receive the recommended amount of physical activity throughout the day (i.e. at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond PE (Physical Education) education class. Toward that end:

a. Classroom health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities such as watching television;

b. Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons (such as science, math and social studies), where appropriate; and

c. VOA education center will discourage extended periods (i.e. periods of two or more hours) of inactivity.

### 4. Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

a. VOA education center will provide every student with opportunities to voluntarily participate in ALC physical activities that meets his or her needs interests and abilities.

b. VOA education center shall offer interscholastic athletic programs through Minneapolis Public Schools that shall adhere to the rules and regulations of the Minnesota State High School League.

## 5. Physical Activity and Punishment

Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (i.e. running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (i.e. recess, physical education) as punishment.

## D. Staff Wellness

School staff serve as role models for students and are the key to successful implementation of student wellness programs. Therefore, the district and schools should offer staff wellness programs as well as general wellness resources and opportunities. This may include workshops and presentations on health promotion, stress management, education and resources that will enhance morale, encourage healthy lifestyles, prevent injury, reduce chronic diseases, and foster exceptional role modeling.

## E. Communication with Families and the Community

1. VOA education center recognizes that parents and guardians have a primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and well-being.
2. VOA education center will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
3. Minneapolis Public Schools and VOA education center will provide information to families, community based organizations and the general public about ways to promote healthy lifestyles.

## F. Implementation and Monitoring

1. VOA education center administration shall execute administrative procedures that ensure the implementation of and compliance with the wellness policy.
2. A Wellness Committee shall be formed to plan, implement and improve the school's nutrition and physical activity environment.