

**THE ACCELERATED SCHOOLS (TAS)  
WELLNESS POLICY**

**History of The Wellness Policy at The Accelerated Schools**

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 mandated that school districts participating in any federally reimbursed school meal programs develop a local school wellness policy by the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year. School districts were required to establish nutritional guidelines for all foods available on the school campus; assure that federally reimbursable school meals meet minimum USDA standards; and establish goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities.

The Accelerated Schools Wellness Policy was created year to help prepare students for classroom learning and to make lifelong healthy habits a part of their education. In order to ensure that the Wellness Policy reflected the needs of the TAS community, the Wellness Team surveyed students, parents, teachers and staff for their input. Status of the current Wellness Policy at The Accelerated Schools

A process to review and revise the Wellness Policy was started in August 2017. A series of meetings open to parents, staff, and administrators were held to go over the policy and suggest changes to improve it. The revised policy will be approved by the TAS Board. Until that time the original Wellness Policy is still in effect. The Wellness Policy is available on the TAS website. Hard copies are available and/or may be requested in the Main Office.

**NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

Substantial research demonstrates a clear connection between nutrition, physical activity and learning. At TAS (The Accelerated Schools) we acknowledge that healthy, well-nourished children are more prepared to learn, more likely to attend school, and able to take advantage of educational opportunities.

Of those TAS students, parents, teachers and staff surveyed:

- 74% agree that it is important to build a healthy school environment in order to introduce and reinforce for students' healthy habits that will last a lifetime;
- 53% of the surveyed community agree that it is important for staff and parents to set a positive example for students through the foods they choose;
- 49% define "healthy" foods as those served in moderate portion sizes, 75% as those low in sugar, 70% as low fat and no packaged "junk" foods;
- 31% believe that TAS should sell only "healthy" foods on campus.

We also recognize that physical activity can also have a positive impact on student achievement. Schools that offer intense physical activity programs see positive effects on academic achievement, including increased concentration, improved mathematics, reading and writing test scores, and reduced disruptive behavior, even when physical education reduces the amount of time spent on academics.

TAS is committed to establishing policies and programs that encourage our students to develop and sustain healthy eating and physical activity habits. As such, we have adopted the following Wellness Policy to help students attain full academic potential and optimal health by providing the skills, social support and environmental reinforcement necessary to adopt lifelong, healthy eating and physical

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activity habits. This policy was developed by TAS teachers and staff, based on the feedback of student, parent, teacher and staff surveys and discussion groups.

This policy was originally implemented in the 2006-2007 school year and updated to reflect the USDA Final Rule in September 2016. During the school year, when the policy is not adhered to, the individual or group, not in compliance will be reminded of the policy and the precise guideline(s) they are not in compliance with by either the School Wellness Committee and School Administrators.

**General Wellness**

- A. Nutritious and appealing foods, such as fresh fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy foods and whole grain products, shall be available wherever and whenever food is offered at school.
- B. Food items are not to be used as a reward or punishment, and using or withholding physical activity is not to be used as a disciplinary tool.
- C. TAS will not sign exclusive contracts with soft drink, fast food, or snack food companies for distribution or marketing of their products on campus.
- D. TAS will maintain a full service kitchen to allow preparation of foods from fresh ingredients as much as possible.
- E. TAS will make every effort to schedule free play before meal times when possible, so that students will not rush their eating or skip a meal altogether in order to have more time at free play.
- F. Moderate portion sizes will be encouraged whenever food is sold or offered at school, and are defined as:
  - a. 1¼ oz for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit or jerky (about the size of ½ baseball)
  - b. 1 oz for cookies (about the size of four dice put together, or a 9V rectangular battery)
  - c. 2 oz for cereal and granola bars, muffins, bagels, and other bakery items (about the size of a baseball)
  - d. 4 fluid oz for frozen desserts (about the size of ½ a small yogurt container)
  - e. 8 oz for non-frozen yogurt (about the size of a small yogurt container)
  - f. 12 fluid oz for beverages, excluding water
  - g. portion size for other dishes shall be comparable to those offered as part of the school lunch program
  - h. fresh fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits.
- G. Beverages and snacks with the following additives will not be sold:
  - a. Monosodium glutamate
  - b. Sodium bisulfite/sodium metabisulfite/sulfiting agents

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- c. Sodium nitrate
  - d. Tropical oils (such as palm, palm kernel, and coconut oils)
  - e. Added animal fats
- H. TAS will remain committed to staff and parent health by encouraging and promoting staff and parent wellness through educational workshops, opportunities for physical activity and other resources to support lifelong, healthy eating and physical activity habits.
- I. TAS will follow federal requirements for competitive foods and beverages sold on campus.

**1) Wellness Committee**

The Wellness Committee has been formed to ensure the creation and maintenance of a school environment which supports healthy lifestyle choices. It is comprised of parents, teachers, and staff, including the School Health Coordinator. The Wellness Committee will:

- A. Make the Wellness Policy and all amendments available to school community.
- B. Work to implement requests of the surveyed community around health resources.
- C. Compile materials, resources and training to teachers to assist them in incorporating health education into a variety of subjects across grade levels.
- D. Support Nutrition Services in carrying out their responsibilities as listed below.
- E. Encourage parents to provide healthy food options at home through newsletters, articles, workshops and other means of education.
- F. Maintain the Wellness Committee collaboration with the TAS community in order to continually improve the school environment and support of health lifestyle choices.
- G. Serve as a resource to the school community on wellness matters.
- H. Evaluate TAS policies and programs to gauge their effectiveness and ensure that they are responding to the needs of the community.

**2) School Food and Nutrition Services**

- A. All foods and beverages sold or served will meet, at minimum, the standards set by the State of California or the National School Lunch Program guidelines.
- B. Students will be limited to 1 serving of menu and a la carte items.
- C. Will offer at least 2 choices of fresh fruits and/or vegetables as a part of meals and/or snacks.

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- D. Will provide serving information about the meals being provided to students, parents and teachers on monthly food menus.
- E. Will create a system to engage students, parents and teachers, through means such as taste-tests and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs to identify food choices that are new, healthful and appealing to the school community.

**3) Special Events and Festivals**

TAS supports special classroom events such as birthday and other celebratory parties. Teachers and parents are urged, however, to keep portions moderate and teach students that treats are appropriate in reasonable amounts for special occasions, and not appropriate for everyday.

- A. Parties where high fat/high sugar foods are served will be limited and must obtain teacher approval with prior approval of at least 48-72 hours. Parents may send a treat to be served during such a party.
- B. Additional parties may be held to celebrate a birthday or other occasion on the day of, however food served at these celebrations should have a healthy choice option. (e.g. fresh fruit, vegetables, etc.)
- C. Food is an important part of learning about and enjoying our cultural heritage. Therefore, we encourage parents and teachers to share healthy cultural foods during festivals. Again, portion sizes are encouraged to meet the guidelines for moderation (see **General Wellness**, Section F).

**4) Fundraising**

- A. Classrooms, clubs and special projects are encouraged to raise funds through means other than food sales, such as car washes, flea markets, gift wrapping, photographs, student designed cookbooks, and specialty school supplies.
- B. In order to ensure compliance with state standards, all fundraisers involving food and beverage sales must be pre-approved by school administrators through a proposal process.

**6) Food and Beverages Brought from Home**

- A. To ensure that all students maintain good health, TAS encourages parents to read the labels on the food that they buy. We highly encourage parents/guardians to send food to school that is:
  - a. low in fat – less than 3 grams of fat per serving
  - b. high in fiber – at least 2 grams of fiber per serving; made with whole grain or whole wheat flour as opposed to white, refined or bleached flour
  - c. low in sugar – sugar is not listed as one of the first two ingredients (also listed as high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, and sucrose)
  - d. low in sodium – no more than 230 mg per serving.
  - e. good source of vitamins or minerals – at least 10% RDA of calcium, iron, vitamin C or A

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- f. 100% fruit juice or water rather than soda, fruit flavored drinks, or “performance” beverages that are high in sugar.
  
- B. Students may not bring the following items from home:
  - a. Gum
  - b. Seeds in shells
  - c. Candy
  - d. Chips
  
- C. Prohibited food and drinks listed above may be taken away from students by any faculty or staff, without being returned.

**7) Physical Education**

- A. All students in grades TK-12 will receive daily physical education per CDE guidelines for the entire school year by qualified staff.
- B. Students will spend at least 50% of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**8) Health Education**

- A. Teaching staff will help students adopt healthy eating behaviors and give students the knowledge and skills they need to be "health literate":
  - a. students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention
  - b. students will be able to access valid health information and health-promoting products and services
  - c. students will be able to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks
  - d. students will analyze the influence of culture, media, technology, and other factors on health
  - e. students will be able to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health
  - f. students will be able to use goal-setting and decision-making skills to enhance health
  - g. students will be able to advocate for personal, family, and community health.
  - h. students will be able to learn about personal hygiene.
  
- B. For young children, nutrition education will focus on concrete experiences (e.g., increasing exposure to many healthy foods, and skills in choosing healthy foods.)
  
- C. Reproductive health education will be taught according to the California Healthy Youth Act (enacted January 1, 2016, link: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/se/index.asp>) in 5th, 7th, and 9th grade.
  
- D. An educational workshop will be offered for parents to inform them of topics to be covered offer strategies for speaking with their children about the various topics.