

Mesa Arts Academy Local Wellness Policy

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The Mesa Arts Academy aims to provide a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and appropriate physical activity. The Academy recognizes that children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive. We also know that good health fosters increased student attendance and involvement in education. We recognize that many of our students may be at-risk for a number of diseases later in life because of unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity. We also believe that education and modeling are the best methods of changing behavior and recognize the importance of involving all stakeholders, including community partners, in this process.

I. Wellness Policy Goals

Goal for Nutrition Promotion: MAA will promote fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices (i.e. posters/displays)

Goal for Nutrition Education: We will provide nutrition education and physical education that fosters lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education, school meal programs, and available community physical fitness programs.

Goal for Physical Activity: All students in grades K-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

Goal for Other School-Based Activities that Promote Student Wellness: The Academy is aware that the movement toward a "Healthy Campus" will require on-going education and changes in procedures and practices over time. Parents, teachers, and community partners will be encouraged to look for affordable, healthy alternatives at events that currently include non-acceptable food or beverage items and to incorporate physical activities into planned events.

II. Nutrition Standards

School Meals

Mesa Arts Academy meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood 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.

- a. All schools in the district will participate in the National School Lunch Program.
- b. All meals will, at a minimum, meet the New Meal Pattern requirements.
- c. Free, potable water will be available to all students during meal periods.
- d. Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:
 - I. be accessible to all students;
 - II. be appealing and attractive to children;

- III. *be served in clean and pleasant settings;*
- IV. *offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;*
- V. *serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain;*
- VI. *Students will be given a minimum of 10 minutes to eat breakfast and 20 minutes to eat lunch;*
- VII. *Students with special dietary needs will be accommodated as directed by appropriate medical professional guidance, within reason;*
- VIII. *Meals will be served at reasonable and appropriate times of the day;*
- IX. *Lunch will follow recess to better support learning and healthy eating*
- X. *Students will have access to hand washing or sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks*
- XI. *Staff will take steps to accommodate tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).*
- XII. *Not permit students to share their food or beverages with one another during meal or snack times.*

Competitive Foods and Beverages

Food and beverages served outside the school meal programs will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at minimum, or not be provided at all.

Celebrations and Rewards

Arizona Law (ARS 15-242) states that all food and beverages served to students in grades K-8 must meet the USDA's Smart Snacks in Schools guidelines.

- e. *Academy staff will be discouraged from using foods or beverages that do not meet acceptable nutrition standards as rewards for academic performance or good behavior.*
- f. *There are a few traditional events in place that allow non smart snacks ("Caught-Ya" ice cream parties, popsicles at "Field Days," "Party Boat" for junior high students, "Dr. Seuss's Birthday Party" at MCC, etc.).*
- g. *Teachers, parents, and community partners will be encouraged to look for affordable, healthy alternatives to including non-acceptable food and beverages in these events.*
- h. *Academy staff will encourage providing 1% milk or water at family events instead of sugary drinks, fruit parfaits or smoothies in place of ice cream, and frozen juice in place of popsicles.*
- i. *If an after-school event traditionally features a banned food item, a healthy alternative will also be offered to families.*
- j. *The Academy will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.*
- k. *Classroom celebrations that feature food will not be offered in competition with scheduled lunches unless they meet the required guidelines for nutritional components and portion size.*

Academy staff will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

- l. *These guidelines apply to (check all that apply):*
 - School-sponsored events
 - Celebrations and parties
 - Classroom snacks provided by parents

☒ Classroom rewards and Incentives

Fundraising

- m. To support children's health, Academy fundraising activities during regular school hours will only offer foods that meet acceptable standards for foods and beverages sold individually on elementary school campuses.
- n. Healthy food, non-food items, and physical activity based school fundraising activities will be encouraged
- o. Non-exempt fundraisers that promote health and wellness will be allowed with approval;
- p. At this time, after-school fundraising activities may include donated food items that do not meet acceptable food standards; however, parents will be provided with a list of "acceptable food items" with every request for donations and teachers will be requested to promote healthy donations.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

The Mesa Arts Academy aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students and will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- q. *is offered at each grade level designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;*
- r. *is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;*
- s. *includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;*
- t. *promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;*
- u. *emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);*
- v. *links with school meal programs and nutrition-related community services;*
- w. *Vending machines, a la carte items, concession stands, etc. are not used on campus*

Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

- All students in grades K-8th, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive a minimum of 60-89 minutes a week of structured physical education.
- Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- In addition, students in kindergarten through 8th grades will participate in a minimum of 35 minutes per week of structured dance classes that allow for moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- All Students have an opportunity to participate in before and after school physical activity (ex: colorguard, cheer, after school club)
- Teachers provide short (3-5 minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time at least 3 days per week.
- Health education is a component of physical education classes.

Daily Recess.

- All students will have at least two 20 minute of supervised recess per day, preferably outdoors, during which the school will encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

Other Activities.

- Health promotion will be distributed throughout the school year to encourage family engagement (monthly newsletters, end of the year summer activity list)

III. School Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership

Mesa Arts Academy will convene a representative wellness committee that meets to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation and periodic review and update of this district-level wellness policy.

- a. A representative wellness council will be convened at least two (2) times per year.
- b. Representation will include the following:
 - a. Teachers
 - b. Parents/Caregivers
 - c. School Nutrition staff
 - d. PE instructional staff
 - e. Administration
 - f. Community partners, when feasible
- c. *The public will be notified of its ability to participate in the LWP process*
- d. *The designated MAA leadership will convene and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and ensure compliance*

Leadership

Mesa Arts Academy has designated one or more LEA and/or school official(s) who have the authority and responsibility to ensure each school complies with the local wellness policy.

- e. *The designated official for oversight of implementation at each school is: Miranda Koperno; Principal; Miranda.koperno@bgcaz.org*
- f. *The designated official for convening the wellness committee is: Arcelia Tovar; Resource Specialist; arcelia.tovar@bgcaz.org*
- g. *The person designated for informing the public about the wellness policy is: Arcelia Tovar; Assistant Principal; arcelia.tovar@bgcaz.org*
- h. *The person designated for sub committee leader is: Lisa Kush, EL Director; lisa.kush@bgcaz.org*

IV. Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement

Implementation of the Wellness Policy

- a. ADE's assessment tool will be used to complete a policy review prior to the development of an implementation plan.
- b. The plan will outline specific steps for execution of the wellness policy, including roles, responsibilities, actions, and timelines.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, Mesa Arts Academy will conduct an assessment of their wellness policy. To accomplish this, MAA will evaluate compliance with their wellness policy and assess progress toward meeting the goals of the Wellness policy. Additionally, USDA requires that MAA compare their policy to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's model wellness policy.

- c. Mesa Arts Academy will assess compliance and progress of their local wellness policy at least once every 3 years.
 - i. A Triennial assessment will assess the following
 - Site-specific compliance
 - The extent to which the policy compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's model policy
 - A description of the progress made in attaining specific goals
 - ii. The Administrator or designee will ensure compliance with established school-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.
 - iii. The person responsible for this assessment is: *Arcelia Tovar; Resource Specialist; arcelia.tovar@bgcaz.org*
- d. Mesa Arts Academy will assess how their wellness policy compares to model wellness policies provided by ADE.
 - i. The person responsible for this assessment is: *Arcelia Tovar; Resource Specialist; arcelia.tovar@bgcaz.org*

Revisions and Updating the Policy

Mesa Arts Academy will update or modify the wellness policy as appropriate.

- i. Updates and modifications of the policy, based on assessment tools, will be made at least once a year and as-needed.

Notification of Wellness Policy, Policy Updates and Triennial Assessment

Mesa Arts Academy will inform families and the public each year of any updates to the wellness policy and every three years their compliance with the written wellness policy.

- e. Families and the public will be informed of the policy, its contents, updates, and implementation status on an annual basis through the school's website and parent handbook
 - i. Additional communication platforms include email, announcements on monthly menus, bulletin board notices, social media, and printed information sent home with students

- f. Mesa Arts Academy will make the Triennial Assessment available at:
<https://www.mesaartsacademy.org/>