

La Paloma Academy Local Wellness Policy

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To be adopted by the La Paloma Academy School Board July 8th, 2025

Wellness Policy Goals

La Paloma Academy is committed to providing a school environment that enhances learning and development of lifelong academic, health and wellness practices.

To accomplish these goals:

- Child Nutrition Programs will comply with federal, state, and local requirements.
- Child Nutrition Programs are accessible to all children.
- Sequential and interdisciplinary nutrition education is provided and promoted.
- Patterns of meaningful physical activity connect to students' lives outside of physical education.
- All school-based activities are consistent with local wellness policy goals.
- All foods and beverages made available to the entire student body during the school day are consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- All Foods made available to the entire student body adhere to food safety and security guidelines.
- The school environment is safe, comfortable, pleasing, and allows ample time and space for eating meals. Food and/or physical activity is not used as a reward or punishment.
- Administrators, parents, teachers, students, and our school nutrition personnel participated in the creation of this wellness policy.
- The wellness policy will be implemented, monitored, held to accountability, and will have community engagement.

I.

Goals for Nutrition Promotion:

The wellness policy emphasizes the importance of fostering a comprehensive approach to student health. By creating an inclusive environment that prioritizes both physical and emotional well-being, schools can ensure students are equipped to excel academically and socially. Collaboration among stakeholders drives the implementation of various health initiatives, ensuring continuous improvement and adaptation to emerging needs.

Goals for Nutrition Education:

The wellness policy also sets forth practical strategies for engaging the broader school community in promoting health-conscious behaviors. Through educational campaigns, interactive workshops, and access to resources, parents and families will be encouraged to reinforce healthy practices at home. Moreover, school cafeterias will host regular taste-testing events to introduce students to nutritious and culturally diverse food options, fostering an early appreciation for balanced diets.

Goals for Physical Activity:

The wellness policy underscores the role of physical activity in fostering not only students' physical health but also their cognitive and emotional well-being. Schools will provide opportunities for physical activity that cater to diverse needs and abilities, ensuring inclusivity and active participation. Programs like daily recess for elementary students, sports clubs, and structured physical education classes will aim to instill lifelong habits of movement and well-being. School administration will also encourage teachers to integrate short physical activity breaks into the classroom environment to promote focus and energy.

Goals for Other School-Based Activities that Promote Student Wellness:

Beyond nutrition and physical activity, the wellness policy highlights the significance of creating a school culture that supports overall well-being. Initiatives such as mindfulness workshops, health-themed school events, and partnerships with local health organizations will be launched to engage students and their families. Schools will also provide professional development for staff to recognize and address student health concerns, fostering a supportive environment for all learners.

II. Nutrition Education and Promotion Standards

School Meals

The goal of La Paloma Academy is to influence students' eating behaviors by providing nutrition education that is appropriate for students' ages; reflects students' cultures; is integrated into health education or core curricula; and provides opportunities for students to practice skills and have fun. The school 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.

- Nutrition education will be integrated into other areas of the curriculum such as math, science, language arts, and social studies.
- Professional development activities will provide basic knowledge of nutrition, combined with skill practice in program-specific activities and instructional techniques and strategies designed to promote healthy eating habits.
- Teachers will instruct students about planning healthy meals, understanding, and using food labels.
- The school cafeteria serves as a "learning laboratory" to allow students to apply critical thinking skills taught in the classroom.
- Nutrition education will involve sharing information with family and the broader community through our weekly school newsletter.
- La Paloma Academy will provide nutrition information to families to encourage them to instruct their children about health and nutrition.
- Students will be encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast.
- Teachers will promote healthy snack choices within their classrooms.

- All schools in the district will participate in the National School Lunch Program and any other nutrition programs available to help provide healthy meals and snacks for students.
- All meals and snacks provided will meet, at minimum, the New Meal Pattern Requirements.
- Free, potable water will be available to all students during meal periods.
- Additional standards include:
 - I. *Employing the OVS Meal Pattern Operation (to the largest extent possible) whenever available to increase student meal consumption and reduce food waste.*
 - II. *Work diligently with local / national manufacturers and distributors to obtain consumable and nutritious foods that are free from harmful and/or prohibited dyes and additives.*
 - III. *Handwashing facilities will be available for all students prior to and after meal service periods.*

III. **Competitive Foods and Beverages**

Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods on Campus

- All foods made available on campus during the school day will comply with the current Arizona Nutrition Standards and The United States Department of Agriculture:
 - Vending machines
 - Beverage contracts
 - Middle School Smart Snack / A la Carte foods
- Food providers will take every measure to ensure that student access to foods and beverages meets federal, state, and local laws and guidelines. Food providers will offer a variety of age-appropriate healthy food and beverage selections for elementary schools.
- Nutrition information for products sold at the snack bar, a la cart, vending and school stores is readily available.
- Families, teachers, students, and school officials are engaged in choosing the competitive food selections for their local schools.
- Class or snacks feature healthy choices.
- Nutrition standards for competitive foods and beverages must, at a minimum, meet the USDA's Smart Snacks in Schools guidelines. *These guidelines apply to all foods sold in the following locations.*
 - a. *Vending Machines*
 - b. *Snack Bar Carts (middle school only)*
 - c. *Beverage Contracts*
 - d. *School Stores*

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.

- a. *La Paloma Academy has set standards for all foods and beverages **served** or provided, but not sold, to students during the school day:*
 - *All food items served to students by any La Paloma Academy Staff will meet USDA Nutrition Standards*
- b. *These guidelines apply to (check all that apply):*
 - ☒ School-sponsored events

- ☒ Celebrations and parties
- ☐ Classroom snacks provided by parents
- ☒ Classroom rewards and Incentives

Fundraising

- a. *La Paloma Academy adopts the following guidelines regarding policies on food and beverage related fundraisers **sold** to students on school campus during the school day, including the frequency and duration of exempt fundraisers as appropriate:*
 - *Exemptions and exceptions for fundraisers involving the sale of food/beverage items to students during the school day, (30 minutes prior to the first bell through out the school day until the 30 minutes after the last bell) will be made only with the understood intention that the food/beverage items being sold, are not intended to be consumed by students during the school day.*
 - *Such fundraisers must occur infrequently (1-3 times per school year) and have a duration of no longer than 1-2 weeks to qualify for exemption or exception.*

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing often includes oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller, or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product. All products marketed on the school campus must, at a minimum, meet the Smart Snacks guidelines.

- a. *Food and beverage marketing in La Paloma Academy schools will be limited to any foods and beverages sold to students. Only foods / beverages that meet USDA Nutrition Standards and Smart Snack / Competitive Foods Guidelines will qualify for any type of food and beverage marketing.*

III. School Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership

La Paloma Academy will convene a representative district 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 primary goal will be to engage family members, students, and representatives of the school food authority, the Governing Board, school administrators, and the public in development and regular review of this school policy.

- a. *The Local Wellness Policy Committee aims to meet four times annually.*
- b. *La Paloma Academy will post electronic announcements through school communication platforms to notify families and community members when / where / how committee meetings will take place.*

Leadership

La Paloma 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.

- a. *The official designated for oversight of implementation at each school is: The principal at each school and the food service director.*
- b. *The designated official for convening the wellness committee is: The food service director.*
- c. *The person designated for informing the public about the wellness policy is: The principal of each school.*

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

Implementation of the Wellness Policy / Child Nutrition Operations

- The child nutrition program will aim to be financially self-supporting.
 - The child nutrition program will ensure that all students have affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to stay healthy and learn well.
 - The school will strive to increase participation in the available federal Child Nutrition programs.
 - The food service director is properly qualified, certified and/or credentialed according to current professional standards.
 - All food service personnel have adequate pre-service training in food service operations.
 - Students are encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast and will be provided with ample time to consume breakfast / lunch when there are upsets to individual student schedules.
- a. *La Paloma Academy, with the use of communication, outreach and collaboration of designated officials and committee members will assess, update, and revise the adopted Local Wellness Policy as district procedures, adjustments and/or state guidelines & policies may require.*
- a. *Designated officials will monitor the procedures of on-campus activities, meal services and after school programs. Any updates or notable instances will be reported to designated officials to maintain compliance with the policy guidelines.*
 - b. *Committee members will meet regularly throughout the school year to discuss current procedures, assess success and outcomes as well as create new policy goals to align with state and federal standards.*

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, the LEA must assess their wellness policy. To accomplish this, La Paloma Academy will evaluate compliance with their wellness policy and assess progress toward meeting the goals of the District Wellness Policy. Additionally, USDA requires that the district will compare their policy to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's model wellness policy.

- a. *La Paloma Academy will assess the compliance and progress of their local wellness policy at least once every 3 years.*
- i. *La Paloma Academy will assess the progress made in attaining the goals of the district's wellness policy as follows:*
 - *La Paloma Academy will assess the current written wellness policy, gather information, feedback, and updates from designated officials and committee members.*
 - *La Paloma Academy will compile all the information gathered and decide what changes, if any, are required to be made to the current written policy.*
 - *La Paloma Academy will compare the current written policy to model wellness policies.*

- *La Paloma Academy will inform families and the public annually of any updates to the current written policy and release the triennial assessment and update of the current written policy.*

Revisions and Updating the Policy

La Paloma Academy will update or modify the wellness policy as appropriate.

- a. *La Paloma Academy will update / assess the adopted Local Wellness Policy every 3 years or as seen appropriate contingent upon results / assessments of quarterly wellness policy meetings.*

Notification of Wellness Policy, Policy Updates and Triennial Assessment

La Paloma Academy will inform families and the public each year of any updates to the wellness policy and every three years per their compliance with the written wellness policy regulations set forth by ADE and USDA.

- a. *The adopted Local Wellness Policy and triennial assessment will be made available on each school website, and a hard copy will be made available for viewing in the front office of each school.*

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