

The Watson Institute Education Center Programs Wellness Policy

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The Watson Institute Education Center Programs Wellness Policy

Preamble

The Watson Institute Education Center Programs (hereto referred to as Education Center Programs) is committed to the optimal development of every student. The Education Center Programs 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.^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7} Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.^{8,9,10} 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.^{11,12,13,14} Finally, there is evidence that adequate hydration is associated with better cognitive performance.^{15,16,17}

This policy outlines the Education Center Programs' 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 the Education Center Programs have access to healthy foods throughout the school day – both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus – in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have several opportunities to be physically active during school;
- Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The “home community” is engaged in supporting the work of the Education Center Programs in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- The Education Center Programs 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 the Education Center Programs. Specific measurable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.

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- *The Education Center Programs will coordinate the wellness policy with other aspects of school management, including the Education Center Programs' School Improvement Plan, when appropriate.*

I. School Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership

The Education Center Programs will convene a representative Education Center Programs wellness committee (hereto referred to as the ECWC or work within an existing school health committee) that meets at least four times 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 Education Center Programs wellness policy (heretofore referred as "wellness policy").

The ECWC membership will represent all school levels (k-12) and include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; students; representatives of the school nutrition program (e.g., school nutrition director); physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals and social services staff [e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists]; school administrators (e.g., Program Director, Program Supervisors, Team Coordinators). When possible, membership will also include Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education coordinators (SNAP-EDEDSNAP-Ed). To the extent possible, the ECWC will include representatives from each school building and reflect the diversity of the community.

Leadership

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

The designated official for oversight is:

Michele Trettel, Program Director

The Watson Institute – Education Center South

230 Hickory Grade Rd, Bridgeville, PA 15017

Phone: 412-914-8758

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The name(s), title(s), and contact information (email address is sufficient) of this/these individual(s) is(are):

Name	Title / Relationship to the School or Education Center Programs	Email address	Role on Committee
Connie George	School Nutrition Program Representative	ConnieG@ thewatsoninstitute.org	Assists in the evaluation of the wellness policy implementation
Susan Rosko	Lead School Nurse	SusanR@ thewatsoninstitute.org	Assists in development, implementation and evaluation of the wellness policy
Martin Dattilo	Physical Education Teacher	MartinD@ thewatsoninstitute.org	Assists in development, implementation and evaluation of the wellness policy
Lisa Kellick	Team Coordinator /Wellness Policy Coordinator	LisaK@ thewatsoninstitute.org	Oversees and assists in development, implementation and evaluation of the wellness policy
Lorie Baumgarner	School Nurse	LorieB@ thewatsoninstitute.org	Assists in development, implementation and evaluation of the wellness policy
Lisa McDermott	School Nurse	thewatsoninstitute.org	Assists in development, implementation and evaluation of the wellness policy
Ashleigh Sadler	Administrative Assistant	AshleighS@ thewatsoninstitute.org	Assists in development and the evaluation of the wellness policy
Michele Trettel	Program Supervisor	MicheleT@ thewatsoninstitute.org	Coordinate the development, implementation and evaluation of the wellness policy

Each school will designate a school wellness policy coordinator, who will ensure compliance with the policy. Refer to Appendix A for a list of school-level wellness policy coordinators.

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

Implementation Plan

The Education Center Programs 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. It is recommended that the school use the [Healthy Schools Program online tools](#) to complete a school-level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's School Health Index, create an action plan that fosters implementation and generate an annual progress report.

This wellness policy and the progress reports can be found at:

<https://www.thewatsoninstitute.org/locations/bridgeville-pa/>

<https://www.thewatsoninstitute.org/schools/the-education-center/>

Recordkeeping

The Education Center Programs will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at [Education Center Programs' Administrative Offices] and on Education Center Programs' central computer network. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating that the policy has been made available to the public;
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the Local Schools Wellness Policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the Education Center Programs uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the ECWC;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the local school wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the Local School Wellness Policy has been made available to the public.

Annual Notification of Policy

The Education Center Programs will actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, any updates to the policy and implementation status. The Education Center Programs will make this information available via the Education Center Programs website and/or Education Center Programs-wide communications. The Education Center Programs will provide as much information as possible about the school nutrition environment. This will include a summary of the Education Center Programs' events or

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activities related to wellness policy implementation. Annually, the Education Center Programs will also publicize the name and contact information of the Education Center Programs' staff leading and coordinating the committee, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the school wellness committee.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, the Education Center Programs 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 the Education Center Programs are in compliance with the wellness policy; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the Education Center Programs' wellness policy.

The position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is **Michele Trettel, Program Director Phone: 412-914-8758.**

The Education Center Programs will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The ECWC will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual School Health Index and triennial assessments and/or as Education Center Programs 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

The Education Center Programs is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. The Education Center Programs will actively communicate ways in which representatives of ECWC and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for that Education Center Programs. The Education Center Programs will also inform parents 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. The Education Center Programs will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the Education Center Programs' website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, 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. The Education Center Programs will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that the Education Center Programs and individual schools are communicating important school information with parents.

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The Education Center Programs will actively notify the public, parents and Education Center Staff members about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum. The Education Center Programs will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

III. Nutrition

School Meals

The Watson Institute is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and have zero grams trans-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meeting the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. 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 special dietary needs.

The Watson institute participates in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). We are committed to offering school meals through the NSLP, and any other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Are served in a clean and safe meal environment;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations. (The Watson Institute offers reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards.)
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices that offer the following Smarter Lunchroom techniques:
 - Daily fruit and vegetable options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students.
 - All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal.
 - Milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers
 - Alternative entrée options are posted on menus within all service and dining areas.
 - A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students
 - Students may be involved in menu selections through various means such as taste testing, sampling and surveys.
 - Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas
 - Menus will be sent home and posted on The Watson Institute website and posted in the classrooms
 - Menus will be created/reviewed by a Registered Dietitian or other certified nutrition professional. The Watson Institute child nutrition program will accommodate students with special dietary needs.
 - Students shall be provided adequate time to eat (30) minutes sit down time for lunch.
 - Students are served lunch at a reasonable and appropriate time of day in an adequate space for eating and serving school meals.
 - Participation in Federal child nutrition programs will be promoted among students and families to help ensure that families know what programs are available in their children's school as well as provide nutritional content on meals upon request

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- Messages about agriculture and nutrition are reinforced throughout the learning environment;
- School hosts field trips to local farms
- School utilizes promotions or special events, such as tastings, that highlight the local/regional products.
- Students who are “food resistant” will be provided samples of “new” foods to try at least one time per month.
- The School Cafeteria will promote events such as a week of outreach that focuses on food colors and lessons to be implemented by classroom staff.

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 including where school meals are served during mealtimes.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

The Watson Institute is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus support healthy eating. No foods or beverages are sold outside the reimbursable school meal programs e.g. a la carte or vending machines. Only bottled water is sold outside of the school meal programs in the school market.

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards. These standards will apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, à la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores and snack or food carts.

Celebrations and Rewards

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

The Education Center Programs will provide to staff and parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards. This information will also appear in the Parent Handbook.

If the offered competitive foods do not meet or exceed the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, the following standards shall apply:

Rewards and Incentives (including School Store):

The use of food and beverages as a reward or incentive will be individualized per student based upon interventions outlined in their IEPs.

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Classroom Parties and Celebrations:

Classroom parties/celebrations with food/beverages shall be limited to no more than one (1) per month in each classroom.

Classroom parties shall offer a minimal amount of foods (maximum 2-3 items) containing added sugar as the primary ingredient (e.g., cupcakes, cookies) and will provide the following:

- Fresh fruits/vegetables; and
- Water, 100 percent juice, 100 percent juice diluted with water, low-fat milk or nonfat milk.

Shared Classroom Snacks:

The Education Center programs will monitor the sharing of classroom snacks during meal and snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some student's diets. Shared snacks will be limited to single serving sizes.

Non-Sold Competitive Foods

Non-sold competitive foods available to students, which may include but are not limited to foods and beverages offered as rewards and incentives, at classroom parties and celebrations, or as shared classroom snacks, shall meet or exceed the standards established by the E

Fundraising

Foods and beverages will not be sold through fundraisers for consumption during the school day.

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, teachers, parents, students and the community.

The Education Center Programs will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur through at least:

- Implementing at least five or more evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using "smarter lunchroom techniques" <https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/smarter-lunchrooms/>; and
- Ensuring 100% of foods and beverages promoted to students meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Additional promotion techniques that the Education Center Programs and individual schools may use are available at <https://www.healthiergeneration.org/our-work/business-sector-engagement/improving-access-to-address-health-equity/smart-food-planner>

Nutrition Education

The Education Center Programs will teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. 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;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits and school gardens;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Links with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services;
- Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and
- Includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.
- Students will receive at least 3 periods of instruction on Nutrition, Healthy Eating and Hydration throughout the year during their Physical Education Class.

Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education

The Education Center Programs will include in the health education curriculum a minimum of 12 of the following essential topics on healthy eating:

- Relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention
- Food guidance from [MyPlate](#)
- Reading and using FDA's nutrition fact labels
- Eating a variety of foods every day
- Balancing food intake and physical activity
- Eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grain products
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain *trans* fat
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars
- Eating more calcium-rich foods
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices
- Accepting body size differences
- Food safety
- Importance of water consumption
- Importance of eating breakfast
- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants
- Eating disorders
- [The Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#)
- Reducing sodium intake
- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior
- How to develop a plan and track progress toward achieving a personal goal to eat healthfully
- Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior

- Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

The Education Center Programs are 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. The Education Center Programs strive 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 Education Center Programs property that contains messages inconsistent with the health information the Education Center Programs is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. It is the intent of the Education Center Programs 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 the Education Center Programs' wellness policy.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, such that only those foods that comply with or exceed those nutrition standards are permitted to be marketed or promoted to students.

Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing often includes an 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.¹⁵ This term includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Brand names, trademarks, logos or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or its container.
- Displays, such as on vending machine exteriors
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on school equipment, such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards or backboards (Note: immediate replacement of these items are not required; however, Education Center Programs will replace or update scoreboards or other durable equipment when existing contracts are up for renewal or to the extent that is in financially possible over time so that items are in compliance with the marketing policy.)
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on cups used for beverage dispensing, menu boards, coolers, trash cans and other food service equipment; as well as on posters, book covers, pupil assignment books or school supplies displayed, distributed, offered or sold by the Education Center Programs.
- Advertisements in school publications or school mailings.
- Free product samples, taste tests or coupons of a product, or free samples displaying advertising of a product.

As the Education Center Programs/school nutrition services reviews existing contracts and considers new contracts, equipment and product purchasing (and replacement) decisions should

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reflect the applicable marketing guidelines established by the Education Center Programs wellness policy.

Management of Food Allergies in Education Center Programs Schools

The Education Center programs shall establish policy and administrative regulations to address food allergy management in Education Center programs in order to:

1. Reduce and/or eliminate the likelihood of severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reactions. The Education Center Schools are “nut-free” campuses.
2. Ensure a rapid and effective response in case of a severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reaction.
3. Protect the rights of students by providing them, through necessary accommodations when required, the opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities.

IV. Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of students’ physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive school physical activity program (CSPAP). A CSPAP reflects strong coordination and synergy across all of the components: quality physical education as the foundation; physical activity before, during and after school; staff involvement and family and community engagement and the Education Center Programs is committed to providing these opportunities. Schools will ensure that these varied physical activity opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education (addressed in “Physical Education” subsection). All schools in the Education Center Programs will be encouraged to participate in *Let’s Move! Active Schools* (www.letsmoveschools.org) in order to successfully address all CSPAP areas.

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks or physical education) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason. The Education Center Programs will provide teachers and other school staff with a [list of ideas](#) for alternative ways to discipline students.

The Education Center Programs shall strive to provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day for all students.

- Education Center Programs shall contribute to the effort to provide students opportunities to accumulate at least sixty (60) minutes of age-appropriate physical activity daily, as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Opportunities offered at school will augment physical activity outside the school environment, such as outdoor play at home, sports, etc.
- A physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students shall be maintained.
- Extended periods of student inactivity, **75 minutes or more**, shall be discouraged.
- Physical activity breaks shall be provided for students during classroom hours.
- The Education Center programs shall partner with parents/guardians and community members and organizations to institute programs that support lifelong physical activity.
- Physical activity shall not be used or withheld as a form of punishment.
- The Education Center programs shall promote physical activity through encouragement of walking and biking during breaks and recess

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- Physical activity opportunities, such as outdoor and indoor socialization times shall be provided to meet the needs and interests of all students, in addition to planned adapted physical education.
- Recommended resources for movement opportunities will be provided to Education Center programs staff.

To the extent practicable, the Education Center Programs will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The Education Center Programs will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

Physical Education

The Education Center Programs will provide students with adapted physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts (discussed in the “*Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education*” subsection). The curriculum will support the essential components of physical education.

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

Age appropriate nutrition education lessons will be incorporated into physical education classes providing students with the knowledge and skills to lead healthy lives.

All Education Center Programs students will receive adapted physical education for at least 30 minutes per week throughout the school year.

The Education Center Programs adapted physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments (via the [Presidential Youth Fitness Program](#) or other appropriate assessment tool) and will use criterion-based reporting for each student.

- *Students will be moderately to vigorously active for at least 50% of class time during most or all physical education class sessions (meets Healthy Schools Program Silver-level criteria).*
- *All physical education classes in [Education Center Programs] are taught by licensed teachers who are certified or endorsed to teach physical education (meets Healthy Schools Program Gold-level criteria).*
- *Waivers, exemptions, or substitutions for physical education classes are not granted unless recommended by the students’ physician.*

Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education

Health education will be required in all grades (elementary) and the Education Center Programs will require middle and high school students to take and pass at least one health education

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course. The Education Center Programs will include in the health education curriculum a minimum of 12 the following essential topics on physical activity:

- The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity
- How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight
- How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process
- How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease
- Differences between physical activity, exercise and fitness
- Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout and cool down
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity
- Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community
- Preventing injury during physical activity
- Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia and sunburn while being physically active
- How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time and type of physical activity
- Developing an individualized physical activity and fitness plan
- Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to physical activity and fitness
- How to influence, support, or advocate for others to engage in physical activity
- How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activity.

Recess (Elementary)

All elementary schools will offer at least **20 minutes of recess** on all days during the school year (*This policy may be waived on early dismissal or late arrival days*). If recess is offered before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built-in to the recess transition period/timeframe before students enter the cafeteria.

Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. Students will be allowed outside for recess except when outdoor temperature is above/below Education Center Programs-set temperature, inclusive of wind chill factors, during “code orange” or “code red” days, during storms with lightening or thunder, or at the discretion of the building administrator based on his/her best judgment of safety conditions.

In the event that the school or Education Center Programs 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.

Classroom Physical Activity Breaks (Elementary and Secondary)

The Education Center Programs recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered **periodic opportunities** to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days

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during a typical school week. The Education Center Programs recommends teachers provide short (3-5-minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time at least three days per week. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

The Education Center Programs will provide resources and links to resources, tools, and technology with ideas for classroom physical activity breaks. Resources and ideas are available through [USDA](#) and the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#).

Active Academics

Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.

The Education Center Programs will support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing annual professional development opportunities and resources, including information on leading activities, activity options, as well as making available background material on the connections between learning and movement.

Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

Before and After School Activities

Not Applicable

Active Transport

The Education Center programs shall cooperate with local municipalities, public safety agency, police departments and community organizations to develop and maintain safe routes to school. Due to the nature of the Education Center Schools, it is not appropriate for students to walk and/or bike to the schools.

V. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

The Education Center Programs will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues and physical activity facilities. The Education Center Programs 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 and strong educational outcomes.

Schools in the Education Center Programs are encouraged coordinate content across curricular areas that promote student health, such as teaching nutrition concepts in mathematics, with consultation provided by either the school or the Education Center Programs curriculum experts.

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All efforts related to obtaining federal, state or association recognition for efforts, or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments will be coordinated with and complementary of the wellness policy, including but not limited to ensuring the involvement of the ECWC.

All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy guidelines. All school-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity and healthy eating opportunities when appropriate.

Community Partnerships

The Education Center programs serve many different school districts from different counties. Many of these students' live large distances from school. We will work to share available inside and outside physical activities in their local communities if appropriate as applicable.

Community Health Promotion and Family Engagement

The Education Center Programs will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities and will receive information about health promotion efforts.

As described in the "Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications" subsection, the Education Center Programs will use electronic mechanisms (e.g., email or displaying notices on the Education Center Programs website), as well as non-electronic mechanisms, (e.g., newsletters, presentations to parents or sending information home to parents), to ensure that all families are actively notified of opportunities to participate in school-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

The ECWC will have a staff wellness subcommittee that focuses on staff wellness issues, identifies and disseminates wellness resources and performs other functions that support staff wellness in coordination with human resources staff. The subcommittee leader's names are:

Marty Dattilo-Education Center South
TBD – Education Center Sewickley

Schools in the Education Center Programs will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. Examples of strategies The Education Center Programs will use, as well as specific actions staff members can take, include:

After School Exercise Opportunities

Staff potlucks with focus on healthy food

Healthier options available in staff vending machines

The Education Center Programs promote staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost.

THE WATSON INSTITUTE EDUCATION CENTER PROGRAMS WELLNESS POLICY

Updated 5/2020 to Reflect the USDA Final Rule

Professional Learning

When feasible, the Education Center Programs will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (e.g., increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or incorporating nutrition lessons into math class). Professional learning will help Education Center Programs staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing Education Center Programs reform or academic improvement plans/efforts.

Healthy Environment

The Education Center Programs are smoke free zones as well as zero tolerance for weapons, drugs, and alcohol.

Glossary:

Extended School Day – the time during, before and afterschool that includes activities such as clubs, intramural sports, band and choir practice, drama rehearsals and more.

School Campus - areas that are owned or leased by the school and used at any time for school-related activities, 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 – the time between midnight the night before to 30 minutes after the end of the instructional day.

Triennial – recurring every three years.

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