

**Pataula Charter Academy**  
**Spring Creek Charter Academy**

TITLE: Wellness Policy

Approved by: The Governing Board

REFERENCES: Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, Child Nutrition Act

Pataula Charter Academy (PCA) and Spring Creek Charter Academy (SCCA) are committed to the optimal development of every student, PCA/SCCA believe 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 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 US 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. Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products is associated with lower grades among students. 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. Finally, there is evidence that adequate hydration is associated with better cognitive performance.

This policy outlines PCA/SCCA's 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 PCA/SCCA have access to healthy foods throughout the school day, through reimbursable school meals, in accordance with Federal and State Nutrition Standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active during and after 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 community is engaged in supporting the work of PCA/SCCA in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits;
- PCA/SCCA establish and maintain an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, and communication about and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives;

Note: This policy applies to all students and staff. Specific measurable goals and outcomes are identified in each section below.

## **SCHOOL WELLNESS COMMITTEE**

### **Committee Role and Membership**

PCA/SCCA will convene a representative Wellness Committee that meet annually to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this Wellness Policy.

The Wellness Committee membership will represent all school levels and may include-but not be limited to parents and caregivers, students, representatives of the school nutrition program (School Nutrition Director), physical education

teachers, health education teachers, school health professionals including the School Nurse and the School Counselor, School Administrators, and school board members.

### **Leadership**

The executive director will convene the Wellness Committee and facilitate development of and updates to the Wellness Policy, and will ensure the school's compliance with this policy.

The designated official for oversight is Cheryl Weathersby, Chief Financial Officer.

## **WELLNESS POLICY IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

### **Implementation Plan**

PCA/SCCA 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; 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.

This Wellness Policy and reports will be made available on the PCA/SCCA website.

### **Recordkeeping**

PCA/SCCA will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the Wellness Policy. Documentation maintained may include; but will not be limited to:

- The written Wellness Policy;
- Documentation demonstrating that the policy including the most recent assessment has been made available to the public;
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the Wellness Policy, including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods PCA/SCCA use to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the Wellness on the Wellness Committee;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the Wellness Policy;

### **Annual Notification of Policy**

PCA/FCCA will inform families and the public each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, any update to the policy and implementation status. PCA/SCCA will make this information available via the school website and/or other communications, such as the Handbook. PCA/SCCA will provide as much information as possible about the school nutrition environment. This will include a summary of the school's events or activities related to Wellness Policy implementation. Annually, PCA/SCCA will also publicize the name and contact information of the school officials 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, PCA/SCCA will evaluate compliance with the Wellness Policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

- The extent to PCA/SCCA is in compliance with the Wellness Policy

- The progress made toward attaining the goals of the Wellness Policy
- The extent to which the Wellness Policy compares to the Model Wellness Policy.

The Wellness Committee will monitor PCA/SCCA compliance with the Wellness Policy.

### **Revisions and Updating the Policy**

The Wellness Committee will update or modify the Wellness Policy based on the results of the triennial assessments and/or as school priorities change, community needs change, wellness goals are met, new health science, information and technology emerges, or 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 Communication**

PCA/SCCA are committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the Wellness Policy. PCA/SCCA will communicate ways in which representatives of the Wellness Committee and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the Wellness Policy through a variety of means appropriate for the school. PCA/SCCA will use electronic mechanism, such as email or displaying notices on the school's website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentation to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the Wellness Policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy

PCA/SCCA will notify the public about the content of or any updates to the Wellness Policy annually, at a minimum. PCA/SCCA will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

## **NUTRITION GUIDELINES**

### **School Meals**

PCA/SCCA are committed to serving healthy meals to our scholars, with plenty of fruits, vegetable, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk. These meals will be moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, have zero grams of artificial trans-fat per serving (nutrition label of manufacturer's specification), and meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of scholars, help mitigate childhood and adolescent 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.

PCA/SCCA participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). PCA/SCCA are committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations.

### **Staff Qualifications and Professional Development**

All school nutrition 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. PCA/SCCA will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

### **Celebration and Rewards**

PCA/SCCA will provide information relating to the USDA Smart Snacks in School Nutrition standards as a recommendation for all foods offered at the school including through:

1. Celebrations and parties. PCA/SCCA will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. PCA/SCCA will provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.
3. Rewards and incentives. PCA/SCCA will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children.

### **Fundraising**

PCA/SCCA will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas to meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in schools nutrition standards for foods and beverages that may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus during the school day.

Any foods being used in fundraising that do not meet these USDA guidelines should have a learning component added to teach scholars about making healthy food choices. This includes marketing of off-campus events at a restaurant or other eating establishments. The school Executive Director or their designee will make all advisors, club leaders, PTO, and after-school program sponsors aware of this fundraising policy and monitor to be sure that the policy is followed accordingly. Exceptions to this policy can be made by permission of the Executive Director or their designee.

### **Nutrition Promotion**

Nutrition Promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by breathing food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout 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.

PCA/SCCA will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus as well encourage participation in school meal programs.

### **Nutrition Education**

PCA/SCCA will teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by all students, PCA/SCCA will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Includes enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits, and/or school gardens;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods.

### **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

Children and adolescents should participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. 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. This does not include participation on sports teams that have specific academic requirements.

To the extent practicable, PCA/SCCA will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe, and that equipment is available to students to be active. PCA/SCCA will conduct necessary inspections and repairs as needed.

### **Physical Education**

PCA/SCCA will provide students with 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. The curriculum will support the essential components of physical education.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. PCA/SCCA will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

The PCA/SCCA physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments and will use criterion-based reporting for each student.

Health education will be required in all elementary grades and PCA/SCCA will require middle and high school students to take and pass at least one health education course.

### **Recess (Elementary)**

All Elementary grades 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, the school will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand sanitizing mechanisms to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and that 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 into the recess transition period/time frame before students enter the cafeteria.

**Outdoor recess** will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. In the event that the school must conduct **indoor recess**, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines to promote physical activity for students to the extent practicable.

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)**

PCA/SCCA 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 during a typical school week. PCA/SCCA 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.

### **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.

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

### **Before and After School Activities**

PCA/SCCA offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity before and/or after the school day through a variety of methods.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE STUDENT WELLNESS**

PCA/SCCA will aim to integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria. PCA/FCCA will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition, and other wellness components so that 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.

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 to the Wellness policy, including but not limited to ensuring the involvement of the Wellness Committee.

**Community Partnerships**

PCA/SCCA will continue relationships with community partners (e.g hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, SNAP-Ed providers and coordinators, etc) in support of this Wellness Policy’s implementation Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with the Wellness Policy and its goals.

**Community Health Promotion and Family Engagement**

PCA/SCCA 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, PCA/SCCA may use electronic mechanisms (email or displaying notices on the school’s website) as well as non-electronic mechanisms (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.

**Professional Learning**

When feasible PCA/SCCA will offer 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 PCA/SCCA staff understand the connection between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing district reform or academic improvement plans/efforts.

The Local Wellness Policy compares to the Best Practices <https://snp.gadoe.org/SCE/Pages/WellnessPolicy.aspx>.

The Triennial Assessment is located on [www.pataula.net](http://www.pataula.net) or [www.sccak12.net](http://www.sccak12.net). The public is invited to attend the Wellness Committee Meetings. Contact Pataula Charter Academy/Spring Creek Charter Academy for details. Pataula Charter Academy, 229.354.4001 or Spring Creek Charter Academy, 229.792-8957.

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