



**Common Ground High School Wellness Policy
2018-2019**

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Preamble

Common Ground High School is committed to the optimal development of every student. We 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 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. 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 Common Ground's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and engage in physical activity throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students 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 opportunities to be physically active before, during and after school
- Common Ground engages in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness
- Common Ground 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 the school in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits
- Common Ground 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 at Common Ground. Specific measurable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.

School Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership

Common Ground will convene a representative school wellness committee (hereto referred to as the SWC) 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 school wellness policy (heretofore referred to as “wellness policy”).

The SWC membership will include, 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 (e.g., health education teachers), school health services staff [e.g., nurses, physicians, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel who provide school health services], and mental health and social services staff [e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or psychiatrists]; school administrators (e.g., superintendent, principal, vice principal), school board members; health professionals (e.g., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public.

The Superintendent or designee(s) will convene the SWC 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 Lizanne Cox; lcox@commongroundct.org

Committee members include:

Jonathan Carney, Common Ground Health and Wellness Coordinator

Keith Johnston, Assistant Director

Theresa Brooks, Chef

Iris Jimenez, Administrative Assistant, parent

School Wellness Policy Coordinator: Jonathan Carney
Keith Johnston; kjohnston@commongroundct.org

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

Common Ground 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. 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: www.commongroundct.org

Recordkeeping

Common Ground will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy on the Common Ground 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 Schools Wellness Policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the school uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the SWC;
- 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

Common Ground 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 school will make this information available via the school website and/or school-wide communications. Common Ground 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, Common Ground 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, Common Ground will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

- The extent to which Common Ground is in compliance with the wellness policy;
- The extent to which the Wellness Policy compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's model wellness policy
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the School's wellness policy.

The person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is:

Jonathan Carney

Common Ground Health and Wellness Coordinator

jcarneya@commongroundct.org

The SWC will monitor Common Ground's compliance with this wellness policy.

Common Ground will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The SWC will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual School Health Index and triennial assessments and/or as school 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

Common Ground is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. Common Ground will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the SWC and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for Common Ground. Common Ground 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. Common Ground will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the school's 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. Common Ground will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that we are communicating important school information with parents.

Common Ground will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum. Common Ground will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

III. Nutrition

School Meals

Common Ground 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 program aims 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.

We participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP). We are committed to offering school meals, that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations. (We offer reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards.)
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using at least ten of the following Smarter Lunchroom techniques:
 - Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing dishes or hotel pans).

- Sliced or cut fruit is available daily.
- Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students.
- All available vegetable options have been given creative or descriptive names.
- Daily vegetable options are bundled into all grab-and-go meals available to 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.
- White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers.
- Alternative entrée options (e.g., salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas.
- A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (e.g., salad bars, snack rooms, etc.).
- Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development, dining space decor and promotional ideas.
- Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas.
- Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options.

Menus will be posted on the school website

Students will be allowed at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch.

Students are served lunch at a reasonable and appropriate time of day.

Common Ground will implement at the following Farm to School activities, meeting Healthy Schools Program Gold-level criteria:

- Local and/or regional products are incorporated into the school meal program;
- Messages about agriculture and nutrition are reinforced throughout the learning environment;
- School hosts a school garden;
- School utilizes promotions or special events, such as tastings, that highlight the local/regional products.

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* and throughout every school campus* (“school campus” and “school day” are defined in the glossary). Common Ground will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

All water sources and containers will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene and health safety standards. Such sources and containers may include drinking fountains, water jugs, hydration stations, water jets and other methods for delivering drinking water.

Students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

Common Ground is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus* during the school day* support healthy eating. No foods and beverages will be sold and served outside of the school meal programs.

Celebrations and Rewards

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

1. Celebrations and parties. Common Ground will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas. Healthy party ideas are available from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and from the USDA.
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. Common Ground will provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.
3. Rewards and incentives. Common Ground will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children. Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

Fundraising

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus* during the school day*. Common Ground will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas [examples from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and the USDA].

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.

Common Ground 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 ten or more evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using Smarter Lunchroom techniques
- Ensuring 100% of foods and beverages promoted to students meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Nutrition Education

Common Ground will teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. We 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.

Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education

Common Ground will include in the health education curriculum a minimum of 12 of the following essential topics on healthy eating:

- 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

Common Ground is 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. Common Ground strives to teach students how to

make informed choices about nutrition, health and physical activity. Advertising and marketing of foods and beverages is not allowed on the school campus, consistent with our wellness policy.

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. Common Ground is committed to providing these opportunities. We 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).

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to 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, Common Ground will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. Common Ground will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

Indoor and outdoor physical activity facilities and spaces will be open to students, their families, and the community outside of school hours.

Physical Education

Common Ground 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 (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 physical education classes. Common Ground will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

All students are required to take the equivalent of one academic year of physical education.

Common Ground's 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.

All physical education classes are taught by licensed teachers who are certified to teach physical education.

Waivers, exemptions, or substitutions for physical education classes are not granted.

Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education

Students are required to take and pass at least one health education course. The health education curriculum comprises a minimum of 12 of 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
- Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition
- 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
- Monitoring progress toward reaching goals in an individualized physical activity plan
- Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids
- 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.

Classroom Physical Activity Breaks

Common Ground 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. Common Ground 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 and class transition periods.

Common Ground 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.

Common Ground 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

Common Ground offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity both before and after the school day through a variety of methods. Common Ground will encourage students to be physically active before and after school by participating in after school or before school physical activity programs.

Active Transport

Common Ground will support active transport to and from school, such as biking. Common

Ground will encourage this behavior by engaging in six or more of the activities below; including but not limited to:

- Designate safe or preferred routes to school
- Promote activities such as participation in National Bike to School Week
- Secure storage facilities for bicycles and helmets (e.g., shed, cage, fenced area)
- Instruction on walking/bicycling safety provided to students
- Promote safe routes program to students, staff, and parents via newsletters, websites, local newspaper
- Document the number of children walking and or biking to and from school
- Create and distribute maps of school environment (e.g., sidewalks, crosswalks, roads, pathways, bike racks, etc.)

V. Other Activities that Promote Wellness

Common Ground will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues and physical activity facilities. We 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.

Common Ground promotes coordination of content across curricular areas that promote student health, such as teaching nutrition concepts in mathematics, with consultation provided by curriculum support staff.

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 SWC.

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

Common Ground 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

Common Ground 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, we will use electronic mechanisms (e.g., email or displaying notices on the school 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 SWC 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 name is Iris Jimenez.

Common Ground will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. Examples of strategies to use, as well as specific actions staff members can take, include promoting fitness opportunities on and off site, including healthy eating information in daily announcements, and providing opportunities for movement in academic classes. Common Ground promotes 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.

Professional Learning

When feasible, Common Ground 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 school staff

understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing district reform or academic improvement plans/efforts.

Policy adopted: 9/17/18

Glossary

Extended School Day – the time during, before and after-school 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.