

Westbridge Academy Comprehensive School Wellness Policy

I. Preamble

Westbridge Academy is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment that fosters the optimal physical, emotional, social, and academic development of all students. Recognizing that student wellness and academic achievement are intrinsically linked, this policy establishes a comprehensive framework for nutrition, physical activity, and school-based wellness activities.

II. Wellness Leadership and Committee

- **Wellness Policy Leader:** One or more designated officials (e.g., School Nurse, Child Nutrition Team, Physical Education Teacher, Principal) will be responsible for the implementation and oversight of the policy.
- **Wellness Committee:** A diverse committee, including administration, food service personnel, teachers, parents, students, and community members, will meet regularly to review, assess, and update the policy.
- **Public Involvement:** The policy will be accessible on the school website, and the community will be informed of policy updates and opportunities for involvement through newsletters and meetings.

III. Nutrition Education and Promotion

Westbridge Academy's nutrition education is integrated into the curriculum, including health, science, and math classes, to equip students with the knowledge and skills to make healthy choices.

- **Goals:**
 - Encourage the consumption of healthful foods, including fruits, vegetables, low-fat milk, and whole grains.
 - Educate students on the impact of food choices on health, learning, and behavior.
 - Provide hands-on learning opportunities such as taste-testing or maintaining a school garden.
- **Promotion:**
 - Smarter Lunchroom techniques will be used to place healthy options in easily accessible areas.

IV. Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods on Campus

All foods and beverages sold or provided to students during the school day will meet or exceed federal and New Jersey state guidelines.

- **School Meals:** Reimbursable meals will adhere to Federal Nutrient Standards and U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- **Other Foods/Beverages (e.g., parties, snacks, incentives):**
 - Foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) and items listing sugar as the first ingredient are prohibited.
 - Teachers are provided with a list of non-food reward alternatives, and food/beverages will not be used as a reward or punishment.
- **Dining Environment:** The school will provide a clean, safe, and attractive dining environment with adequate time for students to eat meals.

V. Physical Activity

Westbridge Academy supports the recommendation that students accumulate at least 150 minutes of age-appropriate physical activity weekly through a combination of physical education, recess, and integrated activities.

- **Goals:**
 - Provide physical education and health education in alignment with NJ Department of Education standards.
 - Ensure all students have daily access to age-appropriate physical activity opportunities during the school day, in addition to physical education classes.
 - Encourage teachers to incorporate brief physical activity breaks into classroom instruction.
- **Environment:** Physical activity will never be used as a form of discipline or punishment. The school promotes active transport (walking/biking) to school where feasible.

VI. Other School-Based Wellness Activities

- **Social and Emotional Wellness:** Westbridge Academy emphasizes social-emotional learning (SEL) and provides individual counseling weekly, crisis intervention as needed, and a culture of caring to support emotional well-being.

- **Staff Wellness:** The school encourages and supports staff to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors. Staff CPR certification is maintained.
- **Community Engagement:** The Academy actively partners with the community to offer support programs, such as its annual Wellness Fair, which provides access to resources on mental health, mindfulness, and nutrition.

VII. Evaluation and Public Updates

The Wellness Committee will annually assess the policy's effectiveness and compliance using tools such as the NJ State Wellness Policy Assessment Tool. The results and any updates to the policy will be communicated to the school community and general public through the school website and newsletters. Contact information for the policy leaders will be clearly provided..