



***The Visalia Unified School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Visalia Unified School District that:***

- *The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.*
- *All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.*
- *Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet or exceed the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.*
- *Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.*
- *To the maximum extent practicable, all schools in our district will participate in available federal school meal programs.*
- *Schools provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and seek to establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.*
- *The provision of student physical and mental health services will facilitate optimal student learning opportunities*
- *A safe and healthy learning environment will be maintained to promote a positive learning climate*
- *Partnerships with community resources will integrate and improve overall community health outcomes*

## **TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:**

### **I. School Health Councils**

The Visalia Unified School District Coordinated Health Advisory and/or individual schools within the district will create, strengthen, or work within existing school health councils to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The councils also will serve as resources to school sites for implementing those policies. (A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, nutrition services department staff, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.)

## **II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus**

### **School Meals**

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk (maximum 20g sugars) and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (as defined by USDA); and
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

Schools should engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, district website, cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

**Breakfast.** To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- Schools will operate the School Breakfast Program.
- Schools will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom, "grab-and-go" breakfast, or breakfast during morning break or recess.
- Schools will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- Schools will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

**Free and Reduced-priced Meals.** Schools will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Toward this end, schools will utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide meals at no charge to all children, regardless of income; promote the availability of school meals to all students; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals, such as "grab-and-go" or classroom breakfast.

**Qualifications of School Food Service Staff.** Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs will include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

**Food Safety.** The food service program Director shall ensure that the district's food service program meets the applicable sanitation and safety requirements of the California Retail Food Code as set forth in the Health and Safety Code. All food preparation and service areas shall be inspected in accordance

with the Health and Safety Code and applicable county regulations. The inspection report shall be made available to any interested person on request. A written food safety program for the storage, preparation, and service of school meals which complies with the national Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system.

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages.** Schools will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

**Drinking Water.** The district shall provide access to free, fresh drinking water during meal times in food service areas at all district schools in areas where reimbursable meals under the National School Lunch or Breakfast Program are served or consumed.

**Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (*i.e.*, foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.)**

**Elementary Schools.** The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in elementary schools. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, 100% juice, and non-fried vegetables.

**Middle/Junior High and High Schools.** In middle/junior high and high schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores, or on-campus fundraising activities) during the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

### **Beverages**

#### Allowed:

1. Fruit or vegetable juice composed of no less than 50 percent fruit/vegetable juice and have no added sweeteners.
2. Drinking water with no added sweeteners.
3. Milk that is 1-percent fat or nonfat; soy milk, rice milk, or other similar nondairy milk. Flavored milk must be non-fat.
4. Electrolyte replacement beverages that contain no more than 42 grams of added sweetener per 20-ounce serving and no added caffeine.

### **Foods**

1. Each entree item shall:
  - a. Not exceed 400 calories.
  - b. Contain no more than four grams of fat per 100 calories.
  - c. Be categorized as an entree item in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast program (consist of two or more food groups such as grain and meat).
2. For each snack item that supplements a meal:
  - a. Not more than 35 percent of its total calories shall be from fat, excluding nuts, nut butters, seeds, eggs, cheese packaged for individual sale, fruits, vegetables that have not

- been deep fried, or legumes.
  - b. Not more than 10 percent of its total calories shall be from saturated fat, excluding eggs or cheese packaged for individual sale.
  - c. Not more than 35 percent of its total weight shall be composed of sugar, including naturally occurring and added sugar, excluding fruits or vegetables that have not been deep fried.
  - d. Its total calories shall not exceed 250 calories.
3. Foods served or sold on campus cannot contain artificial trans fats.

The portion size of a la carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater than the size of comparable portions offered as part of school meals. Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits.

**Fundraising Activities.** To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities will encourage foods that meet the above nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school district will make available a list of ideas for healthy fundraising activities and encourage non-food sales.

**Snacks.** Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, and meet state and federal nutritional requirements. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. The district will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

**Rewards.** Schools will encourage limited use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

### **III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing**

**Nutrition Education and Promotion.** The Visalia Unified School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program 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 classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);

- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services.

**Communications with Parents.** The district/school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district/school will offer post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The district/school will provide parents a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the district/school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community at forums such as the district School Health Advisory Committee.

The district/school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials and/or special events.

**Food Marketing in Schools.** School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above). The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

#### **IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

**Physical Education (P.E.).** Visalia Unified students, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive physical education (or its equivalent of 200 minutes each 10 school days for students in grades 1-6, and 400 minutes each 10 school days for students in grades 7-12) for the entire school year. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (*e.g.*, interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**Daily Recess.** All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

Schools should discourage extended periods (*i.e.*, periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

**Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School.** All elementary, middle, and high schools are encouraged to offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or

intramural programs. All high schools, and middle schools as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs. Schools will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage – verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

**Physical Activity and Punishment.** Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (*e.g.*, running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (*e.g.*, recess, physical education) as punishment.

**Safe Routes to School.** The school district will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school district will explore the availability of federal "safe routes to school" funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements. The school district supports walking, bicycling, and other forms of active transportation to and from school, and encourages families to minimize driving. The school district will encourage students to use public transportation when available and appropriate for travel to school, and will work with the local transit agency to provide transit passes for students.

**Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours.** School spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

## **V. Health Services/Counseling and Support Services**

School health services will include: communicable disease surveillance, monitoring and reporting; emergency nursing care with professional assessment and intervention; health screenings with referral and follow-up services; health care case management and supervision; appropriate health care education and trainings for students, staff and parents; and collaboration with community resources.

Counseling and support services will promote student mental , emotional and social health through counseling and guidance services, along with psychological testing and assessment, consultation, interventions and referral as needed.

## **VI. Staff Wellness**

The Visalia Unified School District highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Each district/school should establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member, school health council member, local hospital representative,

dietitian or other health professional, recreation program representative, union representative, and employee benefits specialist. (The staff wellness committee could be a subcommittee of the school health council.) The committee should develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan should be based on input solicited from school staff and should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff.

## **VII. Monitoring and Policy Review**

**Monitoring.** The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the school district superintendent or designee.

School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent (or if done at the school level, to the school principal). In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA meal program Administrative Review findings and any resulting changes. If the district has not received an Administrative Review from the state agency within the past three years, the district will request from the state agency that an Administrative Review be scheduled as soon as possible.

The superintendent or designee will develop a summary report every three years on district-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the district. That report will be provided to the school board and may also be distributed to all school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, school principals, and school health services personnel in the district.

**Policy Review.** To help with the initial development of the district's wellness policies, each school in the district will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and wellness policies, at the start of the 2013-14 school year. The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the district level to identify and prioritize needs.

Annual assessments will review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school district will review district nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The district, and individual schools within the district, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation. Annual reports will be provided to the school board and the district health advisory committee.