COTTER
SCHOOLS

STUDENT WELLNESS POLICY

GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to assure a school environment that promotes and protects students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy diet and physical activity as part of the total learning environment. Cotter Schools supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. By facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity, schools contribute to the basic health status of children. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and supports Cotter's mission.

Cotter Schools commits to:

1. Providing a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors.

   Nutrition education and physical education are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters student attendance and education. The entire school environment, not just the classroom, should promote and protect students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by encouraging healthy eating and daily physical activity.

2. Supporting and promoting proper dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance.

   Foods provided by Cotter Schools and at school-sponsored activities during the instructional day should meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snack standards. Emphasis should be placed on foods that are nutrient dense. Children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active to grow, learn, and thrive. All students in grades PreK-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

3. Increasing the amount of time students are engaged in physical activity.

   A quality education program is an essential component for all students to learn about and participate in physical activity. Physical activity should include regular instructional physical education, co-curricular activities, and recess.

Students need opportunities for physical activity and to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior. Toward that end, health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities such as watching television;

Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons, where appropriate; and

Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, at the elementary level.

The school encourages the involvement of students, parents, teachers, food service staff, and other interested persons in implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school nutrition and physical activity policies.

GUIDELINES ON FOOD & BEVERAGES:

School breakfast, lunch, and snacks will meet, or exceed, nutrient standards established by the USDA. Ala carte food choices sold to students on campus during the school day (including concessions) will adhere to nutrition standards based on the current USDA Smart Snack standards.

All food and beverages sold within the school day and 45 minutes prior to the start of the day and 30 minutes after the end of the day will follow the USDA Smart Snack standards.

School Meals program nutrition facts will be available upon request.

The school will encourage all food offered (but not sold) on campus during the school day (including classroom celebrations and parent-provided classroom snacks and fundraisers) to meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School Nutrition standards. A list of healthy snack ideas developed by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation is attached, or can be found at https://api.healthiergeneration.org/resource/459

NUTRITION EDUCATION AND PROMOTION:

1. The school will encourage and support healthy eating by students and engage in nutrition promotion that is:

   Offered as part of a comprehensive program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;

   Part of health education classes as well as classroom instruction in subjects such as science, social sciences, and elective subjects, where appropriate; and

   Enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and includes participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, and field trips.

   Instructional staff will be encouraged to integrate nutritional themes into lesson plans, when appropriate. The health benefits of good nutrition should be emphasized.

2. Parent Nutrition Education

   Promotion of health and nutrition education will come from various sources. These include, but are not limited to: newsletters, health fairs, school website, posters, handouts, taste testing, and Farm to School.

The school recognizes that parents and guardians offer a fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and well-being. The school will support its parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.

Cotter will continue to encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks, and to refrain from including beverages and foods without nutritional value.

The school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities and will support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The building principals, in cooperation with the Food Service Director, are responsible for compliance with this regulation.

With the purposes of the implementation of this policy, evaluating policy progress, serving as a resource to school sites, recommending improvements to the policy as necessary and communicating the Wellness Policy to stakeholders, a system-wide nutrition committee will be established. The committee will meet a minimum of two times annually. Committee membership will include members from the community, school staff, students, and administration.

At least once every three years, the Director of Finance & HR, or designee, will assess the wellness policy using a written evaluation tool. This assessment will determine: compliance with the wellness policy, how the wellness policy compares to model wellness policies, and progress made in attaining the goals of the policy. The results of the assessment will also be made available to the board of directors and school families.

USDA Civil Rights Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

(1) **mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
(2) **fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
(3) **email:** program.intake@usda.gov

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Healthy Snack & Beverage Ideas*

- Water
- 100% fruit juice with no added sugar
- Fat-free or low fat milk
- Fruit smoothies (made with frozen fruit with no added sugar and fat-free or low fat yogurt)
- 100% fruit juice slushes with no added sugar
- Fresh fruit – trays, salads or kabobs
- Fresh vegetables – trays, salads or kabobs
- Fat-free or low fat yogurt (alone or as dip for fruits or vegetables)
- Yogurt parfaits (fat-free or low fat yogurt, fruit and whole grain cereal or granola as topping)
- Canned fruit or fruit cups (in water, 100% fruit juice or light syrup)
- Frozen fruit or fruit cups (in water, 100% fruit juice or light syrup)
- Frosty fruits – freeze your own fruit (frozen grapes make a great summer treat!)
- Dried fruit with no added sugar
- Nut or seed butter (serve with fruit or whole grain crackers)
- Nuts or seeds
- Trail mix made of nuts or seeds and dried fruit with no added sugar
- Whole grain crackers
- Low-fat cheese (serve with fruit or whole grain crackers)
- Hummus (serve with vegetables or whole grain crackers)
- Small whole grain waffles or pancakes topped with fruit or nut or seed butter
- Whole grain pretzels (soft or crunchy)
- Low-fat or air-popped popcorn (no added butter or salt)
- Graham crackers
- Nut or seed butter and jelly sandwiches on whole grain bread
- Small whole grain bagels or English muffins with nut or seed butter or jelly
- Pizza (on whole grain crust with low fat cheese and lean protein or vegetable toppings)
- Roll-ups on whole grain tortillas (fill with a lean protein such as ham or turkey, low fat cheese, hummus, nut or seed butter and jelly or vegetables)
- Fat-free or low fat pudding
- Bean quesadillas or burritos made with whole grain tortillas with salsa
- Whole grain cereal bars
- Baked whole grain tortilla chips with salsa or bean dip
- Baked chips (small portions)

*Check ingredient statements and nutrition information to ensure items meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Ensure food allergies of any participants are known before serving any food item.

Pair foods together for an afternoon snack to power youth up for their activities, whether that is physical activity or educational activities. Combine a lean protein with a fruit or vegetable, such as sunflower seeds dried raisins. Or a low-fat dairy food and whole-grain rich choice, like string cheese and whole grain crackers. Try low-fat dairy and fruit – yogurt and strawberries. Pair a whole-grain rich food with a lean protein by spreading hummus on a whole grain tortilla. Or serve a whole-grain rich food and vegetable, such as a whole grain cereal bar and cherry tomatoes. Get creative!

For more information on healthy snacking or finding healthy snacks and beverages, visit healthiergeneration.org

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