FAITH ★ FAMILY ACADEMY

Student Nutrition/Wellness Policy

Approved by School Board last on

June 25, 2025

Purpose and Goal:

The link between nutrition and learning is well documented. Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Healthy eating is linked to reduced risk for mortality and development of many chronic diseases as adults. Schools have a responsibility to help students and the staff, establish and maintain lifelong, healthy eating patterns. Well-planned and well implemented school nutrition programs have been shown to positively influence students' eating habits.

All students shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious and enjoyable food choices for a lifetime. In addition, staff is encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life. Faith Family Academy shall prepare, adopt, and implement a comprehensive plan to encourage healthy eating and physical activity. This plan shall make effective use of school and community resources and equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in cultural norms.

Component 1: A Commitment to Nutrition and Physical Activity

A. Faith Family Academy Board of Trustees shall appoint a School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC).
B. One of its missions shall be to address nutrition and physical activity issues and to develop, implement, and evaluate guidelines that support a healthy school nutrition environment.
C. This committee shall offer revisions to these guidelines annually or more often if necessary.
D. Principals will address concerns such as kinds of foods available on their campus, sufficient mealtime, nutrition education, and physical activity.
E. Nutrition education shall be integrated across the curriculum and physical activity will be encouraged.
F. The school food service staff will participate in making decisions and guidelines that will affect the school nutrition environment.

G. The District is committed to meeting all state and local requirements by ensuring comprehensive physical education and activity opportunities for students. This includes scheduling at least the minimum mandated minutes of physical activity for elementary and middle school students (if not more) and providing a diverse range of physical and athletic programs designed to engage students of all grade levels, supporting their interests and developmental needs.

Component 2: Quality School Meals

A. Faith Family Academy will offer breakfast and lunch programs. Students and staff are highly encouraged to promote and participate in these programs.
B. School food service staff will be properly qualified according to current professional standards. Food service staff will regularly participate in professional development activities.
C. Food safety will be a key part of the school foodservice operation.
D. Menus will meet the nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Texas Department of Agriculture, conforming to good menu planning principles, and featuring a variety of healthy choices that are tasty, attractive, of excellent quality, and are served at the proper temperature.
E. The District's nutrition guidelines are to ensure all foods and beverages sold, otherwise made available, or marketed to students during the school day adhere to all federal regulations and guidance and are designed to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.
F. The guidelines for reimbursable meals shall not be less restrictive than the regulations and guidance of the Child Nutrition Act and the National School Lunch Act.
G. Students will be given the opportunity to provide input on local, cultural, and ethnic favorites.
H. School personnel, along with parents, will encourage students to choose and consume full meals. Positive nutrition statements will be provided to students.

Component 3: Other Healthy Food Options

A. The SHAC will develop and recommend to the administration, guidelines on nutrition standards for food and beverages offered through parties, celebrations, social events, and any school functions (including concession stands at sporting and academic events) in compliance with Smart Snacks standards.
B. No foods or beverages other than those provided through the school food service department may be made available to students at any time except for birthday

celebrations (parent initiated) and six celebrations/party days per year. State rules adopted by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) allow an exemption to the Smart Snacks requirements for up to six days per year per campus when a food or beverage is sold as part of a District fundraiser. The District will allow exemptions to Smart Snack requirements for the following events or fund raisers each school year. Campus administrators will calendar the actual dates before each school year begins.

1. Halloween
2. Last school day before Thanksgiving Break
3. Last school day before Winter Break
4. Valentine's Day
5. Last school day before Spring Break
6. Last school day

C. Parents/guardians or grandparent(s) may provide snacks purchased from a grocery store, bakery or School Food Service for their child's class for his/her birthday. If parents/guardians (and or grandparents) bring in food from the outside, they must notify the teacher AND supply a list of ingredients to the campus nurse one week in advance of the birthday. This is due to food allergies that students may have. The form is provided in the front office. Parents/guardians (or grandparents) have the option of purchasing birthday snacks from the School Food Service; snacks follow the Smart Snack Guidance. In addition, the District has established the following local guidelines on foods and beverages made available to students:

    1. All foods must be produced in a commercial food production certified facility and remain in their original, unopened packaging.
    2. No foods will include nuts or tree nuts in their ingredients.
    3. All allergens must be clearly stated on all food labels.

D. School staff shall not use food as a reward for a student's accomplishments.

E. The withholding of food as punishment for students is prohibited. For example, restricting a child's selection of flavored milk at mealtime due to misbehavior in the classroom is prohibited.

F. The school district will provide nutritional information to parents that will encourage parents to provide safe and nutritious food for their children.

G. Follow Smart Snack Guidance for all fundraising activities.

Component 4: Pleasant Eating Experiences

A. Drinkable water will be available for students at meals and throughout the day.
B. A short snack-free recess for elementary campuses is encouraged to be scheduled sometime before lunch so that children will come to lunch less distracted and ready to eat.
C. School personnel will assist all students in developing the healthy practice of washing hands before eating.
D. The school should not schedule tutoring, pep rallies, assemblies, club/organizations meetings, fire drills or other activities during meal times.
E. Adequate time to eat in a pleasant dining environment should be provided. The minimum eating time for each child after being served will be 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch.
F. Schools will encourage socializing among students, and between students and adults. Adults will properly supervise dining rooms and serve as role models to students by demonstrating proper conduct and voice level. Parents are highly encouraged to dine with students in the cafeteria.
G. Creative and innovative methods will be used to keep noise levels appropriate.

Component 5: Nutrition Education

A. Faith Family Academy will follow health education curriculum standards and guidelines as stated by the Texas Education Agency. Schools will link nutrition education activities with the coordinated school health program.
B. Students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12th grade will receive nutrition education that is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy eating behaviors. Teachers are encouraged to integrate nutrition education into core curriculum areas such as math, science, social studies, and language arts as applicable.
C. Nutrition education will be offered in the school dining room and in the classroom, with coordination between school foodservice staff and teachers
D. Teachers can display posters, videos, websites, etc. on nutrition topics.
E. Faith Family Academy campuses will participate in nutrition education activities and promotions that involve students, parents, and the community. The school nutrition team responsible for these activities will be composed of Child Nutrition service staff, student services staff, school nurses, health teachers, parent/family outreach staff, and physical education coaches.

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Component 6: Marketing

A. Students will receive positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal, about healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school setting. All school personnel will help reinforce these positive messages.
B. Schools will consider student's needs in planning for a healthy school nutrition environment. Students will be asked for input and feedback and attention will be given to their comments.
C. Schools will promote healthy food choices and will not allow advertising that promotes less nutritious food choices.
D. Healthy eating and physical activity will be actively promoted to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at registration, parent meetings, Open Houses, Health Fairs, afterschool programming, teacher in-services, etc.

Component 7: Implementation & Measurement

A. Per TEC Section 28.004, the district school board will appoint at least five members to the SHAC. The law also requires that a parent member serve as the chair or co-chair of the SHAC. Additional SHAC members can serve through appointment, election, or volunteer. The SHAC shall be composed of a representative group of parents, students, community partners, and school district staff, including teachers, school health staff, parent/community outreach staff, cafeteria staff, and campus administrator(s).
B. The SHAC will meet a minimum of 4 times per school year (TEC Section 28.004). SHAC meeting dates will be posted on the district website, and will meet all required meeting posting and documentation requirements.
C. To inform and update the school community and solicit involvement and input from district stakeholders, the District will create a wellness page on its website to document information and activity related to the district wellness policy, including:
    1. Posting a copy of the district's wellness policy and/or notice of any Board revisions to the wellness policy;
    2. Posting SHAC meeting dates, goals, and contacts;
    3. Notice of any SHAC meeting at which the wellness policy or corresponding documents are scheduled to be discussed;
    4. The SHAC's annual report on the District's wellness policy and plan; and
    5. Any other relevant information.

Additionally, SHAC information and updates will be shared with parents and staff at school events and trainings, as well as to recruit interested stakeholders at school events.

D. The SHAC will provide a written report to the school board every year (TEC Section 28.004).
E. The SHAC members from each campus will conduct a review of their respective campuses in the fall and/or spring semester of each year to identify areas for improvement and report their findings to develop a plan of action for improvement as a part of the campus improvement plan. Input for improvements will also be shared to develop a plan of action for improvement as a part of the district improvement plan and district strategic plan.
F. The SHAC Chairperson (Chief of School Health and Chief Operations Officer) will oversee implementation and monitoring of the district's Wellness Policy and implementation efforts to ensure the district and campuses meet the local wellness policy, including developing, implementing, and measuring implementation of the local wellness policy. The Wellness Policy will be measured through industry-standard assessments such as the Annual Texas School Health Survey, the Texas Department of Agriculture Local Wellness Policy Checklist (FND-105), and/or the USDA Wellness Policy Assessment Tool (FORM-357).
G. Records regarding the District's wellness policy will be retained in accordance with law and the District's records management program.