

South Texas Educational Technologies, Inc.
Student Nutrition/Wellness Plan

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 and development of many chronic diseases as adults. Schools have a responsibility to help students and 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. South Texas Educational Technologies 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. South Texas Educational Technologies, Horizon Montessori Public Schools Holder Board shall appoint a School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC). One of its missions shall be to address nutrition and physical activity issues and will develop, implement, and evaluate guidelines that support a healthy school nutrition environment. This committee shall offer revisions to these guidelines annually or more often if necessary.
- B. Principals will address concerns such as kinds of foods available on their campus, sufficient mealtime, nutrition education, physical activity.
- C. Nutrition education shall be integrated across the curriculum and physical activity will be encouraged daily .
- D. The school food service staff will participate in making decisions and guidelines that will affect the school nutrition environment.

Component 2: Quality School Meal

- A. Horizon Montessori Public Schools offers breakfast, lunch and after school snack programs, students and staff are highly encouraged to participate and promote these programs. The schools will participate in a district-wide universal feeding program that will provide meals to all students.
- B. School foodservice staff that is properly qualified/trained, according to the minimum standards and regulations who participates in professional development activities will be able to administer the Child Nutrition Programs.
- C. Food safety is a key part of this school foodservice operation.
- D. Menus will meet the nutrition standards established by the U. S. 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. Students will be given the opportunity to provide input on local, cultural and ethnic favorites of the students. Principals will meet with parents and child nutrition staff for input and selection of food.
- F. School personnel, along with parents and child nutrition staff will encourage students to choose and consume full meals as well as reinforce positive nutrition statements on a daily basis.

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. See Attachment A.
- B. Students in possession of foods or beverages of minimal nutritional value will be asked to surrender such items to school staff members. Staff will follow campus procedures as to disposal or return of them as required. See attachment B.
- C. No foods or beverages other than those provided through the school food service department may be made available to elementary/middle school students at anytime. Elementary/middle school classrooms may serve one nutritious snack per day in the morning or afternoon (not during lunchtime) under school staff guidance. The snack may be provided by the teacher, parents or other groups. During afterschool programs a snack is provided by the school food service department.
- D. School staff shall not use food as a reward for student accomplishments. The withholding of food as punishment for a student is prohibited. For example, restricting a child's selection of flavored milk at mealtime due to misbehavior in the classroom is not acceptable.
- E. The school district will provide parents with safe and nutritional information for their children.
- F. Organizations shall only use non-food items or foods designed for delivery and consumption during after school hours as fund-raisers. For example, barbeque plate sale after school hours would be acceptable. The sale of individually wrapped candy (i.e. candy bars) as a fundraiser is prohibited; however, packaged candy gift items are allowed being provided they are only part of a fund-raising project that includes other gift items (i.e. nuts, candles, jewelry) as well.

Component 4: Pleasant Eating Experiences

- A. Facility design will be given priority in renovations and new construction.
- B. Drinking fountains will be available for students to get water during meals and throughout the day.
- C. 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.
- D. School personnel will assist all students in developing the healthy practice of washing hands before eating.
- E. School personnel will schedule enough time so students do not have to spend too much time waiting inline.
- F. Schools should not schedule tutoring, pep rallies, assemblies, club/organization meetings, and other activities during meal times breakfast/lunch.
- G. 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.
- H. Schools will encourage socializing among students, between and adults. Adults will properly supervise dining rooms and serve as a role model to students by demonstrating proper conduct and voice level, and by eating with the students. Parents are highly encouraged to dine with students in the cafeteria.
- I. Creative, innovative methods will be used to keep noise levels appropriate.

Component 5: Nutrition Education

- A. South Texas Educational Technologies, Horizon Montessori Public Schools will follow health education curriculum standards and guidelines as stated by the Texas Education Agency. Schools will link nutritional educational activities with the coordinated school health program.
- B. Students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 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. Teachers can display posters, videos, websites, etc. on nutrition topics.
- D. S.T.E.T., Horizon Montessori Public Schools campuses will participate in USDA nutrition program such as "Team Nutrition" and conduct nutrition education activities and promotions that involve students, parents, and the community. The school nutrition team is responsible for these activities that will be composed of Child Nutrition Services staff, Student Services staff, school nurses, health teachers, and physical education coaches.

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 need in planning for a healthy school nutrition environment. Students will be asked for input and feedback through the use of student surveys, 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, Open Houses, Health Fairs, teachers in-service, etc.
- E. Schools will work with a variety of methods to spread the word to the community about a health school nutrition environment, such as Horizon Montessori weekly newsletter and local newspapers.

Component 7: Implementation

- A. The SHAC shall be composed of parents and school district staff. Each campus principal shall select three parents and one staff member, such as teacher, nurse, counselor or administrator to represent the campus. Permanent members of the committee shall include a Teacher, P.E. Teacher, and the food service coordinator.
- B. The SHAC members from each campus will conduct a review of their respective campuses in the Fall semester of each year to identify areas for improvement. These groups will report their finding to the campus principal and develop with him/her a plan of action for improvement.
- C. The SHAC will assign campus groups, excluding classroom teachers, to do peer reviews of another campus in the Spring semester of each year.
- D. The SHAC will hear reports from each campus group after each review period. Before the end of each school year the committee will recommend to the Superintendent any revisions to the Student Nutrition/Wellness Plan it deems necessary.
- E. The SHAC via the Food Service Coordinator, will report quarterly to the Principal progress of the committee and the status of compliance by the campuses.

Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School

Food/Nutrient	Standard	Exemptions to the Standard
General Standard for Competitive Food.	<p>To be allowable, a competitive FOOD item must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) meet all of the proposed competitive food nutrient standards; and (2) be a grain product that contains 50% or more whole grains by weight or have whole grains as the first ingredient*; or (3) have as the first ingredient* one of the non-grain main food groups: fruits, vegetables, dairy, or protein foods (meat, beans, poultry, seafood, eggs, nuts, seeds, etc.); or (4) be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup fruit and/or vegetable; or (5) contain 10% of the Daily Value (DV) of a nutrient of public health concern (i.e., calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber). Effective July 1, 2016 this criterion is obsolete and may not be used to qualify as a competitive food. <p>*If water is the first ingredient, the second ingredient must be one of items 2, 3 or 4 above.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients except water are exempt from all nutrient standards. • Canned and frozen fruits with no added ingredients except water, or are packed in 100% juice, extra light syrup, or light syrup are exempt from all nutrient standards. • Canned vegetables with no added ingredients except water or that contain a small amount of sugar for processing purposes to maintain the quality and structure of the vegetable are exempt from all nutrient standards.
NSLP/SBP Entrée Items Sold A la Carte.	Any entrée item offered as part of the lunch program or the breakfast program is exempt from all competitive food standards if it is sold as a competitive food on the day of service or the day after service in the lunch or breakfast program.	
Sugar-Free Chewing Gum	Sugar-free chewing gum is exempt from all competitive food standards.	
Grain Items	Acceptable grain items must include 50% or more whole grains by weight, or have whole grains as the first ingredient.	
Total Fats	Acceptable food items must have ≤ 35% calories from total fat as served.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced fat cheese (including part-skim mozzarella) is exempt from the total fat standard. • Nuts and seeds and nut/seed butters are exempt from the total fat standard.

Food/Nutrient	Standard	Exemptions to the Standard
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats are exempt from the total fat standard. • Seafood with no added fat is exempt from the total fat standard. <p>Combination products are not exempt and must meet all the nutrient standards.</p>
Saturated Fats	Acceptable food items must have < 10% calories from saturated fat as served.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced fat cheese (including part-skim mozzarella) is exempt from the saturated fat standard. • Nuts and seeds and nut/seed butters are exempt from the saturated fat standard. • Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats are exempt from the saturated fat standard. <p>Combination products are not exempt and must meet all the nutrient standards.</p>
Trans Fats	Zero grams of trans fat as served (≤ 0.5 g per portion).	
Sugar	Acceptable food items must have $\leq 35\%$ of weight from total sugar as served.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dried whole fruits or vegetables; dried whole fruit or vegetable pieces; and dehydrated fruits or vegetables with no added nutritive sweeteners are exempt from the sugar standard. • Dried whole fruits, or pieces, with nutritive sweeteners that are required for processing and/or palatability purposes (i.e., cranberries, tart cherries, or blueberries) are exempt from the sugar standard.

Food/Nutrient	Standard	Exemptions to the Standard
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Products consisting of only exempt dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fats are exempt from the sugar standard.
Sodium	<p>Snack items and side dishes sold a la carte: ≤ 230 mg sodium per item as served. Effective July 1, 2016 snack items and side dishes sold a la carte must be: ≤200 mg sodium per item as served, including any added accompaniments.</p> <p>Entrée items sold a la carte: ≤480 mg sodium per item as served, including any added accompaniments.</p>	
Calories	<p>Snack items and side dishes sold a la carte: ≤ 200 calories per item as served, including any added accompaniments.</p> <p>Entrée items sold a la carte: ≤350 calories per item as served including any added accompaniments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entrée items served as an NSLP or SBP entrée are exempt on the day of or day after service in the program meal.
Accompaniments	Use of accompaniments is limited when competitive food is sold to students in school. The accompaniment must be included in the nutrient profile as part of the food item served and meet all proposed standards.	
Caffeine	<p>Elementary and Middle School: foods and beverages must be caffeine-free with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances.</p> <p>High School: foods and beverages may contain caffeine.</p>	
Beverages		
Beverages	<p>Elementary School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plain water or plain carbonated water (no size limit); Low fat milk, unflavored (≤8 fl oz); Non fat milk, flavored or unflavored (≤8 fl oz), including nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives as permitted by the 	

Food/Nutrient	Standard	Exemptions to the Standard
	<p>school meal requirements;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% fruit/vegetable juice (≤8 fl oz); and • 100% fruit/vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation), and no added sweeteners (≤8 fl oz). <p>Middle School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain water or plain carbonated water (no size limit); • Low-fat milk, unflavored (≤12 fl oz); • Non-fat milk, flavored or unflavored (≤12 fl oz), including nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives as permitted by the school meal requirements; • 100% fruit/vegetable juice (≤12 fl oz); and • 100% fruit/vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation), and no added sweeteners (≤12 fl oz). <p>High School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain water or plain carbonated water (no size limit); • Low-fat milk, unflavored (≤12 fl oz); • Non-fat milk, flavored or unflavored (≤12 fl oz), including nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives as permitted by the school meal requirements; • 100% fruit/vegetable juice (≤12 fl oz); • 100% fruit/vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation), and no added sweeteners (≤12 fl oz); • Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages (≤20 fl oz) that are labeled to contain ≤5 calories per 8 fl oz, or ≤10 calories per 20 fl oz; and • Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages (≤12 fl oz) that are labeled to contain ≤40 calories per 8 fl oz, or ≤60 calories per 12 fl oz. 	