

## **Talmudical Academy Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition**

### **Preamble**

Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;

Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;

Whereas, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;

Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;

Whereas, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;

Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

Thus, Talmudical Academy of Baltimore 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 Talmudical Academy of Baltimore that:

- The school will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in nursery through 12<sup>th</sup> grade will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served by school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Foods and beverages marketed or advertised to students on the school campus during the school day will meet the Maryland Nutrition Standards for all Foods Sold in Schools.

- 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, we will participate in the National School Lunch Program.
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

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

### **I. School Health Committee**

The Administration and Volunteer Coordinators (hereby known as School Health Committee) will create, strengthen, or work to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The council also will serve as the resource to the school for implementing those policies. (A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, representatives of the school nutrition program, physical education teachers, health service staff, members of the school board, school administrators, and mental health and social services staff.) The director of special projects, Rabbi Yehudah Zelinger, will convene the system-level wellness committee and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure the school's compliance with the policy.

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

#### **School Meals**

The school participates in the USDA child nutrition program(s) and meets or exceeds nutrition requirements established by state and federal regulations.

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program 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 (i.e. USDA regulations);
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables; and
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA).

All other food and beverages sold in school during the school day must follow Maryland Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School which incorporates the federal Smart Snacks standards. These include foods sold in vending machines, fundraisers, and school stores.

**Free and Reduced-priced Meals.** Talmudical Academy of Baltimore 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.

**Meal Times and Scheduling.** Talmudical Academy of Baltimore:

- will provide students with at least 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities; and
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

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

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages.** Schools should 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.

**Fundraising Activities.** To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities will try not to involve food for fundraisers. The school will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

**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, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. 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 school will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers and parents.

**Celebrations and Parties.** The school will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents, teachers and staff, including non-food celebration ideas.

**Rewards.** The school will try not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment. The school will provide teachers and other relevant staff a list of alternative ways to reward children.

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

**Nutrition Promotion.** Talmudical Academy of Baltimore aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur through at least:

- Implementing at least ten or more evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs user Smarter Lunchroom techniques; and
- Ensuring 100% of foods and beverages promoted to students meet the Maryland Nutrition Standards for all Foods Sold in Schools.

**Nutrition Education.** The school should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level 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 and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, 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, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services;
- Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and
- Includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

#### **Physical Activity.**

- Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks or physical education) will not be withheld as punishment for any reason. The district will provide teachers and other school staff with a list of ideas for alternative ways to discipline students.
- To the extent practicable, the school will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The school will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

### **Other School Based Activities that Promote Wellness.**

- All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy guidelines. All school-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity and healthy eating opportunities when appropriate.
- The school will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. Examples of strategies the school will use, as well as specific actions staff members can take, include making fruit available in the teachers' lounges for the staff to enjoy and modeling healthy eating habits. The school promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost.

**Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting.** For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.*, at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class.

Toward that end:

- classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

**Communications with Parents.** Talmudical Academy of Baltimore will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.

**Food and Beverage Marketing.** All print and electronic materials will promote School Meals, MyPlate, and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans to all students and staff.

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

**Daily Physical Education (P.E.) Nursery-8<sup>th</sup> grade.** All students in grades nursery-12<sup>th</sup> grade, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive weekly structured physical education for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Nursery students get 25 minutes of P.E. every other week, elementary students get 30 minutes of P.E. every week and middle school students get P.E. 45 minutes every week.

**Daily Recess.** All elementary school students have 45 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. The school 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. The middle and high school students get 15 minutes of recess twice a day.

**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.

## **V. Monitoring and Policy Review**

**Monitoring.** The designee will ensure compliance with established school nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. The 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 will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the School Health Council. In addition, the school will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes.

**Policy Review.** To help with the initial development of the school's wellness policies, the school will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of the school assessments will be compiled to identify and prioritize needs. Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school will review our 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 school will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

**Dissemination.** The School will actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, any updates to the policy and implementation status. The school will make this information available via the school's website and/or school-wide communications. The school will provide as much information as possible about the school nutrition environment. This will include a summary of the school's events or activities related to wellness policy implementation. Annually, the school will also publicize the name and contact information of the school officials leading and coordinating the committee, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the school wellness committee.

**Policy Records.** The school will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy on the school's computer network. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating that the policy has been made available to the public.;
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the Local Schools Wellness Policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the school uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the system-level wellness committee;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the Wellness Policy has been made available to the public.

### **Ideas of Non-Food Items to Sell for a Fundraiser:**

- Activity Theme bags
- Bakeless Bake Sale
- Bath accessories
- Balloon bouquets
- Batteries
- Books
- calendars
- Buttons, pins
- Coffee cups, mugs
- Crafts
- Coupon Books
- Emergency kits for cars
- First Aid kits
- Flowers and bulbs
- Foot warmers
- Giant coloring books
- Gift baskets
- Gift certificates
- Gift wrap, boxes
- Hats
- Jewelry
- Scarves
- Stationery
- Stuffed animals/Toys
- Tupperware
- Customized Merchandise
- Bumper stickers/decals
- Calendars
- License plates or holders with school logo
- Logo air fresheners
- Scratch-off cards
- School Frisbees
- Souvenir cups
- T-shirts/sweatshirts

### **School Party / Snack Ideas**

- 100% Fruit/Vegetable Juice
- Water/Flavored Water (calorie-free)
- Low-fat or fat-free Milk
- Fresh fruit assortment
- Fruit and cheese kabobs
- Fruit w/ whipped topping
- 100% fruit snacks
- Vegetable trays
- Cheese-cubes, string cheese
- Pretzels
- Low-fat popcorn
- Graham crackers
- Animal crackers
- Angel food cake – plain or topped with fruit
- Low-fat pudding
- Low-fat yogurt or parfaits
- Trail/Cereal Mixes or Bars
- Nuts, seeds
- Apple Slices with honey
- Dried Fruit
- Squeezable Applesauce
- Pure Fruit Popsicles
- Bananas and/or strawberries with semi-sweet chocolate chips or chocolate syrup (let kids slice the bananas with plastic knife)
- Cereals that contains whole grains and are low in sugar
- Trail mix (made from things like dried fruits, pretzels, mini chocolate chips and nuts)

### **Move More and Other Ideas**

- Provide an extra recess
- Celebrate all monthly birthdays with an open gym celebration!
- Go for a class walk or hike around the school campus
- Turn on some music and dance!
- Play a class game of kickball
- Have extra art or music time
- Take the class to the library
- Plan a thematic craft for the party.
- Party games are always a hit! Have a scavenger hunt where children look for school supply items in their classroom or on the playground.
- Take a field trip to the local zoo, skating rink, or museum
- Play an exercise or yoga DVD for kids
- Put together a "goody bag" of nonedible treats such as glow sticks, balloons, stickers etc.

## **Healthy Treats For Birthdays and Classroom Parties**

- Popcorn cups: Have your child help decorate plain 12-oz. paper cups with stickers, glitter glue or even his photo, and then fill with homemade popcorn. Alternatively, decorate small paper bags or purchase theater-style popcorn boxes or bags.
- Yogurt parfaits: In clear plastic cups, alternate layers of your child's favorite yogurt and fresh fruit such as blueberries, strawberries or mangos. Top with a cupcake topper. (And don't forget spoons!).
- Mini muffins: Carrot, blueberry and banana are all great choices. Use all or part whole-wheat flour or add ground flaxseeds for a nutritional boost.
- Fresh fruit served in cupcake wrappers, waffle cones or waffle bowls.
- Guacamole: Mash avocado, squeeze on fresh lime juice, then mix in chopped tomatoes, diced red onions and a smattering of sea salt. Serve with multigrain chips and veggie sticks (celery, carrots and red peppers).
- Berries with fresh whipped cream:
- Fruit kabobs with vanilla yogurt dip: Pick your child's favorite fruits—strawberries, blueberries, pineapple, kiwi, grapes, and melon, for example—and assemble colorful fruit kabobs. Serve with vanilla yogurt dipping sauce.
- Magic fruit wands: Similar to fruit kabobs but made to look like a magic wand, with a whimsical star fruit at the top.
- Cinnamon tortillas with fruit salsa: Take wheat flour tortillas and brush with melted butter. Sprinkle the tortillas with cinnamon sugar; cut each tortilla into 8 wedges and bake on an ungreased cookie sheet at 350 degrees for 10 minutes or until crisp. For the fruit salsa, pick any combination of your kid's favorite fruits—apples, strawberries, kiwis, pineapple and blackberries all work well—dice and mix with a little sugar and lime juice. Serve salsa in mini plastic cups or bowls with the tortilla chips on the side on paper plates for dipping.