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| Wellness Brighter Choice Charter School Wellness Plan | 2019-20202019-2020 |
|  Wellness Plan for Breakfast, NSLP, CACFP, CEP  | All Schools |

**Brighter Choice Wellness Policy**

The purpose and goal of the Brighter Choice Schools’ Wellness Policy is to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and well-being. The school will make use of school and community resources to equally serve the needs and interest of all the scholars and staff, taking into consideration all cultural differences as possible.

**Rationale:**

* Overweight children are likely to miss four times more school than children who are not overweight. This can affect school efforts to prepare every scholar for success in college and career.
* Childhood weight problems are a medical concern, not just a cosmetic one. Poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, and being overweight can lead to complications such as elevated blood cholesterol and blood pressure, gallbladder disease, osteoarthritis and joint problems, asthma, type II diabetes, depression, anxiety, and sleep apnea.
* Good nutrition and adequate physical activity help children grow, develop, and achieve desired academic outcomes.
* A good portion of children’s diets are consumed in school. Healthy school environments make a large difference.
* Healthcare costs are a growing issue of concern and are significantly impacted by obesity.
* Wholesome foods produced in New York should be available and actively promoted in a Healthy School environment.

**The Brighter Choice Schools have adopted the following as part of our wellness policy:**

1. **Physical Education - Physical activity helps to combat obesity issues and has been found to promote learning.**
* Scholars will participate in physical education as part of the K-5 program.
* The school will promote other activities that involve physical activity during recess and/or transitions.
* The school will encourage and allow faculty and staff to attend professional development trainings and workshops that focus on positive use of physical activity in the classroom.
* Support efforts by staff and faculty to become physically fit.
1. **Quality School Meals/Pleasant Eating Experience as numerous studies have shown that scholars eating breakfast and lunch at school consume a greater variety of foods and more nutrients.**
* The Brighter Choice Schools will offer breakfast, lunch, and snack.
* Menus offered will meet the nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, CACFP, and the New York State Department of Education.
* School meals will be consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans published by the NSLP, Breakfast, CACFP, and USDA.
* Meals will feature a variety of healthy choices that are tasty, attractive, of excellent quality, and are served at the proper temperature.
* The cafeteria will be monitored for disruptive behavior.
* Menus offered at school, by USDA requirements, must meet ¼ of the day’s nutrient requirements for breakfast and 1/3 of the day’s requirements for lunch. This assures that scholars receive a variety of foods that contribute to a balanced diet.
* Food Service Staff that is well-trained and certified under SNA regulations. They will continue to be trained on an ongoing process. They must possess the knowledge and skills to provide quality meals and serve them safely.
* Scholars will eat healthier food, in a supervised environment with sufficient time to eat and socialize. The goal is a minimum of 20 minutes of actual eating time.
1. **Other Healthy Food Options**
* Nutritious and appealing foods, such as fruits, vegetables, lower fat dairy food, and lower fat grain products, should be available wherever food is offered at school.
* We will do our best to abide by our Smart Snack and Wellness policy at all events.
* We will only accept donations that follow the wellness plan.
* Food and beverages may not be sold within the cafeteria from vending machines, outside vendors, fundraising organizations, and school stores before breakfast, breaks, or Lunch serving periods, or thirty minutes after all school sanctioned events, or afterschool is completed. Exceptions are holidays, weekends or scheduled days off.
* School staff will be may not use food as a reward for scholar accomplishment. The withholding of food as a punishment for scholars is prohibited by NSLP regulations.
* The schools will communicate with parents regarding healthy and nutritious foods for their children. We will reach out an meet with parents to ensure they know what is being served and to strengthen wellness policies.
* School organizations shall be encouraged to use non-food items. Healthy foods should be used for fundraising. The sale of candy is not allowed.
* No vending machines on school campuses.
* Lists of recommended foods will be available in each office.
* Menus offered at school by NSLP requirements will meet or exceed all USDA and Healthier Generation requirements. . This assures that children receive a variety of foods that contribute to a balanced diet.
1. **Marketing/Messages**
* Scholars should receive positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal, about the benefits of healthy eating and physical activity in the school. All school personnel should help reinforce these positive messages by modeling healthy habits.
* Scholars should be asked for input and feedback through the use of scholar surveys, and attention given to their comments.
* The school should promote healthy food choices and restrict advertising of less nutritious food choices.
* Healthy eating and physical activity should be actively promoted to all stakeholders at school events and in school communications.
* School Leaders should consider ways to improve scholar perceptions of school meals.
* Marketing materials in the classrooms and lunchrooms should reflect our Wellness Policy as advertisements will contribute to children’s food choices.
* Materials for healthy eating including book marks, coloring books, etc. will be made available upon request from the food director.
1. **Body Image**
* **Promote weight and size acceptance**-The Brighter Choice Schools will encourage acceptance and respect for oneself and others, acceptance of diversity, and a refusal to tolerate teasing or harassing of scholars or adults for any reason, emphasizing height, weight, shape, or size.
* Promote sensitive practices relating to weight assessment- School officials and parents need to ensure privacy, respect, and education on healthy habits and body image. Parents and officials should be educated on the warning signs of body image dissatisfaction and eating disorders.
* Healthy eating habits for elementary scholars can be achieved by moderate consumption of a varied diet, so promotion of healthy meals is a requirement.
* We will have speakers, and assemblies with folks that are farmers, athletes, or people of importance come and speak to scholars.
* We will support and provide healthy meals and snacks at events including Earth Day, Teacher Parent Conferences, Open House, and end of the year events.