GCA Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Greenwood Charter Academy (GCA) is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. GCA is committed to providing a school environment that enhances learning and development of lifelong wellness practices of each student and to provide guidance in the areas of nutrition, health, physical activity and food service. It is the goal of GCA to improve the overall health of students by decreasing the number of students identified as overweight or at risk of becoming overweight by promoting healthy eating choices, nutrition education and physical activity.

Therefore, it is the policy of GCA 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 grades 4K-7th will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

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 under adequate adult supervision.

Students will have access to portable water always.

Students are allowed to converse with one another while they eat their meals.

To the maximum extent practicable, GCA will participate in available federal school meal programs including the National School Lunch Program.

GCA assures that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by USDA.

GCA will have a fully implemented food safety program in place, i.e., HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points).

GCA 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. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

Academic performance and quality of life issues are affected by the choice and availability of good foods in our schools. Healthy foods support student physical growth, brain development, resistance to disease, emotional stability and ability to learn. Nutrition guidelines that require the use of products that are high in fiber, low in added fats, sugar and sodium, and served in appropriate portion sizes consistent with USDA standards will be established for all foods offered by the district's Nutrition Services Department or contracted vendors. Menu and product

selection will utilize student, parent, staff and community advisory groups whenever possible.

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program will:

be appealing and attractive to children;

be served in clean and pleasant settings with adequate seating to accommodate all students during each lunch period;

meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations; Menus will meet the nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the State of South Carolina Department of Education, conforming to appropriate menu planning principles, and featuring a variety of healthy choices that are tasty, attractive, the best possible quality, and are served at the proper temperature.

offer a variety of fruits and vegetables as defined by USDA;

- Dark green vegetables - Red/orange vegetables - Beans/peas (legumes) -

Starchy vegetables - Other vegetables

serve only low-fat (1%) unflavored milk, and fat-free (skim) unflavored milk, or fat-free flavored milk as defined by USDA

will offer grain daily at breakfast and ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain rich. will offer at least one fruit and/or one vegetable.

GCA will engage students and parents in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, the school will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals - GCA 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. Toward this end, schools may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; promote the availability of school meals to all students; Meal Times and Scheduling

GCA will make every effort to:

provide students with at least 30 minutes after sitting down for lunch or breakfast;

schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 10:55 a.m. and 12:55p.m.;

not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;

provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and

take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

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 require continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals. Professional development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

GCA will 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 at GCA will support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, will request that school fundraising activities should not involve food or should use only foods that meet the above nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. Any fundraising activities involving the sale of food or beverages do no take place until after the end of the last lunch period. GCA will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

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. The school will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. Snacks in all after school programs meet USDA guidelines per serving. The school will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

Rewards

GCA will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually, as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations

GCA will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually. The school will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

School-sponsored Events (such as, athletic events, dances, or performances) Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day will meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually.

II. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion

GCA aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. The school will make an effort to 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 taught by teachers who hold a certification from the South Carolina State Department of Education that allows them to teach health education. Teachers will use the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans document as part of health education classes. This information will also be shared with general education teachers so they can implement the information in math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects if needed. It is also important to note that teachers at GCA create opportunities for enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens as part of the nutrition education and promotion goals; we will promote the start of the day with a healthful breakfast and to choose nutritious foods throughout the day. We will also promote fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices; we will provide information on calories, percentages of fat, and serving sizes of school meal items to help children select appropriate portions of food.

GCA will also encourage displaying attractive, current nutrition education materials in dining areas that are changed at least every 9 weeks. The school website links and Social Media sites will include school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services; we will make efforts to teach media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and include training for teachers and other staff.

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity 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 may be incorporated into other subject lessons; and

Elementary and Middle school students will have at least 35 minutes a day of supervised physical education, preferably outdoors. Classroom teachers may provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

In order to measure and evaluate physical education and nutrition education program, physical/ health education classes will be the primary sources, GCA will make sure; physical education/health classes are taught by a qualified teacher who is certified by the South Carolina Department of Education to teach physical education. Students will receive formal instruction in physical/health education five days a week for 35 minutes. Physical education/health class size is similar to other content areas to ensure safe and effective instruction. GCA will also use adequate age-appropriate equipment for every student to be active and appropriate technology is incorporated on a regular and continuing basis. Various activities will include indoor and outdoor equipment and activities that are safe and enjoyable for all students, including those who are not athletically gifted. Teachers will use a curriculum based on state and/or national standards for physical/health education and follow specific standards and objectives outlined by the state of South Carolina. Teachers will use formative and summative assessments of student learning in the physical education/health program. The program at GCA will provide for maximum participation for every student (e.g., inclusion, no elimination games, all students active at once, developmentally appropriate activities, etc)

Physical education teachers will regularly participate in physical education professional development activities and have memberships in related professional organizations. The school director and school administrator will provide regular periodic evaluations of the physical education/health program and teacher

performance. Physical activity will not be used or withheld as punishment during regular class periods.

Communication with parents at GCA will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children, and the parents are invited to join students for school meals. The school will encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. Also, the school will encourage input regarding the selection of food items by promoting and encouraging student and parent participation in taste-testing events, menu review panels, and online recipe reviews. The school may provide parents a list of foods that meet the school's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the school may provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

Information is provided to help families incorporate physical activity into the lives of all household members. The school will report individual student fitness status to parents/ guardians during fifth and upper grade PE courses. In addition, the school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

III. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Physical Education (P.E.) All students, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive physical education, and all will have the opportunity to participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity on a regularly scheduled basis each school week during the entire school year. PE Classes will have a student to teacher ratio that is the same as other class and not exceed an average of 25:1. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. The student to

certified PE teacher ratio will not exceed 500 to 1. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

IV. Monitoring, Policy Review and Partnership

Monitoring

At GCA, the School Director or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school. School food service staff, at the school level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter (to the school director). The effectiveness of the GCA wellness policy will be evaluated and the results will be presented to the Governing School Board with the recommended revisions annually.

Policy Review and Implementation

Assessments will be repeated every year (annually) to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, GCA 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.

Procedures for public input and revisions at GCA involve announcements to the school newsletter, website and place signs in school to inform the parents about the wellness policy presentation to have input. The policy has also been sent to designated teachers, PE, School Improvement Team and Parent Teacher Forum.

For ongoing input; the policy will be placed on the school website where the public will have access to view the board approved policy. In that website, the public and school staff will have a chance to provide ongoing input for areas in need of improvement by writing to school administration. Those who do not have web access may turn-in their input to the school office. Annually, all feedback coming from public and school staff will be evaluated and incorporated to the policy and will be presented to the Board. After getting final inputs from the Board, the

reviewed policy will be in effect.

Wellness Committee

A primary goal will be to engage family members, students, the Governing Board, school administrators, and the public in development and regular review of this school policy. Following

people involve in developing and monitoring the GCA wellness policy:

People Included:

School Director - Jason Byrd

Elementary Principal – Kristen Mobley

School Nurse – Tiera Boyter

Physical Education/Health Teacher – Kendall James & TJ Wilson

Cafeteria Manager – Takoya Douglas

Finance/Bookkeeper -

GCA Board Member – Brittany Burwell

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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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Adopted: April 13, 2023