

Wellness Policy



**Cornerstone Schools of
Alabama**

Cornerstone Schools of Alabama

Wellness Policy

Table of Contents

Preamble	2
Implementation	3
Nutrition Standards	4
Nutrition Education	6
Physical Education and Activity	7
Other Activities that Promote Scholar Wellness	9

Preamble

It is the goal of Cornerstone Schools of Alabama (CSA) to ensure every student has access to a healthy and nutritious meal, proper education about physical activity, and nutritional information. CSA is committed to the optimal development of every student. CSA believes that in order for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, and social success, we need to create a positive, safe, and health-promoting learning environment at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year. This policy outlines CSA's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy, which applies to all students and staff at CSA, establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- CSA students have access to healthy foods 2 times a day — through reimbursable school meals breakfast and lunch-in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before and during school through our PE program, recess (Elementary School), as well as after school if they participate in sports;
- Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of CSA in creating continuity between school and other settings for Students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- CSA establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about, and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

Administrative Implementation

CSA has a Wellness Committee that meets annually and as needed throughout the year to establish goals for and oversee the school's health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this handbook.

The Wellness Committee will represent all grade levels and include to the extent possible, but not be limited to: parents/caregivers, students, representatives of the school nutrition program; physical education teachers; health education teachers, school health professionals and the general public.

If you would like to join the CSA Wellness Committee, please reach out to Caitlin Suggs, Director of Child Nutrition, csuggs@csalabama.org.

Triennial Progress Assessments will be evaluated every three years for compliance with the wellness policy and procedures.

Wellness Committee			
Name	Title	Email Address	Role
Caitlin Suggs	Director of Child Nutrition	csuggs@csalabama.org	Wellness Policy Coordinator
Ann Perry	Director of Finance	aperry@csalabama.org	Administrator
Kennan Brock	PE Teacher	kbrock@csalabama.org	Administrator
Corrie Moncrief	Grant Writer & Development Associate	cmoncrief@csalabama.org	Administrator
Roshunda Manuel	High School CNP Manager	rmanuel@csalabama.org	CNP Representative
Angel May	Administrative/Development Team Assistant	amay@csalabama.org	Parent

Nutrition Standards

Meals

CSA is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat milk; moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and zero grams trans-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer’s specification); and that meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

All schools within CSA participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). Select individual schools also operate additional nutrition-related programs, including Breakfast in the Classroom and After School Snack Program. All schools within CSA are committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs. All schools adhere to the following guidelines:

- Students should be allowed at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they have received their meal and are seated.
- Students are served lunch at a reasonable and appropriate time of day.
- Participation in Federal child nutrition programs should be promoted among students and families to help ensure that families know what programs are available in their children’s school.
- Menus will be reviewed and approved by the Child Nutrition Director.
- Menus will be published on the [school website](#) every month.
- Child Nutrition Director will observe during on-site visits and document a minimum of twice a year.

Staff Qualifications and Development

All school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff should meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA Professional Standards for Child Nutrition Professionals.

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day. CSA will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes if a drinking fountain is not present. In addition, students are allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

CSA is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (i.e., “competitive” foods and beverages) meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day, and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits.

Parents may not drop off and/or bring in food from restaurants for the child. If parents are planning on eating lunch with their child, they are asked to consider eating a school lunch with their student.

Staff meals that are delivered or picked up from restaurants should be done when they do not have students, such as during planning periods, etc. Students are not allowed to retrieve staff food or beverages for them. It is important that the staff encourages students, as well as one another, to maintain nutritious diets as well to encourage everyone to eat from the cafeteria.

Celebrations and Rewards

Foods for celebration and rewards are encouraged to be healthy or non-food related.

1. **Celebrations and parties.** CSA will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas. Healthy party ideas from the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#) and from the USDA. Each classroom will be *encouraged* to limit class parties that do not meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards to no more than 2 per school year. Celebrations that are tied into the curriculum will not count towards these exempt allowances.
 - a. **Classroom snacks brought by parents.** CSA will provide parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards. Smart Snacks for birthday parties can be purchased through the Child Nutrition Department to ensure Smart Snack compliance. Parents are *encouraged* to purchase smart snacks.
2. **Rewards and incentives.** Food and beverages should not be used as a reward. CSA will provide teachers and other relevant school staff [a list of alternative ways to reward](#) children. However, food and beverages will not be withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

Fundraising

CSA does not participate in student fundraising.

Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. Nutrition promotion will also include marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students through a comprehensive and multichannel approach by school staff and teachers, parents, students, and the community.

CSA will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. CSA will promote foods and beverages that meet the USDA **Smart Snacks in School** nutrition standards.

Nutrition Education

CSA aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools will aim to provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is 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 integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- Include enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, and taste-testing;
- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);

School Menus will comply with USDA guidelines. Menus will offer:

- Low-fat choices of milk on a daily basis
- Fresh fruits and/or vegetables will be offered a minimum of 3 times a week
- Whole grains will be offered every day of the week
- Limited sugary desserts offered on a weekly basis, less than 3 times a week
- Menus, nutritional information, and other weblinks/resources will be available on the [school website](#);

After-School snacks (elementary only) will include 2 of the following four components:

- Milk (dairy) – 1 cup or 8oz
- Fruits or Vegetables (including 100% juice) – $\frac{3}{4}$ cup
- Grains – 1 serving
- Protein – 1 serving

CSA will use the [USDA's Team Nutrition](#), which provides free nutrition education and promotion materials, including standards-based nutrition education curricula and lesson plans, posters, interactive games, menu graphics, and more.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

CSA is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. CSA strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health, and physical activity. It is the intent of CSA to protect and promote student's health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus, consistent with CSA's wellness policy.

Physical Education & Physical Activity Opportunities

Children and adolescents are encouraged to participate in 60 minutes of physical activity during the school day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive, school-based physical activity program (CSPAP) that includes these components: physical education, recess, classroom-based physical activity, and out-of-school time activities and CSA is committed to providing these opportunities. Schools will ensure that these varied opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education (addressed in "Physical Education" subsection).

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, physical activity breaks, or physical education) should not be withheld as a consequence. This does not include participation on sports teams that have specific academic requirements. CSA will provide teachers and other school staff with [a list of ideas](#) for alternative ways to discipline students.

To the extent practicable, CSA will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available for students to be active.

Physical Education

CSA will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts (discussed in the "Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education" subsection).

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. CSA will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

CSA's physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments via the Alabama Fitness Test and will use criterion-based reporting for each student.

CSA is committed to following and meeting the criteria of the state's standards for physical education.

Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education

CSA will aim to include in the health education curriculum essential topics on physical activity when health education is taught OR semesters when students are enrolled in health or physical education.

Recess (Elementary)

CSA Elementary School will offer at least 20 minutes of recess on all or most days during the school year. This may be waived on early dismissal or late arrival days. If a student is losing recess as a result of a consequence, then it cannot mean being inactive. Teachers and staff will assign alternate recess movements like walking the track, or doing a routine (jumping jacks, jog-on-the spot). Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class.

Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play.

In the event that CSA must conduct indoor recess, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable. Each school will maintain and enforce its own indoor recess guidelines.

Physical Activity Breaks (Elementary and Secondary)

CSA recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered **periodic opportunities** to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. Resources and links to resources are available through USDA and the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and at www.gonoodle.com .

Active Academics

Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

Before and After School Activities

CSA encourages schools to offer opportunities for students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after the school day through a variety of methods such as clubs, physical activity in aftercare, intramurals, and varsity sports.

At least 30-60 minutes of physical activity during after-school hours shall be provided and can be broken up into multiple activity periods. Sports, exercise and other recreational activities will be offered.

Other School-Based Activities Designed to Promote Student Wellness

CSA will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting. CSA will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition, and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development, and strong educational outcomes.

Schools in CSA are encouraged to coordinate content across curricular areas that promote student health, such as teaching nutrition concepts in mathematics, with consultation provided by either the school or CSA curriculum experts.

All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy.

Community Partnerships

CSA will develop, enhance, or continue relationships with community partners (i.e. hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, etc.) in support of this wellness policy's implementation.

Community Health Promotion and Engagement

CSA will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities and will receive information about health promotion efforts.

Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

CSA 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 of charge.

All schools will be encouraged to implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. Examples of strategies schools will use, as well as specific actions staff members can take, include:

- Participating in [Scale Back Alabama](#)
- United Healthcare, [“Health and Wellness”](#)
- Promoting Healthy Eating options in the Employee Breakroom / Teacher's Lounge
- Participating in [CommuteSmart](#) program

Professional Learning

When feasible, CSA will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school. Professional learning will help CSA staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing reform or academic improvement plans/efforts.