



ACCEL Wellness Policy

ACCEL has developed a Wellness Policy that is focused on improving the health of students. The policy was developed by the health and wellness advisory council that includes teachers, parents, nutrition services staff, administrators, school nurses and students.

Sharing the Message of Wellness

One of our goals is to share the message of nutrition and wellness via our school's website that emphasizes the importance of nutrition and fitness. Our site provides information on nutrition and fitness for teachers, parents and students.

Key Areas of our Wellness Policy

Balance is essential for any Wellness Policy. Key areas include:

- Nutrition Education
- Physical Activity
- Other school based activities that are designed to promote student health and wellness

ACCEL Wellness Procedures

Nutrition:

1. Every child should have a nutritious breakfast & lunch. ACCEL invites each student to eat a healthy breakfast every morning which is provided at no charge. ACCEL also encourages each student to eat a balanced lunch, even if it is brought from home.
2. ACCEL makes certain that all foods served to children on its campus will comply with the USDA Restricted/Competitive Food Policy, Arizona Nutrition Foods Standards Arizona Revised Statute 15-242, and Maricopa County Health Code Chapter 8. (see [Nutrition Standards & Prohibited Foods](#))
3. On special occasions when classroom snacks are served, it should be done after the lunch period. Snacks must be pre-packaged and come from an approved commercial source or licensed vendor. (ACCEL recommends [Arizona Nutrition Standards](#) be followed for any occasion.)

4. Non-food rewards are encouraged for the classroom. (see [Non Food Rewards](#))
5. Students' food choices are often influenced by the observation of others; therefore staff is encouraged to model good eating habits during the school day.
6. Many students have special dietary needs or food allergies that put them at risk. All students with life threatening allergies or required dietary modifications will be accommodated at the school level with support from ACCEL's Nutrition Service staff. The school's staff and the cafeteria manager can help monitor students with specific allergies and/or dietary restrictions.

Education Recommendations:

1. Where appropriate, nutrition education and food safety should be incorporated into the curriculum (i.e. math, science, social studies, pre-vocational/vocational arts, and adapted physical education). School nurses can be valuable resources in this area to teach health and wellness life skills.
2. School staff should set the example for students. By providing them with the knowledge and skills, students can make the right choices to lead a healthy life.

Physical Education Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that students have sports equipment available in their classrooms and common areas for students to use daily during recreation activities.
2. Recreational electives should be initiated in the schools to encourage physical activity throughout the school day.
3. To encourage innovation and sharing of ideas, recreation staff, related service providers, teachers and school nurses are encouraged to meet with their colleagues as appropriate to discuss wellness programs at ACCEL.

Non-Food Rewards

Providing food based on performance or behavior connects food to mood. This practice can encourage children to eat treats even when they are not hungry and can instill lifetime habits of rewarding or comforting themselves with food behaviors associated with unhealthy eating or obesity. Awarding children with food during class also reinforces eating outside of meal or snack times. Since few studies have been conducted on the effect of using food rewards on children's long-term eating habits, the best policy is not to use food to reward children for good behavior or academic performance. At minimum, children should not be rewarded using foods of poor nutritional quality.

Social Rewards

"Social rewards," which involve attention, praise, or thanks, are often more highly valued by children than a toy or food. Simple gestures like pats on the shoulder, verbal praise (including in front of others), nods, or smiles can mean a lot. These types of social rewards affirm a child's worth as a person.

Recognition

- Trophy, plaque, ribbon, or certificate in recognition of achievement or a sticker with an affirming message (e.g., “Great job”)
- Recognizing a child’s achievement on the school-wide morning announcements and/or the school’s website
- A photo recognition board in a prominent location in the school
- A phone call, email, or letter sent home to parents or guardians commending a child’s accomplishment
- A note from the teacher to the student commending his or her achievement

Physical activity and food should not be linked to punishment

Punishing children by taking away recess or physical education classes reduces their already-scarce opportunities for physical activity. Another counter-productive punishment is forcing children to do physical activity such as running laps or pushups. Children often learn to dislike things that are used as punishments. Thus, penalizing children with physical activity might lead them to avoid activities that are important for maintaining wellness and a healthy body weight. In addition, food should not be withheld as a means of punishing children.

ACCEL Wellness Policy

ACCEL continually supports healthy eating habits and the use of physical activity to enhance the learning process of our students. To promote the health and physical wellbeing of our students, Child Nutrition Services monitors the following areas and report its findings to the Governing Board:

The establishment of an ACCEL Wellness Committee comprised of teachers, parents, nutrition services staff, administrators, school nurses and students, is one means to help raise the awareness of the importance of nutrition and physical activity. ACCEL Nutrition Services will establish this committee and report their findings to the Executive Director and Governing Board. We feel our school can do more than any other single institution in society to help young people, and the adults they will become, to live healthier, longer, more satisfying, and productive lives.

- Nutrition guidelines will be followed in accordance with the National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C.1751 et seq.), Child Nutrition Act (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq), and the Arizona Nutrition Standards (A.R.S. 15-242).
- Nutrition education and materials will be made available to stress healthy eating habits and to help recognize conditions such as obesity, eating disorders, and other nutrition related health problems.

- Opportunities for physical activity will be provided at the school level, consistent with national standards, for the development of motor skills and the encouragement of health related fitness.
- Other school based activities will be geared toward creating an overall healthy environment, forming habits for student's short and long-term well-being.
- Parent, community, and staff are encouraged to participate in a regular review of this policy and to share ideas for the health and wellness of the students.
- Evaluation of the ACCEL Wellness Policy will be managed and evaluated by a wellness advisory group.

Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at [\(800\) 877-8339](tel:8008778339). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call [\(866\) 632-9992](tel:8666329992). Submit your completed form or letter 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;
- (2) fax: [\(202\) 690-7442](tel:2026907442); or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.