

LOCAL SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY 2024-2025

Preamble

APT recognizes that good nutrition and regular physical activity affect the health and well-being of all students. Furthermore, research suggests that there is a positive correlation between a student's health and well-being and his/her ability to learn. Moreover, schools can play an important role in the developmental process by which students establish their health and nutrition habits by providing nutritious meals and snacks through the schools' meal programs, supporting the development of good eating habits and promoting increased physical activity both in and out of school.

APT is committed to creating school environments that promote and protect the overall well-being of all students and staff. The guidelines listed below encourage a comprehensive wellness approach that is sensitive to both individual and community needs.

1. Local School Wellness Policy Leadership

School level

APT will establish an ongoing Healthy School Team that will meet annually to ensure compliance and to facilitate the implementation of APT wellness policy.

- At APT, the Wellness and Federal Meals Coordinator and the Director of Business Operations will be responsible for establishing the Healthy School Team that will ensure compliance with the policy.
- The Healthy School Team should include, but not be limited to, the following stakeholders: parents, students, school food service program representatives, school administrators, school health professionals, physical education teachers and the public.

- The Healthy School Team is responsible for:
- To ensure students have access to nutritious food, APT will operate and provide food services in compliance with USDA's National School Lunch Program (NSLP) standards, as well as all relevant laws and regulations of the State of Florida. The guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by USDA.
 - Provide opportunities for physical activity and developmentally appropriate exercises.
 - Provide accurate information related to nutrition and physical activities topics that can be distributed by mail, brochures, presentations and/or digital content.
 - Reporting its school's compliance of the regulations to the Wellness and Federal Meals Coordinator and the Director of Business Operations, the people responsible for ensuring overall compliance with APT wellness policy.

APT will review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques in establishing goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity and other school-based activities that promote student wellness to include, at a minimum, a review of Smarter Lunchroom tools and techniques.

2. Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion can positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by creating food environments that encourage healthy choices and encourage participation in the school meal programs.

- At a minimum, utilize Smarter Lunchroom tools and strategies to promote and reinforce healthy eating in the school environment, ensuring that messages are clear and consistent.
- Increase the number of on campus locations that students can access useful nutrition information by 5-10%.

- Increase student awareness of useful nutrition information from brochures, worksheets, handouts and digital content by 5-10%.
- Increase the variety of opportunities that allow parents to engage in support of school wellness initiatives by 10-15%.
- Discover effective ways to communicate school wellness messages and identify healthy eating and active living messages that resonate with parents. Examples may include presentations, newsletters, social media posts, and printed materials which highlight a wellness topic of interest.
- The school food service, working with other departments, will promote healthy eating by encouraging students to take part in the school meals program.

3. Nutrition Education

Academic performance and quality of life issues are affected by the choice and availability of nutritious foods in our schools. Healthy foods support student physical growth, brain development, resistance to disease, emotional stability and ability to learn.

- Nutrition education will be incorporated into a structured and systematic curriculum within physical education classes and integrated into other subjects, such as math and science, where it naturally aligns, like in Cooking Enrichment activities.
- Students receive nutrition education that is interactive and teaches skills they need to adopt age-appropriate healthy eating behaviors. Classroom lectures, activities and student participation are provided.
- Students will understand how food reaches the table and the implications that has for their health and future. Staff and school food service in partnership with community organizations will integrate hands-on experiences at least once per month such as: Utilize school gardens and the cafeteria as educational spaces.

- The staff responsible for nutrition education will be adequately prepared to effectively deliver an accurate nutrition education designed to promote healthy eating habits.

4. Physical Activity

APT shall ensure that physical activity is an essential element of each school's instructional program. The program shall provide the opportunity for all students to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to participate in a lifetime of physical activity.

- All school students will have at least 20 minutes of daily recess. APT will provide space, equipment and an environment conducive to safe and enjoyable play.
- All students will complete an average of 180 instructional minutes per week of physical education, with no less than 120 minutes per week. This includes instruction and practice in basic movement and fine motor skills, progressive physical fitness, and wellness activities through age-appropriate activities.
- Students will be offered a choice of two physically active enrichment classes, such as basketball, pickleball, dance and other options which may be switched quarterly.
- Students will have an increase in both the number and variety of physical activity opportunities offered to them.
- Staff will be encouraged to participate in physical activities such as walking, swimming, running, etc.

5. Other School-Based Activities

APT will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting. These initiatives will include nutrition, physical activity and other wellness components so that all efforts work towards the same set of goals and objectives used to promote student well-being, optimal development and strong educational outcomes.

General Guidelines

- APT shall consider the components of the Centers for Disease Control's Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model in establishing other school-based activities that promote wellness.
- The goals outlined by the wellness policy will be considered in planning all school-based activities (such as school events, field trips, dances and assemblies).
- Afterschool programs will encourage healthy snacking and physical activity.
- APT shall actively develop and support the engagement of students, families and staff in community health-enhancing activities and events at the school or throughout the community.
- APT shall be in compliance with drug, alcohol and tobacco-free policies.

Eating Environment

- Students will be provided an adequate amount of time to consume their meal with a minimum of 20 minutes after receiving their food from the line.
- APT will create and maintain a clean, safe, and inviting place for students to eat school meals.
- APT will schedule meal periods at reasonable hours when students are hungry and ready to eat.
- School food service will work with school departments, community partners and the student health council to facilitate student understanding of fresh, local, sustainably grown food.
- Convenient access to facilities for hand washing and oral hygiene will be available during meal periods.

Employee Wellness

- The APT wellness committee will promote healthy eating and physical activity habits among the staff.

- All staff will be provided with opportunities to participate in physical activities that are accessible and free or low-cost.

Health Services

- A coordinated program of accessible health services shall be provided to students and staff and shall include, but not be limited to, violence prevention, school safety, communicable disease prevention, health screening, community health referrals, immunizations, parenting skills and first aid/CPR training (school staff).

Behavior Management

- APT is committed to prohibiting the use of food as a reward, unless incorporated into an activity that promotes positive nutrition messages (such as a guest chef or field trip to a farm).
- Teachers and other school personnel will not deny or require physical activity as a means of punishment.

6. Guidelines for All Foods and Beverages Available During the School Day

APT shall operate and provide food service in accordance with USDA's National School Lunch Program (NSLP) standards and applicable laws and regulations of the state of Florida. The guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by USDA.

General Guidelines

- All reimbursable meals will meet nutrition standards mandated by USDA, as well as any additional state nutrition standards that go beyond USDA requirements.
- School meals will include a variety of nutrient-dense foods, including whole grains and fiber rich fruits and vegetables, while accommodating special dietary needs and ethnic and cultural food preferences.
- Serve only low-fat 1% and fat-free milk;

- To the maximum extent possible, all schools in APT will participate in available federal school meal programs, including the SBP, NSLP, ASSP, AMP, and SFSP.
- APT will operate the School Breakfast, Lunch and Snack programs daily.
- Free, potable water will be made available to all children during each meal service.
- All foods made available on campus comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations.

Competitive Foods

- No competitive foods will be sold at APT.
- Vending machines with food and beverages will not be available to students.

Summer meals

- APT will sponsor the local Summer Food Service Program during the June Summer session.

Standards for food and beverages available during the school day that are not sold to students:

- APT will provide parents and teachers a list of ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards and fundraising activities.
- Class parties or celebrations shall be held after the lunch period.
- Schools will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month.

7. Policy for Food and Beverage Marketing

- School-based marketing will be consistent with policies for nutrition education and health promotion. As such, the following guidelines apply:
- Schools will only be allowed to market and advertise those foods and beverages that meet or exceed USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- APT will foster a cafeteria environment that promotes healthy eating.

8. Evaluation and Measurement of the Implementation of the Wellness Policy

APT wellness committee will update and make modifications to the wellness policy based on the results of the annual review and triennial assessments and/or as local priorities change, community needs change, wellness goals are met, new health information and technology emerges and new federal or state guidance or standards are issued. The wellness policy will be assessed as indicated at least every three years following the triennial assessment.

Triennial Progress Assessments

APT will assess the local school wellness policy to measure wellness policy compliance **at least once every three years**. This assessment will measure the implementation of the local school wellness policy, and include:

- The extent to which APT is in compliance with the local school wellness policy;
- The extent to which the local school wellness policy compares to model local school wellness policies; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the local school wellness policy.

9. Informing the Public

APT will ensure that the wellness policy and most recent triennial assessment are always available to the public. APT will also actively notify households on an annual

basis about any updates made to the wellness policy and the availability of the triennial assessment results, as well as provide information to the community about the school nutrition environment.

- APT will ensure the most updated version of the wellness policy and triennial assessments are always available on the school website for the public to view.
- APT will present wellness policy updates, as applicable, during meetings with the Parent Teacher Association/Organization, school board, district superintendent, health and wellness committee and other interested groups or stakeholders.

10. Community Involvement

APT is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. APT will actively communicate ways in which parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, representatives from the local agriculture community, food and nutrition professionals and the public can participate in the development, implementation and annual review of the local school wellness policy through a variety of means, including:

- APT will consider student needs in planning for a healthy nutrition environment. Students will be asked for input and feedback using surveys and attention will be given to their comments.
- APT will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on APT website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of any updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy.

Academy Prep Center of Tampa has a commitment to provide the best wellness practices education to students, parents/guardians, staff and school personnel in different areas such as, nutrition, physical activity, health and not least important hygiene, that is an important part to be healthy.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.