

Elsie Whitlow Stokes
Community Freedom Public Charter School
Wellness Policy
June, 2020
Valid through School Years 2021-2023

Stokes School Mission

The Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School (Stokes School, the school) prepares 605 culturally diverse elementary school scholars in the District of Columbia to be leaders, scholars and responsible citizens who are committed to social justice.

Stokes School teaches children to think, speak, read, write and learn in two languages: English and French or English and Spanish. With a dual focus on academic excellence and community service, the Stokes School accomplishes its mission by creating an environment of achievement, respect and non-violence.

The Stokes School Wellness Committee Vision

The Stokes School nurtures and celebrates our cultural diversity by sharing and enjoying food and through participation in physical activities as fundamental experiences for all of our scholars, and; recognizes that nutrition education, food served in school and physical activity affect scholar wellness, and; intentionally creates an environment and system of practices that models for our scholars their role as agents for family and community health who commit to physical activity and good nutrition, and; recognizes the important connection between a healthy diet and a scholar's ability to learn effectively and achieve high standards in school, and; is committed to continuing a role of leadership in school wellness and in the charter school community and to reviewing its policies and strategies around health in the context of that leadership commitment.

Therefore, in service to the Stokes School Mission, the vision of the Stokes School Wellness committee is that members of the Stokes School Community are models of health committed to the health of others and their community.

The wellness policy will cover the following:

1. Goals for nutrition education, health education, physical education, and physical activity.
2. Nutrition guidelines for all foods available on campus during the school day with the objective of promoting scholar health and reducing childhood obesity.
3. Safeguards to ensure access for all children to healthy foods and to fight hunger and nutrient deficiencies.
4. Assurance that those guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture.
5. Strategies to promote and improve the social and emotional wellness of our scholars.
6. Plans for measuring the impact and implementation of the local wellness policy, including designation of one or more persons with operational responsibility for ensuring that the school is in compliance with the wellness policy.
7. Involvement of parents, scholars, and representatives of the school food authority, school board, school administrators, and the public, in development of the local Wellness Policy.

Section 1: Ensuring Quality Nutrition Education, Health Education, Physical Education, and Opportunities for Physical Activity

The Stokes School acknowledges the positive benefits of physical activity for scholar health and academic achievement. Recognizing that physical education is a crucial and integral part of a child's education, the school will provide opportunities to ensure that scholars engage in healthy levels of vigorous physical activity to promote and develop the scholar's physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being. It is the school's goal that scholars engage in physical activity at least 60 minutes each day. Besides promoting high levels of personal achievement and a positive self-image, physical education activities should teach scholars how to cooperate in the achievement of common goals.

The components of the Stokes School physical education program shall include a variety of kinesthetic activities, including team, individual, and cooperative sports and physical activities, as well as aesthetic movement forms, such as dance, yoga, or martial arts.

Stokes School scholars shall be given opportunities for physical activity through a range of before, during and or after-school programs and our school will ensure that:

- Students in grades K-5 will receive a total of 150 minutes of physical education per week. At least 50% of this time will be devoted to physical activity;
- Students will be allotted 30 minutes of recess each day
- The Wellness Program will include a curriculum that connects and demonstrates the interrelationship between physical activity, good nutrition, and health;
- The school will enhance the quality of physical education curricula and increase training of physical education teachers through site-based and district-wide staff development;
- Suitably adapted physical activity is provided as part of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) adapted for scholars with a physical disability that may restrict excessive physical exertion;
- Physical education staff will appropriately limit the amount or type of physical exercise required of scholars during air pollution episodes, excessively hot weather, or other inclement conditions;
- School staff will not require or withhold physical activity as a punishment to scholars.

Health and Nutrition Education

Stokes School will provide health and nutrition education that:

- includes an average of at least 15 minutes per week (or equivalent) of health education for scholars in K – 5;
- is offered at each grade level, K – 5, as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide scholars with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- integrated into other content areas such as math, science, language arts, and social sciences;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, school gardens, etc.;

- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training teachers, parents, and community partners
- Promotes healthy events - such as Walk & Roll (twice a year), basketball game and soccer game, etc. The list of events in which the school intends to participate will be made available on the Wellness page of the school website each year.

Section 2: Establishing Nutritional Guidelines for All Foods Served and Sold at School

Stokes School believes in the importance of teaching scholars to establish and maintain life-long healthy eating habits. This will be accomplished, in part, through selling and serving healthy food in the school. The Stokes School will ensure that:

Well-Balanced Meals and Healthy Snacks

Stokes School will:

- serve only foods that will meet at minimum the following nutritional requirements of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the District of Columbia Healthy Schools Act (HSA):
 - Saturated fat: Fewer than 10% of total calories
 - Trans fat: Zero grams; and
 - Sodium: Breakfast – less than 430 mg; Lunch – less than 480 mg
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk, or nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives;
- provide whole grains as half of the grains served;
- not sell foods with high fat and/or high sugar content;
- serve meals and snacks during the school day that make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving well-balanced meals, and fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks;
- offer vegetarian meal options and dietary meal options that meet the needs of children with diagnosed medical conditions as required by a physician;
- not permit third parties to sell foods or beverages of any type to scholars on school property from midnight the night before the school day begins until 90 minutes after the school day ends.;
- not offer food that does not meet the requirements of the school wellness policy as incentives, prizes or rewards to scholars, and;
- ensure that meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs are appealing and attractive to scholars and are served in clean and pleasant settings.

Free Meals and Reduced Price Meals

The Stokes School will ensure maximum participation in the free school meal program (breakfast, lunch and snack) by developing a coordinated, comprehensive outreach and promotion plan, and by putting systems in place that will make sure that each scholar who qualifies for a free meal receives it. Students will be provided 30 minutes to eat lunch, as well as sufficient time for scholars to pass through the food service line. In addition, free breakfast will be provided to all scholars through an extended breakfast period. Stokes is a nut and nut butters free school and does not serve pork products.

Breakfast

The Stokes School will:

- offer free breakfast to all scholars;
- provide scholars with at least 20 minutes to eat after sitting down; and
- notify parents of the availability of the school Breakfast Program.

School Snacks and Supper

Snacks served by the school or its staff during the school day or in after-school will:

- follow the nutritional standards set forth by the USDA and HSA;
- make a positive contribution to scholars' diets and health;
- emphasize serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snack and water as the primary beverage.

Menus

School menus for breakfast, lunch and supper will be available to the public through our school's website and weekly newsletter.

Foods and Beverages Sold at Fundraisers

The Stokes School will ensure that any foods or beverages sold for fundraisers shall meet the following requirements of the USDA Smart Snacks in School Guidelines for competitive foods:

- Calories from total fat must be no more than 35% per serving, excluding seeds and reduced-fat cheese;
- Contain less than 0.10% grams trans fat per serving (**zero grams** trans fat);
- Calories from saturated fat must be below 10% per serving, excluding reduced-fat cheese;
- Total sugar must be under 35% sugar by weight (including naturally occurring and added sugars), excludes fruits, vegetables, and milk;
- Sodium must be equal to or less than no more than 200mg for snack items, and no more than 480mg; and
- Portion size/calories is not to exceed the serving size of the food served in the National School Lunch Program; for other items, the package or container is not to exceed 200 calories.

Beverages

The following beverages are allowed:

- Water (unflavored, non-carbonated, caffeine free) without added caloric sweeteners;
- Fruit and vegetable juices that contain 100% juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners <6 oz.; and
- Unflavored or flavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free fluid milk, or nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy beverages (to be defined by the USDA).

The following beverages are not allowed:

- Soft drinks, sports drinks, iced teas;
- Fruit-based drinks that contain less than 100% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; and
- Beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat (1%) or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

Foods

Any food items sold individually will meet the nutritional requirements listed above, as well as, the following:

- Foods will contain no more than 200mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, french fries, baked goods, and other snack items; no more than 480mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and no more than 600mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes; and
- A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered; items include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the sodium requirements above).

Rewards

The Stokes School will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutritional standards for foods and beverages sold individually above, as rewards for academic performance or good behavior.

Fundraising

Fundraising activities at the Stokes School will only use foods that meet the nutritional standards for foods and beverages sold individually above. The Stokes School will encourage fundraising activities that promote wellness and physical activity. The school will make available a list of approved fundraising activities.

Food Marketing

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, the Stokes School will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutritional standards for foods and beverages sold individually above. School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

Celebrations

Stokes School encourages one birthday celebration per month per class practice to limit the amount of food offered that does not meet the nutritional requirements of the DC HSA. The school will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and staff.

Third-Party Vendors

The Stokes School will not permit third-party vendors to sell foods or beverages of any type to scholars on school property from 90 minutes before midnight the night before school begins to 90 minutes after the school day .

Section 3: Assurance that Guidelines for School Meals are Not Less Restrictive than Those Set at the Federal Level by the Secretary of Agriculture.

The Wellness Committee will review this policy and ensure that the standards in this policy are not less restrictive than those set forth by the Secretary of Agriculture or state law.

Section 4: Improving Environmental Sustainability

The Elsie Whitlow Stokes School engages in practices to improve environmental sustainability. Stokes School minimizes its waste, purchases renewable energy, and develops environmental literacy. Stokes School accomplishes this through:

- Increased use of environmentally friendly cleaning products;
- Use of locally grown, locally processed and unprocessed foods as much as possible in school meals;
- Farm to School partnerships with local farmers and the Stokes Garden Program to provide fresh produce as a part of school meals;
- The Stokes Garden Program;
- Separate collection of recyclable materials at all points of the building;
- The use of rooftop solar panels and modernized HVAC systems;
- The collection and composting of food waste at all points of the building;
- Incorporating the OSSE Environmental Literacy Framework in curriculum development.

Section 5: Community Involvement

The development of the local wellness policy will include the Wellness Coordinator, parents, scholars, representatives from the school faculty and administration, which comprises the School Wellness Committee. At the beginning of each school year, the Wellness Committee will conduct a survey to measure attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge of healthy behaviors. This information will be used to track the school's progress towards creating a healthy environment. Additionally, the Stokes School will disseminate the wellness policy as well as activities and additional wellness information to parents through the school office and on the school website, social media platforms, as well as through our parent organization and email listserv. In keeping with the Stokes School Language Policy, information will be available on the website and in hard copy, at request, in English, Spanish and French. Translations into other languages for families will be available at request.

Students and family members will have opportunities to provide both suggestions and feedback for school meals and other foods offered at the school. Finally, Stokes will conduct health promotion and education programs outside school hours as Taste of Stokes, Walk and Roll and sports events.

Section 6: Social and Emotional Wellness

Stokes School is committed to intentionally creating a community focusing on achievement, respect and non-violence, academic excellence and community service in order to support scholars and responsible citizens who are committed to social justice. Stokes School has adopted the Responsive Classroom model to support social and emotional wellness and Stokes School staff is trained in its use.

To measure the quality of social and emotional support for scholars, Stokes School uses the Classroom Assessment Scoring System® (CLASS®). CLASS® is a tool that measures the daily interactions between teachers and scholars and among scholars. CLASS® measures interactions in three domains, emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support; for the purposes of the the Committee's measurement of Social and Emotional Wellness, we will monitor measurements of emotional support, as described below. The Emotional Support domain assesses children's social and emotional functioning in the classroom. Children who are connected to others are more likely to positively develop in both social and academic areas. Teacher support of children's social and emotional functioning is essential in an effective classroom. Emotional Support contains four dimensions: positive climate, negative climate, teacher sensitivity, and regard for scholars' perspectives. 100% of preK-5th grade classrooms will score 5 or above, and 80% will score 6 or above on Emotional Support. Stokes School currently uses CLASS® to measure emotional support in grades PK - 3 and will extend its use for grades 4 and 5 by SY 2018 - 2019.

Section 7: Establishing a Plan for Measuring the Impact and Implementation of the Wellness Policy

Stokes School's Wellness Committee will monitor and report on the effectiveness of the school's wellness policy.

Each month, the committee will announce progress towards annual goals and opportunities for community involvement on the Wellness page of the Stokes website. Additionally, each year the committee will report on:

- the web address for the Wellness Policy and how the community can access a copy of the Wellness Policy;
- the percentage of months all meal plans were posted to the website;
- the results of the Stokes application for USDA recognition;
- the amount, in gallons, of food waste composted;
- the results of schoolwide CLASS® data;
- participation in OSSE, citywide and national health awareness programs;
- members and participation of the Wellness Committee, including contact information for the Wellness Coordinator, and;
- suggested changes for the triennial review of the Wellness Policy.

This committee shall also be responsible for evaluation of the policy annually. In addition, the committee will seek ongoing input from scholars, staff and families about the policy's effectiveness through the annual survey.

This committee shall also be responsible for triennial review of the Wellness Policy, the next occurrence of which will be in the 2019 - 2020 school year.