

NORTHPOINT SCHOOL'S WELLNESS POLICY
The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004
Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010

“Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body; it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity.” ~John F. Kennedy

Preamble

The Northpoint School is a Non Public school serving children whose needs can not be met in public school. Northpoint School combines academic instruction and individual, group and family therapy with a broad spectrum of specialized services. The focus is on developing each student's unique strengths and abilities, resolving specific difficulties, re-integrating students into community schools and/or awarding them with a high school diploma. Northpoint students have emotional and behavioral difficulties that include but are not limited to Schizophrenia, Major Depression, Bipolar Disorder, and Post Traumatic Stress disorder, ADHD, Oppositional Defiant Disorder and Pervasive Developmental Disorders.

The Northpoint School recognizes the relationship between health, nutrition, fitness, mental health and academic achievement. The body of evidence linking these areas is growing at a rapid pace. Food choice consumption and exercise play important roles in the development, management and prevention of numerous medical and mental health disorders such as depression, ADHD, Diabetes, and more. In addition, studies are showing a dramatic link between nutritional, mental, physical health and academic performance. Scientific and anecdotal evidence indicate that these areas are all intertwined and changes in any one area may affect the student's success. The mission of the Northpoint School includes the incorporation of a holistic approach to engage students in the improvement of their education, mental and physical health goals.

These studies include but are not limited to identifying the correlation between obesity, severe nutritional deficiency and poor academic performance (Fay W. Boozeman College of Public Health <http://publichealth.uams.edu/about-coph/>). Research on the contrary has shown, "...improvements in nutrition were associated with significant improvements in academic performance and psychosocial functioning." (School Nutrition a Key Component in Academic Performance at International Schools, Sanow, J. 2012) According to the LAUSD Blueprint for Wellness (2006), "studies show that children in food insecure households have increased absences and tardiness and demonstrated poorer cognitive functioning resulting in lower test scores." Therefore, the efforts to engage our students in healthy food choices may show improvement in one significant area for which they were referred to this level of care- academic performance

In the area of physical health, research is showing the same cause and effect between physical health, mental health and academic performance. LAUSD Blueprint for Wellness identifies, "children participating in daily physical activity have shown superior academic performance and a more positive attitude toward school. The Center for

Disease Control (CDC) has researched the relationship between nutrition and academic performance and the results demonstrate that there is a direct correlation between the two. According to the CDC, students who participate in the "United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) School Breakfast Program (SBP) have increased academic grades and standardized test scores, reduced absenteeism, and improved cognitive performance." The CDC has also stated that those students who are physically active usually have "better grades, school attendance, cognitive performance, and classroom behaviors." This includes enhanced concentration and attention as well as improved classroom behavior.

(CDC, http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/health_and_academics/pdf/pa-pe_paper.pdf)

In regards to mental health, Duke University demonstrated the direct positive effect exercise had on depression. "The important conclusion is that the effectiveness of exercise seems to persist over time, and that patients who respond well to exercise and maintain their exercise have a much smaller risk of relapsing." (J. Blumenthal Duke University Study Proves Exercise Can Be Just as Effective as Medication When Treating Major Depression 2005). The goal of the Northpoint School is to ameliorate mental health issues that affect academic performance, therefore, the correlation between exercise and depression is significant. It has been shown that addressing mental health needs has resulted in an increase in school attendance, test scores, graduation rates, and a decrease in school violence and drop out rates.

One hundred percent of Northpoint students have a mental health concern that affects their overall functioning in school and in at least one of the following areas: home, the community, social relationships and/or work. Northpoint students may suffer from the following mental health diagnoses; Schizophrenia, Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and Oppositional Defiant Disorder. Ninety percent of Northpoint students are prescribed psychotropic medications for their emotional and behavioral difficulties. These students are at high risk of hospitalization, residential treatment and or dropping out of school. Mental health services are regularly provided within the milieu of the school and the direct clinical service. Northpoint School offers a large array of services including individual, group and family therapy as well as psychiatric services. Northpoint's success is evident in the population's reduction of psychiatric hospitalizations, increase in school attendance, return to Public School, graduation from high school and self reports of mental health improvements.

Schools have a responsibility to help students learn, establish and maintain lifelong healthy eating and activity patterns. The inclusion of staff in the development and implementation and participation of the Northpoint School wellness program is instrumental as the staff can be role models for healthy behaviors.

In response to the above stated issues and in accordance with the Federal Lunch program through the California Department of Education, Northpoint School has

formalized a wellness policy that encompasses student, family and staff wellness. This policy incorporates nutrition and physical education, health education, mental health services, family/community involvement and staff involvement.

Our primary goal at Northpoint is to increase the student, parent and faculty's knowledge of our wellness policy and to increase the commitment to healthier lifestyles, both mind and body. This will be accomplished through the education, marketing and implementation of a well designed Wellness policy that addresses nutrition, physical activity and mental health care. This policy is designed to utilize Northpoint School and community resources and equitably serve the needs and interests of the student body while maintaining the integrity and sensitivity to differing cultures.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. School Health Councils

Northpoint School has created a wellness committee (consisting of parents, students, representatives of school food service, the school board, school administrators, physical education teachers and community members) to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies.

II. Medication

Psychiatric medication is prescribed to the majority of the students at Northpoint. Though these medications can be very helpful in treating mental health, many of these medications can lead to major weight gain. In addition, psychotropic medication may effect blood sugar and cholesterol levels, and increase the student's risk of developing diabetes (Dixon L, Weiden P, Delahanty J, et al. Prevalence and correlates of diabetes in national schizophrenia samples. *Schizophr Bull* 2000; 26:903-912.) and heart problems. (Newcomer JW and Hennekens C. Severe Mental Illness and Risk of Cardiovascular Disease. *JAMA*; 298: 1794-1796.) The Northpoint psychiatrist and Nurse monitor clients on psychiatric medications closely. They monitor height, weight, body mass index, blood pressure and any other necessary tests such as cholesterol.

Due to the fact that most of the students at Northpoint are on psychotropic medications, we believe that providing healthy options in the cafeteria is essential. This means encouraging families to replace junk food with more fruits, vegetables and meals prepared with nutritious ingredients.

Northpoint has accomplished offering healthy options at school by eliminating soda and other drinks with high amounts of sugar, eliminating non nutritious snacks and replacing them with healthier lunch and breakfast options. The Northpoint staff is working to educate students on picking healthier choices at school and at home.

Northpoint is now utilizing a vendor, Revolution Foods, to provide food for the meal program. Revolution Foods offer breakfast and lunch with a choice of fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

III. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus School Meals

Northpoint Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs:

- offer nutritional, tasty and appealing foods in collaboration with Revolution Foods;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- serve only low-fat (1%) milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy alternates (to be defined by USDA) as necessary;
- offer a menu that meets the meal patterns and nutritional standards established by the US Department of Agriculture and the California Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition Programs;
- encourage school staff and families to participate in school meal programs;
- operate all Child Nutrition Programs with food service staff who are properly qualified according to current professional standards;
- establish food safety as a key component of all school food operations and ensure the food service permit is current for the food service school site;
- follow the State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales;
- establish guidelines for all foods available on the school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity;
- provide families with nutrition information of school meals and offer nutrition analysis upon request; and
- communicate regularly with parents when students present with foods that do not fall within the standard.

In an effort to promote healthy living, Northpoint makes attempts throughout the year to engage families and students participation in healthy eating. This is organized through flyers, educational materials, group presentations and food demonstrations. All families are encouraged to participate. Northpoint makes every effort to set up these events with the families specific needs in mind (child care, transportation issues, etc.). Families are notified directly, through flyers and some programs are listed on the website.

Breakfast. To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn, Northpoint:

- offers school breakfast with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutritional standards established by the US Department of Agriculture and the California Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition programs;

Free and Reduced-priced Meals. Northpoint School makes every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to and prevent the overt identification of students who are eligible for free and reduced-priced meals. All students, upon intake for the Northpoint School are initially reviewed for Direct Certification. If their name is not listed through direct certification, the student is provided with an application for Free and Reduced-Priced meals. This form is offered in both English and Spanish with staff available to answer questions in either language. The form is completed prior to the child attending school and is reviewed for eligibility within 1 working day and a letter of Eligibility Notification is sent to the primary caretaker on that same day. The Food service Specialist is provided with the name and it is handwritten on the current roster. The name is also placed on the printed roster for the following month. Direct certified clients are made eligible with verification by Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Service (DPSS). The plan is to be approved to be added to their DPSS Direct Cert program. Eligible participant are reviewed 2x per year.

Meal Times and Scheduling.

- Offer adequate time for students to eat and enjoy school meals. For our younger wing students 30 minutes and our older wing students are allotted 30 minutes as well.
- Encourage a positive eating environment that includes socializing among students and adults.
- Breakfast is served between 9:00am and 9:30am. Students will line up in the cafeteria, take their food and return to their classroom.
- Lunch will be served between 11:30am and 12:30pm. Students will line up in the cafeteria, take their food and return to their classroom.
- Students have the option to take all or portion of the meal offered (offered vs. serve)

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff. Qualified nutrition professionals administer the school meal programs. As part of the school's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals at Northpoint. These staff will be trained based on the HACCP guidelines and ensure food safety as a key component of food operations. In addition, annual health inspections will take place and when allowed by the LAC Health Department, biannually.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages. Northpoint School discourages 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.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (*i.e.*, foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.)

Competitive Foods. At this time, Northpoint School does not allow competitive foods.

Fundraising Activities. Northpoint School continues to move towards healthier nutritional standards. Fund raisers include craft sales, car washes, etc. Northpoint has eliminated bake sales, and replaced them with fruit and kale smoothie sales.

(based on SNP-37-2014)

Snacks. Snacks served during the school day 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. Northpoint will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, student's nutritional needs, student's ages, and other considerations.

Northpoint will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to all school personnel and parents.

It is important to note that the school nurse maintains snacks to be provided to those students who may need additional nutrition due to side effects of psychotropic medications.

Rewards. Northpoint will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

School-sponsored Events (such as, but not limited to, 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 (above). At this time, only healthy smoothies are allowed to be sold at school sponsored events.

IV. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion. Northpoint School aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating. Schools should 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 part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- 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 for teachers and other staff.

Health Education

Health Education Content Standards from California Department of Education, grades K-12, focuses on “using standards-based, theory driven, and research-based approaches to health instruction...focusing on essential knowledge and skills that will foster health-risk reduction among students.” Students will learn standards of Essential Health Concepts, Analyzing Health Influences, accessing Valid Health Information, Interpersonal Communication, Decision Making, Goal Setting, practicing Health Enhancing Behaviors and Health Promotion (CDE health Content Standards).

Nursing Support Most Northpoint students are on psychotropic medications. These medications are known to effect appetite and can aid in weight gain. The school nurse provides individual education and focuses on the specific issues that student

may face. The school nurse discusses with both the students and caregivers the possible side effects including weight gain and increase in appetite and she encourages students to eat healthy and exercise. Height, weight and blood pressure are monitored and documented based on the student's need to assess any changes. This ranges from weekly to quarterly. The school nurse provides handouts, individual interventions and contact with the family to support is/her physical wellbeing.

Alternate health education activities: Our Teaching Garden, developed in 2012 in collaboration with the American Heart Association as the first Nonpublic school site is focused on empowering and promoting healthier eating choices for our students. Students have the opportunity to apply CDE content standard nutrition concepts in Northpoint's Teaching Garden. The Garden is a hands-on learning laboratory that focuses on the value of sustainability, garden maintenance as a skill, moderate exercise, pride in what the students grow which results in new, healthy eating choices. Studies indicate that "school gardening may affect children's vegetable consumption, preference for, and willingness to taste vegetables" (Ratcliffe, M.M. et al., 2011).

Communication with parents and caregivers is a key component to lifelong healthy eating habits with children. Northpoint School develops their relationship with parents and caregivers by providing educational materials, school meal program menus, school assemblies, Parent and Me workshops, seasonal gatherings and newsletters.

Northpoint School promotes nutritional values and choices through Revolution Foods' Veggie Dip Day and Salad Bar Day, and monthly cooking activities involving the Teaching Garden. Students are introduced to new vegetables and encouraged to try new foods, create new dishes and maintain healthy eating habits.

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.

Per California Education Code for middle and high school students:

The curriculum should emphasize nutritional needs during different life stages. The unique nutritional needs of adolescents should be particularly emphasized. The effects of nutrition and exercise on behavior, appearance and physical and mental performance

- Making healthy food choices in a variety of settings

- Establishing and maintaining healthy eating practices, including developing and using a personal nutrition plan based on food choices and calorie levels that promotes health and reduces risk of heart disease.
- The curriculum should emphasize the pleasure of physical activity
- Explore ways of engaging in out-of-school activities that promote health
- Regular participation in enjoyable physical activities
- Develop a personal fitness plan

The health of children and their success in school are intimately linked. Increasingly, the value and importance of educating the whole child, including focusing on children's health, is being supported by empirical studies. Inadequate nutrition and a wide range of negative and self-destructive behaviors such as the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs have been linked to poor school performance. Northpoint School makes every effort to meet these standards

Communications with Parents. Northpoint School supports parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. Northpoint will offer healthy eating seminars for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school website, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Northpoint 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. In addition, Northpoint School will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community. Northpoint 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.

Food Marketing in Schools. Northpoint School does not partake in food marketing.

Staff Wellness. Northpoint School highly values the health and wellbeing of every staff member and implements activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Northpoint has established and maintained a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member, school health professional, student body representative, Board member, family member, and physical education teacher. (When appropriate, a student representative will be present.) The committee develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan is based on input solicited from school

staff and other consumers and outlines ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff. The staff wellness committee distributes its plan to the school health council annually.

Child and Family Guidance Center, the umbrella organization for the Northpoint School, offers a number of staff run programs that aid in the efforts of staff wellness. These programs include but not limited to: yoga, gym membership discounts, exercise classes ran by staff, and the opening a gym for staff use.

V. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Daily Physical Education (P.E.) K-12. Northpoint School implements a physical education program that teaches lifelong knowledge and skills which promote a healthier lifestyle. Mandated time allotments vary by age group. Appropriate instructional minutes are instituted pursuant to the requirements of the CDE (ranging from no less than 200 minutes per 10 school days for grades 1-8 to no less than 400 minutes per 10 school days for grades 7-12). The school has created a planned sequential program of physical education instruction that incorporates individual and group activities, taught in a positive and success-driven environment. The goal is to teach the skills and help students develop an interest and passion for particular physical activities that they can carry across their lifespan.

The CDE states “Physical activity includes recess activities, intramural and athletic programs and are a component of Physical Education.” Northpoint School incorporates a number of physical activities in their program. These include an intramural program of football, basketball and baseball. Girls may participate in these sports as well as dance, and yoga.

Northpoint School has incorporated the following physical activities that may also be found in our Physical Education manual:

- Yearly fitness test
- Fitness clubs
- Intramurals- Northpoint recently began an intramural program. These sports include Basketball and Flag Football
- Staff monitored recreation activities during recess
- Utilization of recreation therapists
- Use of outdoor exercise equipment

STANDARDS

The five overarching model content standards for elementary and middle school students are as follows:

Standard 1: Students demonstrate the motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.

Standard 2: Students demonstrate knowledge of movement concepts, principles, and strategies that apply to the learning and performance of physical activities.

Standard 3: Students assess and maintain a level of physical fitness to improve health and performance.

Standard 4: Students demonstrate knowledge of physical fitness concepts, principles, and strategies to improve health and performance.

Standard 5: Students demonstrate and utilize knowledge of psychological and sociological concepts, principles, and strategies that apply to the learning and performance of physical activity. In elementary school the content standards emphasize the way in which students move through space and time in their environment, the way in which the student and a partner move in space together, the continuity and change in movement, the manipulation of objects in time and through space, and the manipulation of objects with accuracy and speed. In middle school the content standards emphasize working cooperatively to achieve a common goal, meeting challenges, making decisions, and working as a team to solve problems.

For high school youths the three overarching content standards are as follows:

Standard 1: Students demonstrate knowledge of and competency in motor skills, movement patterns, and strategies needed to perform a variety of physical activities.

Standard 2: Students achieve a level of physical fitness for health and performance while demonstrating knowledge of fitness concepts, principles, and strategies.

Standard 3: Students demonstrate knowledge of psychological and sociological concepts, principles, and strategies that apply to the learning and performance

Community Sponsored Partnerships. Northpoint has established and maintained ongoing relationships with several community organizations that

provide health awareness and physical activity ideas. These organizations include:

NIKE Betterworld

American Heart Association- Hoops for Hearts

Fit Friendly

Physical Activity and Punishment. Northpoint is a school that educates children with severe emotional and behavioral difficulties. As a result, on the rare occasion when a child requires increased supervision due to dangerous behaviors, there may be occasions when s/he is not allowed out at recess time with the other students. When this is the case, the student is allowed supervised recess after the other students return to the classroom. At no time does the student miss out on academic time or free time.

Safe Routes to School. Northpoint School students are bused to-and-from school on a daily basis.

VI. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring. Designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

School food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the designee. In addition, the school will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. If the school has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past five years, the school will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.

The designee will develop a summary report every two years on compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from the wellness committee. That report will be provided to the principal, overarching administration, board, families, and school personnel.

Policy Review. To help with the initial development of the school's wellness policies, Northpoint will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of the assessments will be compiled to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments will be repeated every year to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the Northpoint School 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. Northpoint School will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

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