



Bruce-Guadalupe
Community School



United Community Center
Centro de la Comunidad Unida



United Community Center
Acosta Middle School

United Community Center Schools

Health & Wellness Policy



April 2025



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Purpose

The United Community Center and its schools (hereto referred to as UCC Schools) is committed to the optimal development of every student. UCC Schools believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental and social success, we need to create positive, safe and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

This policy outlines the UCC Schools 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 establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in the district have access to healthy foods throughout the school day — both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus—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 throughout the day;
- Students have opportunities to practice mindfulness activities throughout the day;
- Students have opportunities to develop social emotional skills to promote mental wellness and social emotional well-being;
- Schools engage in nutrition, physical activity promotion, and other activities that foster student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The parents are engaged in supporting the work of UCC Schools in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- UCC Schools establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

This policy applies to all students, staff and schools in the UCC Schools. Specific measurable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.



School Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership

The Principal will convene the UCC wellness committee that meets at least two times per year to establish goals for and oversee school health, including development, implementation and periodic review and update of this wellness policy.

Leadership

The designated school officials for oversight are **Veronica Silva** and **Santiago Navarro**.

The members of the UCC Schools Wellness Committee are as follows:

- Administration
 - Shaba Martinez - Chief Academic Officer
 - Alyssa Mantekas - Preschool Principal
 - Veronica Silva - Elementary Principal
 - Santiago Navarro - BGMS Principal
 - Jose Flores-Benitez - UCC Acosta Principal
 - Zecillia Alamillo-Roman - Youth Programs Director
- School Nurse and Health Clinic Staff - Medical/Health Care Professional
 - Lucy Coronado - SSCHC School Nurse
 - Julie Valdivia - Health Clinic Assistant
- Classroom Teacher
 - K4 -
 - K5 - Teresa DeFrancisco
 - 1st Grade -
 - 2nd Grade - Rebecca Schnell
 - 3rd Grade - Carmen Jackson
 - 4th Grade -
 - 5th Grade - Julie Bakkala
- Physical Education & Health Teacher
 - Eric Roecker
 - Chris Rodriguez
 - Kurt Zagzebski
 - Lauren Bardenwerper
- Community Member and/or Parent
 - Sandra Arteaga-Hernandez
 - Laura Krueger
- Student
- School Food Authority (SFA) Representative - Mirthaly Rivers



Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement

Implementation Plan

The UCC Schools will develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions and timelines specific to each school; and includes information about who will be responsible to make what change, by how much, where and when; as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. It is recommended that the school use the [Healthy Schools Program online tools](#) to complete a school-level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's School Health Index, create an action plan that fosters implementation and generate an annual progress report.

Recordkeeping

UCC Schools will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at the principal's office. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating that the policy has been made available to the public;
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the Local Schools Wellness Policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the UCC Schools uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the UCC Schools Wellness Committee;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the local school wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the Local School Wellness Policy has been made available to the public.

Annual Notification of Policy

The UCC Schools will actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, any updates to the policy and implementation status. The UCC Schools will make this information available via the school website and/or school-wide communications. The UCC Schools will provide as much information as possible about the school nutrition environment. This will include a summary of the UCC Schools events or activities related to wellness policy implementation. Annually, the UCC Schools will also publicize the name and contact information of the school officials leading and coordinating the committee, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the school wellness committee.



Triennial Progress Assessments

The UCC Schools will evaluate compliance with the Wellness Policy no less than once every three years. The assessment will include the extent to which each school is in compliance with the policy and how the policy compares to a model policy, as established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The individuals responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information are Veronica Silva vsilva@bgcsedu.org and/or Santiago Navarro snavarro@bgcsedu.org.

UCC Schools will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The UCC Schools Wellness Committee will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual School Health Index and triennial assessments and/or as UCC Schools priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. **The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.**

Community Involvement, Outreach and Communications

The UCC Schools is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. UCC Schools will ...

- actively communicate ways in which representatives of the UCC Schools wellness committee and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for UCC Schools.
- inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply, and a description of and compliance with [Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards](#).
- use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the district's 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 the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy.
- will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that the district and individual schools are communicating important school information with parents.
- will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually and will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.



Nutrition

School Meals

Our school is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and have zero grams *trans*-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meeting 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 UCC Schools participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP)

All schools within the District are committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations. (UCC offers reimbursable school meals that meet [USDA nutrition standards](#).)
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using at least ten of the following [Smarter Lunchroom techniques](#):
 - Sliced or cut Fresh fruit and vegetables are available daily.
 - Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students.
 - All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal.
 - White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers.
 - A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (e.g., salad bars, snack rooms, etc.).
 - Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas.
 - No junk food vending machines are located in school facilities (*"Junk Food" are items with low nutritional value, typically produced in the form of packaged snacks needing little or no preparation*)

Cold Lunch - Schoolwide Expectations

- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations.
- Students will not be allowed to bring soda or candy.
- If bringing food items of low nutritional value, students will be limited to individual serving sizes.
- Parents will be encouraged to bring whole foods versus processed foods.
- UCC Schools will provide healthy lunch ideas.
- If bringing an unhealthy lunch UCC Schools will provide students with a hot lunch option.



Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the [USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals](#). These school nutrition personnel will refer to [USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website](#) to search for training that meets their learning needs.

Water Access and Hydration

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day* and throughout every school campus. The UCC Schools will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

- Drinking fountains are available and accessible on every floor of our school buildings.
- Students are provided multiple opportunities throughout the school day to stay hydrated, including:
 - During scheduled passing periods
 - At breakfast, lunch, and snack times
 - With teacher permission during classroom activities or breaks
 - Before and after school

Water Quality Assurance: Our school's water systems are tested and monitored regularly in accordance with safety and health guidelines to ensure clean, safe drinking water for all students and staff. Results of all water tests are shared with families.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

The UCC Schools is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus* during the school day* support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (e.g., “competitive” foods and beverages) will 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. A summary of the standards and information, as well as a Guide to Smart Snacks in Schools are available at:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>.

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards.



Celebrations and Rewards

All foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards including through:

1. Celebrations and parties. The UCC Schools will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. The UCC Schools will provide to parents a [list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks](#) nutrition standards.

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 also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff, teachers, parents, students and the community.

The UCC Schools will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur through at least:

- Implementing at least five or more evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using [Smarter Lunchroom techniques](#); and
- Ensuring 100% of foods and beverages promoted to students meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Nutrition Education

The UCC Schools will teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. Schools will 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;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits and school gardens;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods;



- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and
- Includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

The UCC Schools 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. The UCC Schools strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health and physical activity. These efforts will be weakened if students are subjected to advertising on UCC Schools property that contains messages inconsistent with the health information the UCC Schools is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. It is the intent of the UCC Schools 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 the UCC Schools wellness policy.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus* during the school day* will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Food and beverage marketing are defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing often include oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product. This term includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Brand names, trademarks, logos or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or its container.
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on school equipment, such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards or backboards (Note: immediate replacement of these items are not required; however, UCC Schools will replace or update scoreboards or other durable equipment when existing contracts are up for renewal or to the extent that is financially possible over time so that items are following the marketing policy.)
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on cups used for beverage dispensing, menu boards, coolers, trash cans and other food service equipment; as well as on posters, book covers, pupil assignment books or school supplies displayed, distributed, offered or sold by the UCC Schools.
- Advertisements in school publications or school mailings.
- Free product samples, taste tests or coupons of a product, or free samples displaying advertising of a product.
- Schools will restrict food and beverage marketing to only those foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards set forth by USDA's Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools (Smart Snacks) rule.



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Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. The UCC Schools shall provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical activity in addition to physical education.

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks or physical education) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason. The UCC Schools will provide teachers and other school staff with a [list of ideas](#) for alternative ways to discipline students.

To the extent practicable, the UCC Schools will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The UCC Schools will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

Physical Education

The UCC Schools 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.

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

Recess

All elementary schools will offer at least **15-20 minutes of recess** on all days during the school year. If recess is offered before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms located just inside/outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built into the recess transition period/time frame before students enter the cafeteria.

Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. In the event that the school conducts **indoor recess**, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practical.

Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.



Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

The UCC Schools will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues and physical activity facilities. The UCC Schools will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development and strong educational outcomes.

Community Partnerships

The UCC Schools will continue relationships with community partners (e.g., hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, SNAP-Ed providers and coordinators, etc.) in support of this wellness policy's implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with the wellness policy and its goals.

Community Health Promotion and Family Engagement

The UCC Schools 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 (e.g., health fair, nutrition/physical activity open house and will receive information about health promotion efforts.)