



**Hawking STEAM Charter Schools, Inc.  
Wellness Policy**

**(Updated October 17, 2019)**

Hawking STEAM Charter Schools, Inc. (hereto referred to as Hawking) is committed to the optimal development of every student. Hawking believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, and social success, it needs to create positive, safe, and health-promoting environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year. This policy outlines Hawking’s approach to achieving those objectives. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Hawking Students have access to healthy foods throughout the school day and receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Hawking Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during, and after school;
- Hawking Students receive education and resources that promote their social and emotional well-being and their resilience;
- Hawking Students have frequent opportunities to engage in outdoor nature-based activities and are encouraged to do so;
- Hawking Students receive education and guidance that help them develop healthy limits and behaviors with respect to their use of technology and social media;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of Hawking in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- Hawking 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 Hawking students, staff, and schools.

I. **School Wellness Committee**

**Committee Role and Membership**

Hawking will convene a representative School Wellness Committee (herein also referred to as the SWC) that meets at least twice per year to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this wellness policy (heretofore referred as “wellness policy”).

The SWC membership will represent all school levels and include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; students; representatives of the school nutrition program (e.g., food service directors); physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health services staff; and mental health and social services staff (e.g., school counselors); school administrators (e.g., executive director, principal, vice principal), school board members; community health professionals (e.g., dietitians, doctors, nurses); and the general public. To the extent possible, the SWC will include representatives from each school location and reflect the diversity of the community.

**Committee Leadership**

The Hawking Executive Director or designee will convene the SWC and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure each school’s compliance with the policy. SWC Leadership shall be as follows:

Name	Title	Role
Bill Tayler	Operations Coordinator	Wellness Coordinator
Dawna Halama	Special Education and Student Services Coordinator	Social-Emotional Health
Shaekha Dominguez	Food Service Director (H1)	Nutritional Wellness (H1)
Elizabeth Pina	Food Service Director (H2)	Nutritional Wellness (H2)

Eric Martinez	PE Teacher (H1)	Physical Activity (H1)
Caesar Villalobos	PE Teacher (H2)	Physical Activity (H2)
Zach Zaragoza	Counselor (H1)	Emotional Wellness (H1)
Lilianna Moreno	Counselor (H2)	Emotional Wellness (H2)

II. **Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability, and Community Engagement**

**Implementation Plan**

Hawking 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.

This policy and progress reports can be found at [www.hawkingschools.org](http://www.hawkingschools.org).

**Recordkeeping**

Hawking will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at the school business office. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including (1) Efforts to actively solicit SWC membership from the required stakeholder groups; and (2) These groups' participation in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy;
- Documentation of the triennial assessment\* of the policy for each school under its jurisdiction;

- Documentation demonstrating compliance with public notification requirements, including: (1) Methods by which the wellness policy, annual progress reports, and triennial assessments are made available to the public; and (2) Efforts to actively notify families about the availability of wellness policy.

### **Triennial Progress Assessments**

At least once every three years, Hawking will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

- The extent to which Hawking schools are in compliance with the wellness policy;
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of Hawking's wellness policy.

The SWC, in collaboration with individual schools, will monitor schools' compliance with this wellness policy.

### **Revisions and Updating the Policy**

The SWC will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual progress reports and triennial assessments, and/or as Hawking's 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**

Hawking is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. Hawking will actively communicate ways in which representatives of SWC and others can participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for Hawking. Hawking will also 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. Hawking will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on Hawking'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. Hawking will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that Hawking and individual schools are communicating other important school information with parents.

Hawking will notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum. Hawking will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

### **Integration and Coordination of Wellness Activities**

Hawking will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues, and physical activity facilities. Hawking 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 holistic wellness.

### **III. Nutrition**

#### **School Meals**

Hawking is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and dairy; moderate in sodium, low in added sugar, and zero grams *trans* fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meet 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 Hawking schools participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and any additional programs the school may elect. All Hawking schools 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. (Hawking offers reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards.)

### **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**

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day and throughout every school campus. Hawking will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. Hawking will adopt policies that discourage the consumption of beverages containing added sugar (e.g., sodas, juice drinks, sports drinks), and Hawking will not in any manner promote the consumption of such beverages.

### **Competitive Foods and Beverages**

Hawking is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus\* during the school day\* support healthy eating. Any foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (i.e., "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 are available at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>.

### **Celebrations and Rewards**

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

1. Celebrations and parties. Hawking will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents.
3. Rewards and incentives. Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

## **Fundraising**

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus\* during the school day\*. Hawking will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas.

## **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 and teachers, parents, students, and the community.

Hawking will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs.

## **Nutrition Education**

Hawking aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by 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;
- Include enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, and participatory activities;
- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods;

- Discourage the consumption of beverages with added sugar (e.g., sodas, juice drinks, sports drinks);
- Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Include nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

### **Nutrition Counseling**

Hawking will make available to students and parents/caregivers information regarding resources in the community that provide age-appropriate nutritional counseling. Hawking will actively provide such information directly to the parents/caregivers of students they have reason to believe may be at risk of eating disorders, childhood obesity or malnutrition.

In addition, Hawking will seek grant funding to provide on-site nutritional counseling to students.

### **Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools**

Hawking 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. Hawking 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 Hawking property that contains messages inconsistent with the health information Hawking is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. It is the intent of Hawking 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 Hawking's wellness policy.

#### **IV. Physical Education and Activity**

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, physical activity breaks, or physical education) will not be withheld as punishment for any reason.

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



## **Physical Education**

Hawking will provide students with rigorous physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. Hawking will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary to ensure student engagement and participation.

## **Recess**

Outdoor recess will be offered whenever the weather is feasible for outdoor play (e.g., no lightening or heavy rain/storm activity).

In the event that a Hawking school must conduct indoor recess, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable. Each school will maintain and enforce its own indoor recess guidelines.

Recess will complement, not substitute for, physical education classes. 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.

## **School Events**

All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy. All school-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity opportunities when feasible and appropriate to the event.

## **V. Social-Emotional Wellness**

Schools are an ideal setting to support the social and emotional well-being of students and offer resources and opportunities to build resilience. When schools support social and emotional wellness, students are able to focus more on school work, develop skills to communicate effectively, and have fewer disciplinary issues. This generally results in improved overall wellness, better academic outcomes and better health later in life.

A setting that promotes social and emotional well-being and resilience is particularly important for students who face challenges at home or have a history of stressful or traumatic events, commonly referred to as Adverse Childhood

Experiences (ACEs). Hawking is committed to promoting the social-emotional wellness of all of its students, taking into account the particular challenges faced by many Hawking students due to demographic factors and/or economic status.

The School Wellness Committee will work with Hawking School Administrators and the Hawking Board to propose, adopt and implement policies and programs to support the social-emotional wellness of all Hawking students. Such policies and programs should include (but are not limited to) methods such as:

- Raising awareness and understanding about the impact of childhood trauma or Adverse Childhood Experiences;
- Developing trauma-informed school policies and practices to proactively support students and their families;
- Developing trauma-informed school policies and practices to ensure that Hawking school personnel are able to identify and appropriately respond to students whose behaviors indicate that they may have been exposed to traumatic or stressful events in their lifetime;
- Creating emotionally safe and responsive classroom cultures by integrating social and emotional learning into classroom curriculum
- Training Hawking students of all grade levels in mindfulness techniques;
- Implementing Restorative Justice Practices that help students process, learn, and grow from challenging encounter;
- Providing on-site counseling by licensed School Counselors to address student needs individually or in small groups on topics such as healthy body image, life style choices, healthy relationships, etc.;
- Providing innovative and creative techniques and services to support the social-emotional wellness of all Hawking students, and developing school policies and practices related to such services and techniques;
- Partnering with community agencies to provide wrap-around services and supports for Hawking students and their families.

#### VI. **Promotion of Outdoor Nature-Based Activities**

In addition to providing an opportunity for healthy exercise, studies have shown that allowing children the opportunity to spend time engaged in outdoor nature-based activities results in both an increase in positive factors (e.g., higher

cognitive performance and creativity and a decrease in negative factors (e.g., reduction in anxiety, negative rumination and stress).

The School Wellness Committee will work with Hawking School Administrators and the Hawking Board to propose, adopt and implement policies and programs to facilitate frequent outdoor nature-based activities by Hawking students, parents/caregivers and staff. By way of example, such policies and programs may include the following:

- Integrating outdoor nature-based activities into the STEAM curriculum;
- Establishing an Outdoor Club at each Hawking school to promote and facilitate outdoor nature-based activities;
- Providing incentives to students, parents/caregivers and staff to engage in outdoor nature-based activities;
- Providing education to students, parents/caregivers and staff regarding how to engage in outdoor nature-based activities on their own;
- Maintaining a school garden and/or garden boxes at each school to the extent feasible;
- Partnering with nonprofit agencies to provide opportunities for Hawking students, parents/caregivers and staff to engage in outdoor nature-based activities;
- Partnering with nonprofit agencies to provide water safety and swimming education and instruction to Hawking students, parents/caregivers and staff to facilitate their participation in water-based activities such as surfing and snorkeling;
- Promoting environmental conservancy efforts through awareness and education;

Hawking will make available to students and parents/caregivers information regarding other opportunities in the community to engage in outdoor nature-based activities.

In addition, Hawking will seek grant funding to provide frequent outdoor nature-based activities to its students.

## VII. **Responsible Use of Social Media & Technology**

Multiple studies have concluded that excessive use of mobile devices, and in particular excessive social media use, by children has detrimental effects on their development and overall well-being. In one study, brain scans of children with a

great deal of screen time showed a premature thinning of the cerebral cortex (the outermost layer of the brain that processes sensory information), and children who reported more than two hours a day of screen time got lower scores on cognitive and language tests. Other studies have found that excessive screen time can harm children's health by increasing obesity and disrupting their sleep, and children who use social media at night are more at risk for sleep disturbances and symptoms of depression. Furthermore, several studies have found that the more time children spend on social media, the more likely they are to report symptoms of depression.

As a STEAM school, Hawking recognizes the role of technology in the education and lives of its students. However, Hawking is also committed to protecting its students well-being with respect to technology, including promoting the responsible use of electronic mobile devices and educating its students, parents/caregivers and staff about such use.

The School Wellness Committee will work with Hawking School Administrators and the Hawking Board to propose, adopt and implement policies and programs to promote the responsible and healthy use of digital devices and social media by Hawking students. By way of example, such policies and programs may include the following:

- Providing education to students, parents/caregivers and staff regarding age-appropriate screen time limitations for children;
- Providing education to students, parents/caregivers and staff regarding the detrimental effects of excessive screen time and social media usage;
- Adopting and issuing guidelines for parents/caretakers to follow regarding screen time and social media use, particularly on nights before School Days;
- Advocating for, and providing, alternative social or physical activities in lieu of social media and screen time;
- Adopting appropriate policies related to the use of mobile phones by students during the School Day;
- Providing education to students, parents/caregivers and staff regarding the safe use of social media by children and the avoidance of risks related to human trafficking through social media.

## **Glossary**

*Extended School Day:* time during before and afterschool activities that includes clubs, intramural sports, band and choir practice, drama rehearsals, etc.

*School Campus:* areas that are owned or leased by the school and used at any time for school-related activities such as the school building or on the school campus, including on the outside of the school building, school buses or other vehicles used to transport students, athletic fields, and stadiums (e.g. on scoreboards, coolers, cups, and water bottles), or parking lots.

*School Day:* midnight the night before to 30 minutes after the end of the instructional day.

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(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; or

(3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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