

Sly Park Environmental Education Center

LOCAL SCHOOL WELLNESS PROGRAM

Section 204 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 added Section 9A to the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 USC 1758b), Local School Wellness Policy Implementation. The provision set forth in Section 204 expands upon the previous local wellness policy requirement from the Child Nutrition and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265). The Act requires each local educational agency participating in the National School Lunch Program or other federal Child Nutrition programs to establish a local school wellness policy for all schools under its jurisdiction.

Sly Park Wellness Plan

Preamble

Research shows that two components, good nutrition and physical activity before, during and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. For example, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) School Breakfast Program is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores, lower absenteeism and better performance on cognitive tasks.^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7} Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.^{8,9,10} In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education and extracurricular activities – do better academically.^{11,12,13,14} Finally, there is evidence that adequate hydration is associated with better cognitive performance.¹⁵

The Board of Education recognizes the link between student health and learning and thus strives to promote healthy eating and physical activity for all students.

Sly Park Environmental Education Center (Sly Park) is the outdoor science and environmental education program operated by the Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE). Sly Park is committed to providing students with a successful, week-long outdoor education experience, which includes a positive, safe, learning environment in a unique in a camp-like setting.

The Sly Park Wellness Plan will consist of these components:

1. Nutrition and physical activity to promote student wellness.
2. Nutrition guidelines to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity for all foods available at Sly Park, via the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and ChooseMyPlate.gov.
3. Create a school wellness committee that includes stakeholders such as teachers, nutrition staff, parents, students, school food authorities, school administrators, and members of the general public.
4. The wellness committee will contribute to the development, implementation, and review of the Sly Park wellness plan and reinforce students' understanding and appreciation of the importance of a healthy lifestyle; advise on health-related issues, activities, policies and programs such as disease prevention, weight management and oral health.
5. Keep accessible the Sly Park Wellness Plan for the general public.
6. Periodic assessment of extent to which Sly Park is in compliance with the wellness policy. This will include inviting feedback from stakeholder groups every three years.
7. Appoint a wellness committee coordinator who is responsible for ensuring that Sly Park complies with the wellness plan:
Director, Sly Park; 916-228-2482

To promote student health and wellbeing, Sly Park has adopted nutritional guidelines consistent with the National School Lunch and National School Breakfast programs, and provides appropriate nutrition, education, and physical activity for its students. Therefore, it is the policy of Sly Park to meet the following **school wellness plan goals**:

- Sly Park will engage food service staff, the director, and Sly Park teachers, as well as participating students, parents, and classroom teachers (through evaluation feedback tools), in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students attending Sly Park (grades 5-6) will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a daily basis, including hiking and recess opportunities.
- Foods and beverages served at Sly Park will meet the nutrition recommendations of the USDA Nutrition Standards for School Meals.
- Sly Park food service staff will
 - Provide students with access to a variety of nutritious and appealing foods that meet their health and nutrition needs.
 - Accommodate the religious, ethnic, health, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning.
 - Provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- Sly Park will participate in available federal school meal programs, including the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program.
- Sly Park will support nutrition and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity.

TO ACHIEVE THESE PLAN GOALS:

I. Sly Park Wellness Committee

The Sly Park Wellness Committee (SPWC), as provided in Federal Legislation, will assist in developing, implementing, reviewing, and, as necessary, revising school nutrition and physical activity policies. The SPWC will serve as the resource for implementing those policies. The SPWC will consist of a group of individuals representing Sly Park (administrator, teacher/s, head cook, and secretary/outdoor education support specialist) and local parent/s. Sly Park will invite feedback and input from participating 5th and 6th grade students, parents, and teachers through weekly teacher surveys, student/parent surveys, and other feedback tools.

II. Nutrition Quality of Foods and Beverages Served on Campus

School Meals

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

- Be appealing and attractive to children;
- Be served in a clean and pleasant setting;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations, including fruits and vegetables, low-sodium, and whole grain- rich foods.

Menus will be posted in the Sly Park dining hall. Sly Park will share information about the nutritional content of meals with those interested.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals

Sly Park will prevent the overt identification of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.

Meal Times and Scheduling

Sly Park will:

- Provide students with a least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat after sitting down for lunch;
- Schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 10 am and 2 pm. Sly Park will serve breakfast at 7:30am, lunch at 12:15pm, and dinner at 5:00pm;
- Schedule lunch to follow “Recreation Time” (recess) to better support learning and healthy eating;
- Provide students access to hand washing or sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- Take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risks).

Accommodations for Children with Disabilities in the Child Nutrition Programs

Sly Park is committed to ensuring that all children have access to healthy meals that meet their dietary needs and will accommodate students with medical and other special dietary needs through meal substitutions.

Guidance on Prohibition of Separation by Gender during Child Nutrition Program Meal Service

School food authorities (SFA's), organizations, and institutions impacted by this guidance are those participating in any of the following Child Nutrition Programs: NSP, SBP, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, SMP, CACFP and SFSP. These include any schools, child or adult care institutions and facilities, camps (including residential facilities, and other sites, as defined in 7 CFR §§ 210.2, 215.2, 225.2, and 226.2, that are providing meal service as a Program activity). In general, SFA's, institutions, and organizations participating in the Child Nutrition Programs are not permitted to separate children on any protected basis during meal or snack service, in keeping with Federal non-discrimination laws and policies outlined for the Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs in 7 CFR Parts 15, 15a, and 15b. Federal law prohibits discrimination based on gender at any education institution Federal assistance.

Access to Drinking Water

- Students and school staff members will have access to free, safe, fresh (potable) drinking water at all times throughout the campus and throughout the school day. Water is available at all meal times.
- Sly Park staff will encourage and model drinking water consumption. Students will be encouraged to carry water bottles filled only with water with them throughout the day.
- Maintenance will be performed on all water fountains regularly to ensure the hygiene standards for drinking fountains, and other methods for delivering drinking water maintained.

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff

Sly Park's Head Cook will administer the school meal programs. As part of Sly Park's responsibility to operate a food service program, Sly Park will provide the avenues for continuing professional development for all food service personnel.* Sly Park recognizes the cultural diversity within the student population and will include professional development to reflect the diversity of healthy food traditions in the student population. Professional development programs will include appropriate certification and/or training programs for cafeteria workers according to their levels of responsibility.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

Sly Park does not allow students to bring food/snacks from home, with the exception of nut-free foods required for medical dietary needs that cannot be accommodated by the Sly Park kitchen. Students with special medical needs (i.e., diabetes) will be allowed to carry approved snacks.

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion

Sly Park encourages and supports healthy eating and will provide nutrition information through posters, signage and by meals served. Science lessons throughout the week will incorporate discussions about the importance of healthy food choices, drinking water, and physical activity.

No food or beverages are marketed or available for purchase on the Sly Park campus.

* School nutrition staff development programs are available through the USDA, School Nutrition Association, and National Food Service Management Institute.

Communications with Parents

Sly Park encourages communication with parents who are concerned with the dietary needs of their child while the child attends the Sly Park program. Sly Park also provides a “Student/Parent Evaluation” form for each student and parent to discuss and evaluate the student’s week at Sly Park. The Sly Park website provides several parent resources[†].

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities

Daily Physical Activity; K-12

Students attend Sly Park during their 5th or 6th grade year of school. Sly Park will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students including boys, girls, gender-neutral, students with disabilities, and students with special medical needs.

All students will receive daily instructional trails (walking/hiking) as well as the participation in evening activities (night hikes, team building games, and gym games) towards their physical exercise requirement of 150 minutes per week for elementary school students and 225 minutes per week for middle school students. Sly Park will provide adequate space/equipment and conform to all safety standards.

Daily Recess

Students at Sly Park will receive a daily minimum of 20-25 minutes of supervised “Recreation Time” (recess), preferably outdoors, for each full day they are at Sly Park. Students will be encouraged to participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment. (NOTE: This period cannot count as physical education).

Physical Activity and Punishment

Sly Park teachers and staff will not use physical activity or withhold opportunities for physical activity as a punishment.

Safe routes to school

Transportation to and from Sly Park is provided by the students’ schools. Once the students arrive at Sly Park, there is no further need for transportation until the students depart Sly Park.

Use of school facilities outside of school hours

Because the Sly Park program is a week-long, residential program, this section is not applicable.

V. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

Sly Park will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the dining hall and physical activity facilities. To increase students’ self-esteem, to promote social responsibility and stewardship, and to prevent bullying, Sly Park will utilize its student-developed character education program to encourage students to be trustworthy, respectful, empathetic, enthusiastic, and safe (“T.R.E.E.S.”) during all aspects of the Sly Park program.

[†] www.slyparkcenter.org. Click on the “For Parents & Students” tab.

VI. Monitoring and Plan Review

Monitoring

The Sly Park administrator will ensure compliance with the physical activity and educational components of the wellness plan.

Food service staff, under the direction of the Sly Park administrator and Head Cook, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas.

Plan Review

Sly Park will perform annual reviews to ensure plan compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of the annual review, Sly Park will review meals and nutrition standards, physical activities, and education and other program elements. Sly Park will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies to facilitate their implementation.

To ensure the ongoing development and implementation of Sly Park's wellness plan, every three years the SPWC will evaluate compliance with the wellness plan. As part of this assessment, Sly Park will invite feedback from stakeholders in order to identify and prioritize needs and to ensure that policies and procedures meet those needs. The SPWC will use indicators, as established by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Healthy Schools Program Framework of Best Practices[‡], to measure the implementation and effectiveness of Sly Park activities related to student wellness. The following information will be included in the triennial assessment:

- Extent to which Sly Park is in compliance with the wellness plan
- Comparison of the Sly Park wellness plan to CDE school wellness models and/or other school wellness policies
- Progress made in attaining the goals of the plan
- Recommendations to change the plan, if any
- Additional information required by the USDA

This triennial assessment and the Sly Park Wellness Plan shall be posted on our website. (7CFR 21030).

[‡] https://schools.healthiergeneration.org/_asset/1062yk/07-278_HSPFramework.pdf

Endnotes

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- ¹⁵ Change Lab Solutions. (2014). *District Policy Restricting the Advertising of Food and Beverages Not Permitted to be Sold on School Grounds*. Retrieved from <http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/district-policy-school-food-ads>.