



## **South Shore Charter School Wellness Policy for 2025-26**

This Wellness Policy is approved for use for the 2025-26 School Year.

### **Preamble**

South Shore Charter School is committed to working with schools, families, and the community to ensure that all students graduate knowing how to take care of their minds, their bodies, and those around them. For students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, and social success, they need positive, supportive, and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

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 rates of absenteeism, and better performance on cognitive tasks. Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods, including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students. 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.

This policy outlines South Shore Charter School's approach to ensuring its schools can provide students with physical and health education instruction, as well as environments and opportunities that allow all students to practice healthy behaviors throughout the school day with minimal commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students have quality physical education that meets State requirements, and opportunities to be physically active before, during, and/or after school;
- Students receive comprehensive health education that helps them develop the knowledge and skills to practice lifelong healthy behaviors;
- Students learn how to access the health information and services available to them in and outside of school settings;
- Students have access to healthy foods during the school day—through both reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus—in accordance with federal and New York State nutrition standards;
- Food and beverages sold or served at school meet strict nutrition standards;



- School meals provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet their health and nutritional needs;
- South Shore Charter School participates in available federal school meal programs, including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, and Afterschool Snack Program.
- Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of the South Shore Charter School in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and,
- Central offices coordinate management, oversight, implementation, communication about, and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

### **This policy applies to all students and staff at South Shore Charter School**

South Shore Charter School's Operations team drafted the policy with the goal of ensuring that schools and the community have a more cohesive policy that clearly defines federal, State, and local mandates and recommendations associated with each area.

- Physical Education and Physical Activity
- Comprehensive Health Education, including Nutrition Education
- Health Services
- School Food and Nutrition Promotion
- Other Activities that Promote Wellness

### **Governance**

#### **Wellness Committee: Roles and Membership**

The South Shore Charter School Wellness Committee ("Wellness Committee") that meets at least two times per year to recommend, review, and support the implementation of policies and practices addressing wellness-related issues that affect student health and well-being, including the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this Wellness Policy ("wellness policy").

The Wellness Committee membership will represent all school levels and, to the extent possible, will include but not be limited to: parents/caregivers, students, representatives of School Food (e.g., nutrition director), staff, school administrators (e.g., Superintendents, principals), and other community partners and stakeholders. The Wellness Committee shall consist of members who are representative and inclusive of the South Shore Charter School school community.

A School Wellness Committee acts as an advisory team to the School Leadership Team and the principal in order to review and support implementation of the wellness policies; assess the wellness of the



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school environment using the School Wellness Scorecard; and create and implement action plans as a part of school-wide wellness initiatives (e.g., physical activity programs, healthy fundraisers, non-food celebrations and rewards) and/or to support instructional goals in Comprehensive Education Plans. The Wellness Committee leader should communicate wellness-related policies annually so that all staff, parents, and students are aware of and follow policy guidelines. Final responsibility for School Wellness Council governance and policy implementation rests with the SFA food program director & school principals.

**The name(s), title(s), and contact information of Wellness Committee members are:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Contact Info</b>
<b>Ryan Miller</b>	<b>Director of Operations and Authorized Rep</b>	rmiller@southshorecharterschool.org
<b>TBD</b>	<b>Parent Representative</b>	
<b>TBD</b>	<b>Student Representative</b>	
<b>Dermoth Mattison</b>	<b>School Executive Director</b>	dmattison@southshorecharterschool.org
<b>TBD</b>	<b>Whitson’s Vended Meals Representative</b>	

**Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability, and Community Engagement Implementation Plan**

In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with instructional portions of this wellness policy. Principals or designees also will ensure that requirements (e.g., Chancellor’s Regulation A-812) and health services requirements are met, where applicable, and each school will report operational compliance to the appropriate South Shore Charter School operations manager. In addition, SFA Food Service Director will provide the following services:

- Work with the Wellness Committee and utilize student surveying to measure student acceptance of the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program offerings.
- Continue to monitor compliance of cycle menus and snack programs with federal, State, and local nutritional policies and standards.
- Randomly collect, analyze, and evaluate Menu items for compliance with School Food specifications.
- Continue to participate in audits and reviews by local, State and federal agencies.



## **Recordkeeping**

The South Shore Charter School SFA food service Director will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy on the South Shore Charter School's central computer network. Documentation maintained will include but not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including (1) efforts to actively solicit Wellness Committee membership from the required stakeholder groups; and (2) these groups' participation in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy;
- Annual, school-level physical education and health education progress reports (pursuant to [City Council Legislation](#))
- Documentation of the triennial progress assessment (see below) 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 the wellness policy.

## **Annual Assessments**

The Wellness Committee will compile and publish an annual Wellness Policy Assessment to share basic information about the wellness policy and report on the South Shore Charter School's overall progress implementing wellness goals. This annual assessment will be published on the South Shore Charter School website.

This report will include but not be limited to:

- The website address for the wellness policy and/or how the public can receive/access a copy of the wellness policy;
- A summary about the South Shore Charter School's progress in meeting the wellness policy goals;
- Highlights of school and/or South Shore Charter School events or activities related to wellness policy implementation;
- The name and position title of the designated South Shore Charter School policy leader(s) identified in Section I; and
- Information on how individuals and the public can get involved with the school wellness efforts.



### **Triennial Progress Assessments**

At least once every three years, coordinating South Shore Charter School will evaluate progress of the wellness policy to assess implementation, including the extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the South Shore Charter School SFA are in compliance with the wellness policy, and provide a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the South Shore Charter School wellness policy. The person responsible for managing the triennial assessment is the SFA Food Service Director. The triennial progress report will be made available to the public on the South Shore Charter School website.

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

The Wellness Committee will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual assessments and triennial assessments, and/or as South Shore Charter School priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerge; 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 South Shore Charter School is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. The South Shore Charter School will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the Wellness Committee and others can participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy. South Shore Charter School will also inform parents of changes 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. South Shore Charter School will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or notices displayed on the South Shore Charter School website, 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. South Shore Charter School will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports. South Shore Charter School 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 communicate other important school information to parents.

South Shore Charter School will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum.

### **Physical Education and Physical Activity**

#### **Physical Education**

Physical education (PE) class is an essential component of educating the whole child. In PE, students learn about their bodies, how to take care of them, and how to move, as well as the skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits. Physical Education is an academic subject that students need and deserve in order to maintain focus in school and develop healthy habits for a lifetime. South Shore Charter School



must provide students with physical education according to [New York State Education Law 803\(Open external link\)](#).

Staffing: Every school serving elementary school grades is required by State regulations to have at least one PE-certified teacher. Per NYS Commissioner's Regulation 135.4, a South Shore Charter School classroom teacher may provide instruction under the guidance of a certified PE teacher in elementary school. In middle and high schools, PE must be provided by a certified PE teacher. South Shore Charter School highly recommends that all elementary PE be taught by a PE-certified, licensed teacher.

Also, in accordance with the [New York State Concussion Management and Awareness Act\(Open external link\)](#), all PE teachers and coaches must complete concussion training every two years.

Student Participation: All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. Schools will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students, and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary. Per State regulation, waivers, exemptions, or substitutions for physical education classes are not permissible.

### **Physical Activity**

Children and adolescents should participate in [60 minutes of physical activity\(Open external link\)](#) every day. Along with physical education, a substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through school activities, including classroom-based physical activity, recess, active transportation to school, and out-of-school time activities. The South Shore Charter School is committed to promoting and supporting these opportunities. Schools will ensure that these activity opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education (addressed in "Physical Education" subsection above).

South Shore Charter School recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn when they have periodic breaks to be physically active or stretch. Accordingly, South Shore Charter School also recommends that teachers provide short (3-5 minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time. Physical activity breaks should complement, not substitute for physical education class, recess, and/or class transition periods. Resources and ideas for implementing regular, physical activity breaks are available through USDA and the Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

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, nor will it be used as a punishment for any reason. This does not include participation in out-of-school activities or school sports teams, which may have specific rules and requirements for participation.

Active Design: South Shore Charter School encourages schools to create environments that promote physical activity for the health and well-being of students, staff, and the community. South Shore Charter School recommends two resources to guide schools:

- [The Active Design Toolkit for Schools\(Open external link\)](#) was developed by the Partnership for a Healthier New York City in collaboration with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, South Shore Charter School, and the New York City Department of



Transportation. It provides details and strategies for and examples of incorporating active recreation, beautification, healthy foods and beverage choices, and active transportation into school environments.

- [The Active Design Playbook for Early Childhood Settings\(Open external link\)](#) was developed by the Healthy Living by Design Unit at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene with input from a range of partners and with support from the Partnership to Improve Community Health cooperative agreement funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It provides strategies and ideas for how to incorporate active play and time in nature to support learning in NYC’s early childhood centers.

### **Comprehensive Health Education**

Health education plays a critical role in helping students develop the knowledge and skills they need to care for their bodies and make healthy decisions. Health education provides young people with the opportunity to develop essential competencies, such as goal-setting, self-advocacy, communication, decision-making, analyzing influences, accessing resources, and practicing health-enhancing behaviors that will help them succeed in school and in life.

The South Shore Charter School must provide students with health education according to New York State Education Law 804, and under rules set out in [Commissioner’s Regulations 135\(Open external link\)](#). According to New York State [Commissioner's Regulations Part 135.3\(Open external link\)](#), South Shore Charter School requires standards-based Comprehensive Health Education in elementary, middle, and high school that is medically accurate, age- and developmentally appropriate, culturally inclusive, and provided in a safe and supportive learning environment where all students feel valued.

Whenever possible, nutrition promotion events and activities within and around the school—such as School Food Program tastings, school garden and Garden to Café activities, community farmers markets, and School Wellness Committee healthy cooking/eating events—should be referenced and/or coordinated with nutrition education lessons provided as part of comprehensive health education.

New York State also requires that all students K-12 receive a certain number of lessons annually on the nature, methods of transmission, and methods of prevention of HIV/AIDS.

Parents may opt their child out of “prevention” lessons having to do with methods of preventing pregnancy and/or sexually transmitted infections (STIs), not including abstinence lessons. Additional information about parent notification and opt-out policies for certain HIV lessons and certain sexual health education lessons is available on the South Shore Charter School website.

### **Health Services**

When children are healthy, they are more likely to learn and to be successfully engaged in school. In-school health services can play a vital role in removing health obstacles to learning by ensuring access and/or referral to primary health care services, providing integrated mental health services, managing chronic disease conditions during school hours, providing emergency care for illness or injury,



identifying communicable diseases, and enacting practices and systems to ensure that all students have access to key resources and services that are developmentally appropriate.

South Shore Charter School will strive to provide a range of health services to support student well-being and academic success, including:

- On-site school nurses, physicians and health educators;
- School-Based Health Centers;
- Mental health programs, vision screening, dental screening, and reproductive health services.

The South Shore Charter School strongly encourages all schools to promote participation in available health services and to strengthen links between instructional areas, especially between health education and health services, to help students access health resources and put learning into action. School nurses, School-Based Health Center staff, and others are important members of the school community to include in School Wellness Councils, when possible.

### **School Food Nutrition and Promotion**

Good nutrition is paramount for a great education. When students have a healthy diet, it enhances their attention and understanding during class time. The South Shore Charter School food program offers nutritious, complete meals daily that provide students with the fuel their brains need to excel in school. Schools are strongly encouraged to highlight what is being served in the lunchroom during announcements, in newsletters, during community meetings, and as part of nutrition education lessons. Doing so will allow students to learn about the benefits and value of healthy choices.

Meals served by South Shore Charter School through the School Breakfast Program (SBP), National School Lunch Program (NSLP), and After-School Snack adhere to the following requirements:

### **Meet, local, State, and federal requirements for reimbursement**

- Restrict the fat content of meals as follows:
  - Total fat will be limited to 30 percent of the total calories over the course of the week
  - Saturated fat will be limited to 10 percent of the total calories over the course of the week
- Provide limited and targeted amounts of sodium
- Offer and promote the consumption of fresh fruit and a variety of vegetables daily
- Offer and promote the inclusion of plant-based entrees
- Incorporate seasonal and locally produced foods into menus
- Offer at least two of the following varieties of milk:



- Low-fat (1%)
- Fat-free
- Fat-free chocolate milk

South Shore Charter School will continue to prohibit ingredients that are potentially harmful to developing children in the products served on our menus.

Monthly menus will be posted in school dining rooms and on the South Shore Charter School website.

### **Breakfast**

To meet students' nutritional needs and to stress the benefits of a healthy breakfast, South Shore Charter School encourages students to participate in the School Breakfast program.

### **Lunch**

South Shore Charter School offers students a varied lunch menu designed to meet nutritional standards, and works with students to develop innovative and healthy items for use in menus.

Competitive Foods: Foods and Beverages Sold/Served Outside the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program

“Competitive Foods” refers to foods and beverages sold to students through vending machines, a la carte snacks, school stores, school fundraisers, and school-based kitchens. Food and beverages in these settings are governed by the Chancellor’s Regulation on Competitive Foods (CR A-812).

Effective February 2010, only foods and beverages that meet the New York City Department of Education guidelines may be offered for sale during school hours. The list will not include items prohibited by federal and/or New York State law.

Information on approved snack products, ingredients, portion sizes, and other information is available on this website [SchoolFood website\(Open external link\)](#).

### **Beverage Standards for Areas Not Accessible to School Children (e.g., Teacher Lounges and Administrative Offices)**

Beverage vending machines in administrative offices and teacher-accessible areas (e.g., teachers’ lounge and other spaces to which students do not have access) shall comply with the Citywide standards for beverage vending machines for adults, which may be updated from time to time by the City at its sole discretion.

### **Nutrition Education and Promotion**

The Wellness Committee can work with school sites to promote and monitor nutritional and physical activity policies and programs in their respective schools. These groups can serve as a resource to the school administration in implementing those policies.



South Shore Charter School will complement these efforts by addressing nutrition education in professional learning opportunities for teachers using NYC DOE-recommended comprehensive health education curricula, as well as in physical education and health education scope and sequence documents.

### **Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness**

South Shore Charter School encourages and supports schools in integrating wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues, and physical activity facilities. South Shore Charter School will seek to coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition, and other wellness components so that efforts are complementary, not duplicative. South Shore Charter School will also work toward the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development, and strong educational outcomes.

### **Community Partnerships**

South Shore Charter School will work to develop relationships with community partners and stakeholders 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.



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