

Wellness Policy

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School (HVMCPS) is committed to teaching and learning in an environment that focuses on the needs of the whole child. Optimal personal wellness varies for individual students and is critical for their ability to be in school and “ready to learn.” Wellness is defined as the quality or state of being healthy in body and mind, especially as the result of deliberate effort.

HVMCPS acknowledges the steady rise in adult and child overweight and obesity as reported by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). HVMCPS recognizes the link between access to healthy foods and opportunities for being physically active and its effect on personal wellness, obesity, and readiness to learn. Eating nutritious foods and being physically active has been proven to improve behavior and alertness, as well as standardized testing scores. To that end, HVMCPS has established a Wellness Advisory Committee (WAC) and the following policies to support staff, student, parent, and community wellness.

HVMCPS’ Wellness Policy can be found at <https://www.hillviewmontessori.org/policies-procedures>

I. Wellness Advisory Committee

1. The WAC consists of HVM administrators, the HVM School Nurse and the HVM Health and Wellness teacher. We will attempt to invite parents, students and community members whenever possible. The Director of Finance & Administration or designee is responsible for and will oversee the implementation and compliance of the school’s Wellness Policy.
2. The committee will meet 4 times per year throughout the school year with the goal of reviewing and drafting policies or otherwise advising the HVMCPS staff, parents, Administrators and Board of Trustees on issues that affect health and wellness at HVMCPS.
3. Committee meeting minutes can be found at <https://www.hillviewmontessori.org/policies-procedures>

II. Wellness Policy Assessment and Evaluation

1. The Wellness Committee will assess and revise the policy every three years or on an as needed basis. The committee will compare the current policy to a model policy and will be sure that the school policy is based on current best practices, federal and state guidelines and regulations, national nutritional and physical activity guidelines, and local community needs. We will update policy goals during our Triennial assessment.
2. Findings from the Triennial assessment, updated goals and plans for policy revisions can be found at <https://www.hillviewmontessori.org/policies-procedures>

III. Nutrition Education and Wellness Promotion

1. HVMCPS teachers and staff will be able to review the Wellness Policy through the Staff files server.
2. HVMCPS students in grades K–8 receive nutrition education through the school’s Physical Education program, aligned with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Frameworks. This instruction integrates state standards by promoting healthy eating habits, understanding nutritional guidelines, and fostering decision-making skills that support lifelong wellness.
3. Students have access to free drinking water during the school day including during breakfast, lunch and snack time via drinking fountains throughout the building.

IV. Physical Activity and Fitness Education

1. Students will participate in a Phys Ed Program that is led by a qualified teacher per the Massachusetts Department of Education requirements.
2. Phys Ed classes will be held at each level at least one time per week.
3. Proper and safe fitness equipment and adequate indoor and outdoor space will be provided during Phys Ed classes and recess.
4. Students will participate in daily recess for at least 20 minutes per day or more.
5. Recess will not be restricted as a punishment.
6. To the extent possible, physical activity breaks and movement will be encouraged and incorporated into everyday teaching and learning when appropriate.

V. School Meals Program

1. HVMCPS will participate in the National School Lunch and Breakfast programs and follow all state and federal requirements for the meal programs in compliance with the [USDA nutrition standards](#).
2. HVMCPS food service staff will receive the required hours of training needed for our school and program.
3. Strict confidentiality of students who participate in the Free and Reduced Meal Program will be adhered to.
4. Students have access to free drinking water during the school day including during breakfast and lunch via drinking fountains throughout the building.
5. At least 20 minutes will be allowed for students to eat lunch and at least 10 minutes for eating breakfast.
6. Students eat meals in the classrooms and will be encouraged to wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer prior to and after meals and snacks for sanitary as well as allergy awareness and prevention. (See HVMCPS Allergy Awareness Policy)
7. HVMCPS does not allow food to be withheld as a punishment OR given as a reward.

VI. Nutrition Standards for All Foods Available during the School Day

1. HVMCPS staff will be encouraged to be positive role models for students with regards to healthy eating behaviors and habits.
2. Except for school celebrations, and where proper planning has been established to ensure safety, food sharing will be strongly discouraged to avoid accidental exposure to food allergens.
3. All competitive foods and beverages provided or sold during the school day will follow the [Massachusetts Competitive Foods and Beverages Standards](#) and/or the [USDA Smart Snacks Standards](#), whichever is stricter.
4. All food-based fundraisers and any food/beverage marketing on the school campus during the school day, will follow the [Massachusetts Competitive Foods and Beverages Standards](#) and/or the [USDA Smart Snacks Standards](#), whichever is stricter.
 - a. The school day is defined as midnight the night before until 4:30 pm
5. Teachers can decide how his/her own class will celebrate various occasions in the classroom. If a teacher chooses to have or requests food from parents for a celebration, reward or incentive, the teacher and parents must follow the recommended healthy foods based on the [Massachusetts Competitive Foods and Beverages Nutrition Standards](#).
 - a. Resources for food choices will be provided. (See Appendix B)
 1. One such resource is the "A List" that is developed and updated by the John C. Stalker Institute at Framingham State College. This list is updated, and after August of 2012, will comply with the Massachusetts Competitive Foods and Beverages Nutrition Standards. (See Appendix B)

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6. HVMCPS staff will not be responsible for determining if a food that is sent in by a parent for an individual child's snack or meal complies with the nutrition standards and will not be taken away.

Appendix B:

Guidance for Parents/Guardians and Staff for foods that comply with Massachusetts Competitive Foods and Beverages Nutrition Standards

Periodically, lists of acceptable foods may be shared with families, staff, and students based on latest nutrition guidelines and standards set for public schools in Massachusetts. In general, fresh, frozen, or packaged fruits and vegetables in their own 100% natural juices will be acceptable. Water, non-fat or low-fat (1%) milk, non-sweetened 100% fruit juices are the beverages that should be provided. Refer to Appendix A for nutrition guidelines for all foods that are provided. Foods that fit these guidelines are requested.

Foods on the “A List” from the John C. Stalker Institute for Food and Nutrition at Framingham State University will be considered by HVMCPS to be acceptable as these foods comply with the Massachusetts Competitive Foods and Beverages Nutrition Standards to which we are held. Please use the following link to access the “A-List”: [A-List - John C. Stalker Institute of Food and Nutrition \(johnstalkerinstitute.org\)](http://www.johnstalkerinstitute.org)

References and Additional Resources for Parents/Guardians and Staff:

Selected Messages for Consumers. U.S. Department of Agriculture. ChooseMyPlate.gov Website. Washington, DC. <https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/food-group-gallery>

Obesity rates among all children in the United States. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC.gov Website. Atlanta, GA. Data and Statistics. <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/index.html>

Massachusetts Department of Public Health. 105 CMR 225.000: Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages in Public Schools. <https://www.mass.gov/regulations/105-CMR-22500-nutrition-standards-for-competitive-foods-and-beverages-in-public-schools>

The Learning Connection: The Value of Improving Nutrition and Physical Activity in Our Schools, Action for Healthy Kids <https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/the-learning-connection/>

Constructive Classroom Rewards, Center for Science in the Public Interest www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/constructive_rewards.pdf

Alternatives to Using Food as a Reward, Mass.gov .pdf (copy and paste link to your browser) <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/viewer.html?pdfurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.mass.gov%2Fdoc%2Fhealthy-students-healthy-schools-guidance-for-implementing-massachusetts-school-nutrition%2Fdownload&clen=1066927&chunk=true&pdfilename=school-nutrition-guide.pdf>

Prohibition against Denying Meals and Milk to Children as a Disciplinary Action, U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/resources/ProhibitionAgainstDenyingMealsAsPunishment.pdf

Energizers, East Carolina University www.ncpe4me.com/energizers.html

Model School Wellness Policies. National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA) <http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/>