

## HOWARD GARDNER MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE CHARTER SCHOOL

	Students/Families	SF18-1001
	Wellness Policy	ADOPTED DATE: October 16, 2018  REVIEWED DATE:  REVISED DATE: May 20, 2025

### **Purpose**

Howard Gardner Multiple Intelligence Charter School (HGMICS) is committed to providing a school environment that promotes student and staff wellness and supports students in their efforts to become fit, healthy and ready to learn. Through implementation of this policy, students and staff shall become more knowledgeable and skilled in making behavior choices that support optimum health.

### **Goals**

The School adopts this policy based upon recommendations of the Wellness Committee and in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.

To ensure the health and well-being of all students, the School establishes that the School shall provide;

For Students:

- A comprehensive nutrition program consistent with federal and state requirements.
- Reasonable cost to foods and beverages that meet established nutrition guidelines.
- Physical education courses and opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day.
- Curriculum and programs for grades K-8 that are designed to educate students about proper nutrition and lifelong physical activity, in accordance with Pennsylvania Department of Education curriculum regulations and academic standards.

For Students and Staff:

- *Access to strategies and supports to develop knowledge and skills for social-emotional health.*
- *access to high quality counseling, psychological, and social services to support mental, behavioral, and social-emotional wellbeing.*

*HGMICS is committed to establishing strong partnerships with students, employees, families, community members, and community organizations to ensure engagement and involvement between school and other settings to maximize the impact of wellness programming.*

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## **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of this policy to ensure that HGMICS programs and curriculum are compliant with this policy, related policies and established guidelines or administrative regulations.

The CEO shall annually report to the Board on the School's compliance with law and policies related to school wellness. The report may include an assessment of the school environment regarding school wellness issues, evaluation of food services program, review of all foods and beverages sold in school for compliance with established nutrition guidelines and recommendations for policy and/or program revisions.

The CEO or designee and the established Wellness Committee shall conduct an assessment at least once every three (3) years on the contents and implementation of this policy as part of a continuous improvement process to strengthen the policy and ensure implementation. This triennial assessment shall be made available to the public in an easily accessible and understood manner and include:

- The extent to which HGMICS is following law and policies related to school wellness.
- The extent to which this policy compares to model wellness policies.
- A description of the progress made by HGMICS in attaining the goals of this policy.

At least once every three (3) years, HGMICS shall update and modify this policy as needed, based on the results of the most recent triennial assessment and/or as the School and community needs and priorities change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information and technologies emerge; and new federal or state guidance or standards are issued

HGMICS shall annually inform and update the public, including parents/guardians, students, and others in the community, about the contents, updates, and implementation of this policy via the School website, parent/student handbook, posted notices and/or other efficient communication methods. This annual notification shall include information on how to access the School Wellness policy, information about the most recent triennial assessment; information on how to participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the School Wellness policy; and a means of contacting the Wellness Committee leadership.

## **Recordkeeping**

HGMICS shall retain records documenting compliance with the requirements of the School Wellness policy that shall include:

The written School Wellness policy.

Documentation demonstrating that the School has informed the public, on an annual basis, about the contents of the School Wellness policy and any updates to the policy.

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Documentation of efforts to review and update the School Wellness policy, including who is involved in the review and methods used by the School to inform the public of their ability to participate in the review.

Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the School Wellness policy and notification of the assessment results to the public.

### **Wellness Committee**

HGMICS shall establish a Wellness Committee composed of, but not necessarily limited to, at least one administrator, food service representative, student, parent/guardian, school nurse, health/physical education teacher, K-8 certified teacher, social worker or counselor, and a member of the public.

The Wellness Committee shall serve as an advisory committee regarding student health issues and shall be responsible for developing, implementing, and periodically reviewing and updating a School Wellness policy that complies with applicable laws and regulations and to make recommendations to the CEO for adoption of any updates or revisions to the policy.

The Wellness Committee shall review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques in establishing goals for nutrition education and promotion, physical activity and other school-based activities that promote student wellness as part of the policy development and revision process. The School Nurse will serve as a resource to the Committee to examine student health issues and to assist in organizing follow-up programs. The Wellness Committee will monitor the four goals of nutrition education, nutrition promotion, physical activity, and physical education as central to a school environment that promotes health and wellness.

### **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.

HGMICS shall promote nutrition through the implementation of Farm to School activities where possible. Activities may include, but not be limited to, the initiation/maintenance of school gardens, taste-testing of local products in the cafeteria and classroom, classroom education about local agriculture and nutrition, field trips to local farms and incorporation of local foods into school meal programs.

HGMICS food service personnel shall review and implement research-based, behavioral economics techniques in the cafeteria to encourage consumption of more whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and legumes, and to decrease plate waste. Consistent nutrition messages shall be demonstrated by avoiding use of unhealthy food items in classroom lesson plans and school staff avoiding eating less healthy food items in front of students. HGMICS shall offer resources about health and nutrition to encourage parents/guardians to provide healthy meals for their children.

### **Physical & Nutrition Education**

A sequential physical education program consistent with curriculum regulations and Health, Safety and Physical Education academic standards shall be developed and implemented. Quality physical education instruction that promotes lifelong physical activity and provides instruction in the skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong participation shall be provided.

Physical education classes shall be the means through which all students learn, practice and are assessed on developmentally appropriate skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong, health enhancing physical activity. Safe and adequate equipment, facilities and resources shall be provided for physical education courses.

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Physical education shall be taught by certified health and physical education teachers.

Nutrition education will be provided within the sequential, comprehensive health education program in accordance with curriculum regulations and the academic standards for Health, Safety and Physical Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences.

Nutrition education in the School shall teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by students. Promoting student health and nutrition enhances readiness for learning and increases student achievement. Nutrition education lessons and activities shall be age appropriate.

Lifelong lifestyle balance shall be reinforced by linking nutrition education and physical activity. Nutrition education shall extend beyond the School environment by engaging and involving families and the community.

### **Physical Activity**

HGMICS shall strive to provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day for all students. A physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students shall be maintained. Extended periods of student inactivity, two (2) hours or more, shall be discouraged and physical activity breaks shall be provided for students during classroom hours.

### **Health Education**

Health education and healthy living skills are taught as part of the regular curriculum. These courses provide the opportunity for all students to understand and practice concepts/skills related to health promotion and disease prevention.

Nutrition promotion and education will be taught as part of the regularly scheduled health curriculum as well as in other teachable moments when appropriate in the classroom and lunchroom.

### **Social Emotional Climate**

The HGMICS will prioritize the cultivation of just and equitable learning environments, where each member of the school community is treated with dignity and respect, and experiences a sense of belonging, positivity, and safety.

HGMICS will establish and sustain a focus on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) as a process through which students develop the fundamental social and emotional skills for success in learning and life. HGMICS is committed to the CASEL framework the address 5 competences: 1) Self Awareness 2) Self Management 3) Social Awareness 4) Relationship Skills 5) Responsible Decision Making

All students will be taught the core SEL curriculum and social emotional learning will be integrated into all academic subjects.

### **School Counseling, Psychology, and Social Work Supports**

HGMICS will provide a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) that integrates academic (literacy, math, science, social studies, etc.) and socio-emotional wellbeing (behavior, socio-emotional learning, mental health, health/wellness) supports across all universal, targeted, and intensive levels.

B. Selection and delivery of targeted (tier 2) and intensive (tier 3) integrated supports and interventions are data-driven and emerged from an analysis of school-wide universal academic, behavior, climate, and wellbeing data (e.g., universal screening).

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C. Schools will develop a consistent teaming structure that (1) maps school support, interventions, and resources, (2) engages in data-based decision making, and (3) integrates all supports through an intentional school-wide strategy to promote academic success and socio-emotional wellbeing.

HGMICS will implement and sustain at least four evidence-based (i.e., research supported, promising best practice, or data-driven) supports or interventions to meet student social, emotional, behavioral, and health needs. At least two will be at the universal level, one at the targeted level and one at the intensive level.

All services provided by HGMICS students services staff (nurses, school counselors, school psychologists, and social workers) aim to address barriers to learning and create environments that foster emotional and physical safety, overall health, and availability for learning.

### **Employee Wellness**

School-based or school-linked programs will be available and offered in an effort to promote employee wellness and to facilitate positive role modeling for students.

### **Family and Community Involvement**

HGMICS shall partner with parents/guardians and community members and organizations, such as YMCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs, local and state parks, hospitals, etc., to institute programs that support lifelong physical activity.

### **Other School Based Activities**

Drinking water shall be available and accessible to students, without restriction and at no cost to the student, at all meal periods and throughout the day.

Nutrition professionals who meet hiring criteria established by the School and in compliance with federal regulations shall administer the school lunch program. Professional development and continuing education shall be provided for lunch program staff, as required.

The School shall provide adequate space and time to eat school meals, as defined by the School, for eating and serving school meals.

### **Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods/Beverages at School**

All foods and beverages available during the school day shall be offered to students with consideration for promoting student health and reducing obesity. Foods and beverages provided through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) shall comply with established federal nutrition standards. Food and beverages offered or sold at school or parent sponsored events outside the school day shall offer healthy alternatives in addition to more traditional fare.

Competitive foods available for sale shall meet or exceed the established federal nutrition standards (USDA Smart Snacks in School). These standards shall apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold to students, which may include, but are not limited to a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, snack carts and fundraisers.

### **Food Allergies**

HGMICS shall establish administrative procedures to address food allergy management to:

1. Reduce and/or eliminate the likelihood of severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reactions.
2. Ensure a rapid and effective response in case of a severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reaction.
3. Protect the rights of students by providing them, through necessary accommodations when required, the opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities.

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**Competitive foods** are defined as foods and beverages offered or sold to students on the school campus during the school day that are not part of the reimbursable school lunch. For purposes of this policy, school campus means any area of property under the jurisdiction of the school that students may access during the school day. For purposes of this policy, school day means the period from midnight before school begins until thirty (30) minutes after the end of the official school day.

### **Fundraiser Exemption**

Fundraising activities held during the school day involving the sale of competitive foods shall be limited to foods that meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards unless an exemption is approved in accordance with the applicable administrative guidelines.

HGMICS may allow a limited number of exempt fundraisers as permitted by PDE each school year, i.e. up to five (5) exempt fundraisers. Requests from faculty, students, and Parent Forum for approval for an exempt fundraiser must be submitted to the Wellness Committee for approval at least two months before the beginning date of the fundraiser.

Requested fundraisers will be reviewed on a first come basis.

### **Non-sold Competitive Foods**

Non-sold competitive foods available to students, which may include but are not limited to foods and beverages offered as rewards and incentives, at classroom parties and celebrations, or as shared classroom snacks, shall meet or exceed the standards established by the School.

1. Rewards and Incentives - Foods and beverages shall not be used as a reward for classroom or school activities unless the reward is an activity that promotes a positive nutrition message.
2. Classroom Parties and School Celebrations - HGMICS encourages and prefers the use of non-food items at classroom parties and celebrations. If food is going to be served, staff must arrange for it to be purchased by the parent/guardian from and/or prepared on site by the schools' food service department. No outside food or drink is permitted at classroom celebrations, including birthday and holiday celebrations.
3. Shared Classroom Snacks - Shared Classroom snacks will be monitored by the classroom teachers and provide an opportunity to promote good nutrition. Only healthy snacks will be provided.

Teacher – Student Lunch: The emphasis of the School STAR reward Teacher-Student Lunch is the opportunity for personal attention and interaction. Food should be limited to the daily lunch either bought or brought for the day.

HGMICS shall provide a list of nonfood ideas, to parents/guardians and staff, which may be posted via the School website, parent/student handbook, posted notices and/or other efficient communication methods.

### **Marketing/Contracting**

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day shall meet or exceed the established federal nutrition standards (USDA Smart Snacks in School) and comply with the established administrative regulations. Exclusive competitive food and/or beverage contracts shall be approved by the CEO, in accordance with provisions of law. Existing contracts shall be reviewed and modified to the extent feasible to ensure compliance with established federal nutrition standards, including applicable marketing restrictions.

*References:*

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*Section 1422.1. Local Wellness Policy.--(1422.1 repealed June 5, 2020, P.L.223, No.30)*

*42 U.S. Code § 1758b - Local school wellness policy*

*CDC Healthy Schools - Smart Snacks*

*CDC - Improving School Health*