

Hawthorn Academy
Policy: Wellness Policy
Approved: March 12, 2025



Purpose

The purpose of this school Wellness Policy (the “Policy”) is to ensure the best possible mental and physical health environment for the students of Hawthorn Academy (the “School”) and for all students to practice lifelong healthy habits that promote physical, mental, and social health. The School’s Board of Trustees (the “Board”) and Administration (the “Administration”) recognizes that there is a well-documented link between nutrition, physical activity and learning. Well-planned and effectively implemented school nutrition and fitness programs have been shown to enhance students’ overall health as well as their behavior and academic achievement in school. Schools have a responsibility to help students learn, establish and maintain lifelong healthy eating and activity habits and to promote healthy living in families and in the community.

25% of children and adolescents are affected by chronic health conditions, with about 5% of children having multiple chronic health conditions. Some chronic health conditions can affect students during the school day and possibly impact their academic performance such as asthma, diabetes, seizure disorders, and poor oral health. For example, research demonstrates that 49% of students with asthma miss one or more days of school because of asthma symptoms. Students with diabetes often face many challenges in school with monitoring and treating blood glucose levels, which can ultimately impact quality of life and school achievement. Research illustrates that students with seizure disorders may have difficulty with cognitive ability, academic performance, and scores on intelligence tests¹.

Equally important components of overall health and well-being are Mental and physical health. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. Mental illnesses are conditions that affect a child’s thinking, feeling, mood or behavior. Depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and attention deficit disorder are conditions that may be occasional or chronic and affect the child’s ability to relate to others and function during the school day. Faculty and staff wellness is an integral part of a healthy school environment as well, since school faculty and staff can be daily role models for healthy behaviors.

The School shall engage the community in supporting the work of the local school in creating continuity between schools and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits. The School shall establish and maintain an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication, and monitoring of the policy.

¹Tiu, G. F., Leroy, Z. C., Lee, S. M., Maughan, E. D., & Brener, N. D. (2019). Characteristics Associated With School Health Services for the Management of Chronic Health Conditions. The Journal of School Nursing

Wellness Committee

Under the direction of the Board and Administration, the School has established a Wellness Committee to oversee wellness efforts, review the School's progress towards accomplishment of the School's wellness objectives and, as necessary, recommend changes to the Policy. The Wellness Committee may consist of, but is not limited to, students, parents, food service staff, members of the Board and Administration, teachers, health professionals and members of the community. Hawthorn community shall be encouraged to participate in the development and assessment of the wellness policy. The Wellness Committee may utilize a self-evaluation (Surveys twice a year to both staff and parents) or planning tool to assess the effectiveness and quality of the policy. The Wellness Committee reassessment shall be advertised in Newsletters, Website and by Admin recommendation requesting. Leadership will convene the local Wellness Committee and facilitate development of and any updates to the Wellness policy and will ensure each school's compliance with the policy.

Wellness Committee members are as follows:

Floyd Stensrud (Superintendent), Jeremy Craig (Principal) Emely Puerto (Vice Principal), Brenda Thomas (Parent), Justin Heidmann (Parent) Katherine Harbaugh (Teacher), Rachel Zager (Kitchen Director), Ashley Sheaffer (Teacher), Jennifer Darcy (Teacher) DeAwna Egege (Teacher) and Melanie Campbell (Teacher).

Objectives

All students in the School shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy food and physical activity choices throughout their lifetime. Parents and families shall be provided with tools and resources to promote and encourage healthy living. All staff in the School shall be encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.

To meet these objectives, the School adopts this Wellness Policy, which addresses physical activity, nutrition education, and healthy school environment and food guidelines. This Policy is designed to effectively utilize School and community resources to equitably serve the needs and interest of all students, families, faculty and staff, taking into consideration differences in culture.

Physical Activity

The Board and Administration recognize the importance of physical activity for student health and academic achievement. To promote physical activity, the School will:

- a. Ensure that every student from Kindergarten through ninth grade receives regular, age appropriate, quality physical education.
- b. Teachers shall incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into core subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, mathematics, language arts, social studies) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.
- c. Provide a wide variety of physical activities and introduce students to many different sports and ways of getting physically active. This may be done in the classroom as well as through physical education, assemblies and after-school activities.
- d. The school has established before- and/or after-school sports teams or clubs for students. Faculty act as advisors with support from parent volunteers. Sports and clubs include, for example, cross country, volleyball, basketball, soccer, dance, cheer, creative drama, ballroom, art, exploratory science, etc.
- e. Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) as punishment. Any restriction of recess or other physical activity opportunities for disciplinary purposes must be limited in duration with administrative approval and may not prevent students from receiving the required physical activity minutes.

- f. Provide physical activities that teach all students, regardless of ability, cooperation and teamwork, good sportsmanship, positive self-image and personal achievement.
- g. Ensure that alternative activities are provided for students with physical disabilities.
- h. Provide exemptions from physical activities where appropriate for ill or injured students.
- i. To the extent practicable, the School shall ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe, and that equipment is available to students to be active. The School shall conduct necessary inspections and repairs.
- j. All secondary students shall take a minimum of one physical education course in middle school and 1.5 credits of physical education in high school.
- k. Shall provide at least 20 minutes of active daily recess to all elementary school students.
- l. Shall provide recess before lunch when schedules allow. Considerations shall be made for students with medical needs, such as diabetes and hypoglycemia
- m. Shall make accommodations for students to participate indoors for poor air quality on mandatory action days.
- n. Shall provide recess monitors or teachers to encourage students to be active.
- o. The School shall support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing annual professional development opportunities and resources.

Nutrition Education

The primary purpose of nutrition education is to build knowledge and skills that will help students make healthy eating and physical activity choices now and throughout their lives. In order to do so:

- a. The classroom, cafeteria and other School venues will provide clear and consistent messages that explain and reinforce healthy eating and physical activity habits.
- b. Faculty and staff will teach healthy eating habits in the classroom by incorporating healthy facts and activities not only in health but also subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects as required per grade for Core Curriculum
- c. Nutrition education will be provided and nutrition incentive programs will be established. Staff wellness is a focus and activities are established which allow staff to model and support the wellness policy.
- d. The school lunch program places a tip monthly in the school cafeterias and on the Parent Newsletter at each school, that is sent out each week..
- e. Students will be encouraged to test healthy food items with which they are not familiar to promote behavior change and healthy school meal consumption.
- f. Nutritional and physical awareness and healthy lifestyles will be promoted to students, families, faculty and staff through activities that may include but are not limited to assemblies, fairs, newsletters and physical activities.
- g. The school works with the community to promote nutrition and physical awareness through an annual Healthy Living Expo and Fun Run/Walk. Healthy tips are shared with families through community partners and representatives to help educate families the month leading up to the event and at the event through direct email/texts and Newsletters.

Healthy School Environment

The Board and Administration understand the need to create a school environment that is conducive to promoting and sustaining the nutritional, physical and emotional health of its students, faculty and staff. In order to create such an environment:

- a. Students will be educated on the importance of proper hand washing and will be provided access to restrooms for washing hands.
- b. The School makes drinking fountains available so that students can get water at meals and throughout the school day. In addition, students are allowed to bring and store water bottles in the classroom; however, only water is permitted in water bottles while in the classroom.
- c. The School ensures there is adequate time, as determined by the Board and Administration, for students to enjoy eating healthy foods with friends.
- d. The School will offer opportunities and encouragement for staff to model healthy eating and exercise habits
- e. The Wellness Committee works with the school PTO to pursue and implement fundraising activities that promote healthy eating and physical activity. School will fill out School Site Exempt Food Fundraiser Form for approved Fundraisers that do not meet Smart Snack Standards. (3 allowed per year)
- f. The School will hold vision screenings in the fall of each school year.

Mental Health

Mental health is more than the absence of illness, it is an integral component of health and well-being. The school understands the role mental health plays in the school context because it is central to our students' social, emotional, and academic success. When students' mental health is supported they are better able to learn, make decisions, build relationships, cope with life's challenges, and thrive.

- a. The faculty and staff have a annual Child sex abuse and human trafficking prevention
[https://vahara-o2-public.s3.amazonaws.com/media/45345/Sexual-Abuse-and-Mole station-Prevention-Policy-7-22-20.pdf](https://vahara-o2-public.s3.amazonaws.com/media/45345/Sexual-Abuse-and-Mole%20station-Prevention-Policy-7-22-20.pdf)
- b. The School has a Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy
[https://vahara-o2-public.s3.amazonaws.com/media/45344/Child-Abuse-%26-Neglect-Reportin g-Policy-%287.22.20%29.pdf](https://vahara-o2-public.s3.amazonaws.com/media/45344/Child-Abuse-%26-Neglect-Reportin%20g-Policy-%287.22.20%29.pdf)
 - The School has a bullying and Hazing Policy
 - <https://vahara-o2-public.s3.amazonaws.com/media/104558/HA-Bullying-and-Hazing-Policy-%2810.12.2022%29.pdf>
 - The school sponsors a Mental Health Night for students and Parents in early fall of each school year.

Air quality

All individuals are entitled to breathe healthy air and to be free of the adverse health effects of indoor and outdoor air pollution.

The health, comfort, and learning environment of students and staff are important aspects of the school. Air quality, both indoor and outdoor, is a critical component of providing a healthy and comfortable learning environment. The School shall:

- a. Control temperature, humidity, and ventilation associated problems, which shall foster students' comfort and learning.
- b. Monitor the outdoor air pollution and provide a safe alternative to outdoor recess on days with elevated levels of air pollution.
- c. Limit idling at drop off and pick up zones and post signage to remind parents and guests of idle free zones.

There are many health and educational benefits to air purifiers in schools, they can help cut down on absences, they can help raise test scores, improve student behavior, and improve the overall health of students. Even low-level air pollution makes it more difficult for students to learn, reduces test scores, and diminishes academic performance

<https://www.uphe.org/free-air-purifiers-for-utah-schools/> Sun Safety

The School recognizes Utah's high rate of skin cancer. In order to protect students and staff Hawthorn Academy shall use comprehensive sun-safe practices to best protect students and staff from harmful sun exposure during school activities.

Whenever possible schools shall:

- a. Schedule recess for times when ultraviolet ray (UV) exposure can be minimized;
- b. Promote sun safety habits like wearing hats, sunglasses, or applying sunscreen that is brought from home; who spend time outdoors and take steps to limit their exposure.
- c. Have indoor recess if the temperature feels like 100 degrees or higher based on airtemp and relative humidity

First Alert Weather (Cold days)

Whenever possible schools shall:

- a. Have indoor recess when the temperature feels less than 22 degrees taking wind speed and air temperature into consideration
- b. Encourage winter clothing for students at recess so they stay warm and comfortable

Period Products

LEAs will provide period products at no cost in all female and unisex restrooms ([Utah Code 53G-4-413](#) and [53G-5-414](#)).

Substance Misuse Prevention and Intervention

The use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs has been found to negatively affect the developing brain of youth. Not only are youth who use alcohol, tobacco and other drugs at a higher risk for experiencing addiction later in life, but teen substance use has been linked with school performance problems such as higher absenteeism and poor or failing grades. Using alcohol, tobacco and other illicit drugs in adolescence can harm the parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood and impulse control.

Enforcement of clear, consistent standards of conduct, prevention education and promotion, and the implementation of evidence-based programs can prevent youth substance use.

Substance Misuse Prevention

Schools are in a powerful position of influence among the students they serve and can play a major role in prevention. Research is clear that the establishment and

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- a. Hawthorn Academy will provide a school sponsored parent seminar that includes substance misuse and prevention. ([Utah Code 53G-9-703](#))
- b. Hawthorn Academy staff shall be required to receive training and instruction on child sexual abuse prevention and awareness, responding to a disclosure of child sexual abuse, and mandatory reporting requirements according to the Utah Child Sexual Abuse Prevention law ([Utah Code 53G-9-207](#)).
- c. Hawthorn Academy shall adopt comprehensive school policies and procedures for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. Since youth are at higher risk for suicide after an attempt and/or inpatient care, this should include procedures for the re-entry process after this has occurred. By having clear policies and procedures in place, schools can act to reduce the risk of suicide and to prevent suicide contagion.

Healthy students are better learners, and academic achievement bears a lifetime of benefits for health. Schools are an ideal setting to teach and provide students with opportunities to improve their dietary and physical activity behaviors and manage their chronic health conditions (asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, food allergies, and poor oral health). When school health policies and practices are put in place, healthy students can grow to be healthy and successful adults.

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/about.htm>

Food Guidelines

The primary purpose of the food guidelines contained herein is to ensure that the use of food in the School promotes and protects health and wellness. Meal programs at Hawthorn Academy shall seek to help children develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors, support healthy choices, and improve overall student health and well being through the following policies and practices.

The following guidelines are hereby set forth:

- A. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp>
- B. B. Hot lunch and breakfast will be available at the School. Information will be available at the beginning of the school year. All meals must be eaten in the supervised area. There is no eating food in the halls or outside on the playground.
- C. Food that supports the School's wellness philosophy (Smart Snacks) and objectives will be allowed in the classroom at the teacher's discretion where it is part of a lesson plan or demonstration. For example, a teacher may use an orange to teach fractions.
 - a. All items sold to students during the school day meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Questions regarding food related fundraisers, school stores, etc. should be directed to the Food Service Department. There are three allowable exceptions per school year.
 - b. Correct form will be filled out for these fundraisers.
 - c. Food-base Fundraisers will not occur in competition to the School Breakfast Program or National School Lunch Program.
 - d. When Field Trips are scheduled, students will have access to sack meals through the School Breakfast program and National School Lunch Program.
 - e. Fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat dairy products are featured in school menus, are displayed in an attractive manner, and prepared appropriately.
 - f. Food items available to children through school meals, a la carte, vending machines, school stores, events, celebrations, fundraisers, concessions, etc. support healthy food choices and the goal of improving student health and well-being
- D. Gum will not be provided to students at any time during school and will not be allowed within the School or on School property.
- E. Distribution of carbonated beverages to middle school students only will be limited to select activities held 30 minutes after the end of school and approved by the Administration. Carbonated beverages will not be distributed to students in grades K- 6. Energy drinks are prohibited across the schools for students.
- F. Teachers will be encouraged to identify their students' allergies and dietary restrictions and work with parents to address individual needs.
- G. Consumption of food and snacks in classrooms is permitted only at the discretion and under the direction of the classroom teacher.
- H. Students will be discouraged from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other dietary restrictions.
- I. Students are prohibited from selling food items on campus.
- J. Classes that have a student with a food allergy will have a sign posted on their doors: Allergy Aware Classroom. A letter will be sent home to parents of all students in that class so that they will be aware that certain foods are restricted in that setting and for classroom activities.
- K. Classroom celebrations that involve food will be allowed at the Administration's discretion. Such celebrations shall comply with the following:
 - a. All foods made available will comply with state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. All food brought for a classroom activity must have a clear, store-bought ingredient label.
 - b. Healthy snack choices and/or options will be offered to students, faculty and staff as part of the celebration.
 - c. Faculty, staff and parents will make healthy and fun activities the focus of the celebration rather than food.
 - d. The School will regulate the use of food as a reward or incentive for children, as they may undermine healthy nutrition practices being taught, teach children to eat when they are not hungry, and set the stage for unhealthy habits which can contribute to obesity.

- e. The PTO will create and provide suggestions of healthy and affordable snacks to parents who are helping with celebrations.
- K. Food provided as part of after school or extracurricular activities will be under the direction of the Administration.
- L. Guidelines for meals served as part of the School's school lunch program will not be less restrictive than the regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of section 10 of the Child Nutrition Act (42 U.S.C. § 1779) and sections 9(f)(1) and 17(a) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. § 1758(f)(1), (1766(a))).
- M. Food Marketing - Advertisements for Non-program foods will not be permitted

³ Action for Healthy Kids. (n.d.). *Healthy Non-food Rewards*. Retrieved from Action for Healthy Kids:

https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Healthy-Non-Food-RewardsTip-Sheet_English.pdf

OVERSIGHT OF POLICY

- The Lead Director, in conjunction with the campus administrators, will oversee the Wellness Policy. The Lead Director (Floyd Stensrud) and the Admin Assistant (Kim Oliver) will oversee the Wellness Policy process.
- The Kitchen Director (Rachel Zager), who oversees the National School lunch program at all campuses, will ensure compliance with the lunch program regulations.
 - Ensure that all reimbursable school meals meet current USDA nutritional standards. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp>
- The Policy will be reviewed every three years; next due date 02/2026
- The policy will be posted on the Hawthorn website after Board vote/approval.
- The school administration will measure level of implementation twice a year in self reporting staff/parent/student surveys.