



## Wellness Policy

### Overview

Boston Renaissance Charter Public School ("BRCPS" or the School) is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects its students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of BRCPS that:

- The school will engage students, parents, teachers, and staff in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing school-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades PreK-6 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Qualified school staff will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, BRCPS will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program).
- BRCPS will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

### *Assessing and Meeting Student Needs*

In establishing a school-wide health and wellness policy, it is necessary to understand the needs of BRCPS' students and families and establish programs to meet those needs, while developing students' nutritional awareness and providing physical education at the School. To achieve policy goals, BRCPS will establish a school health committee consisting of school staff, parents, and members of the school's Food Service program. This committee will meet at least annually to establish programmatic goals and policies related to wellness:

- The School's primary goal in providing physical education is to provide our students with the knowledge, skills, and ability to maintain a healthy lifestyle through lifelong physical exercise, regardless of their physical abilities.
- All grades at the School will participate in a physical education program. The purpose of physical education at BRCPS will be two-fold:
  - It will instill in our students the importance of lifelong physical exercise.
  - It will expose our students to fitness, movement, and self-awareness skills and techniques that position them strongly to take advantage of the athletic opportunities that will be offered to them in secondary school and community-based programs.

- BRCPS has an indoor gymnasium and an outdoor space for play and athletics. The school utilizes these spaces for optimal student use, with structured physical education indoors and structured play during recess outdoors, weather permitting.

### **Health and Wellness Policy Goals**

Based on the anticipated needs of BRCPS students, the following policy goals have been recognized:

#### **1. Food and Beverages Brought Into the School, Sold and Served**

##### *School Meals*

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

- Be appealing and attractive to children
- Be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;

##### *Breakfast*

To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- BRCPS will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- BRCPS will communicate with parents to encourage their students to participate in the school breakfast program.
- BRCPS students will have the opportunity to eat breakfast at school between the hours of 7:15 am to 7:50 am daily in the cafeteria.

##### *Free and Reduced-priced Meals*

BRCPS will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Currently, BRCPS participates in the Community Eligibility Program (CEP), which removes the need to identify students' individual free or reduced price status.

- In the event that BRCPS no longer participates in CEP, BRCPS will mail the Free and Reduced Lunch application to all students who do not qualify under Direct Certification in order to avoid having some students receive applications by hand while others do not.

##### *Summer Food Service Program*

BRCPS will provide breakfast and lunch to students throughout the School's summer vacation, free of charge. In the event BRCPS does not participate in the Summer Food Service Program, the School will notify parents of locations in their communities where children can receive free breakfast and lunch during the summer.

##### *Meal Times and Scheduling*

BRCPS will:

- Provide students with appropriate time to eat after sitting down for breakfast and after sitting down for lunch;
- Schedule meal periods at appropriate times
- Not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during meal times, unless students may eat during such activities; and
- Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

#### *Food Service Professionals*

The food program will be administered by qualified professionals. Professionals will obtain appropriate certification and/or training to administer the food program on a continuous basis.

#### *Sharing of Foods and Beverages*

BRCPS discourages students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some students' diets.

## **2. Physical and Nutrition Education**

BRCPS aims to teach, encourage and support healthy eating by students. BRCPS will promote fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices. Students will be taught the importance of physical activity.

#### *Family Support*

BRCPS will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities. BRCPS will provide families with information on nutrition and healthy eating, as well as information on food access programs, i.e. local food banks and community programs offering meals.

## **3. Physical Activity**

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

- All students in grades PreK-6, including students with disabilities and special healthcare needs, will receive physical education.
- Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirements.
- Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

#### *Physical Activity and Punishment*

Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use the revocation of physical activity (e.g. physical education) as a consequence or punishment for infractions of school policies.

## **4. Evaluation**

BRCPS will conduct annual assessments of the overall Wellness Policy to review policy compliance, assess individual programs, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the School's Wellness Committee will review all meals programs, nutrition education, and physical education policies and program elements. BRCPS will, as necessary, revise the Wellness Policy and develop work plans to facilitate enhancements to programs identified as being in need of improvement.

The Head of School or designee will ensure compliance with established school-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies described herein.