Lubavitch Mesivta of Chicago Wellness Policy

Revised August 2026

Preamble

Lubavitch Mesivta of Chicago (hereto referred to as LMC) is committed to the optimal development of every student. LMC believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, and social success, we need to create positive, safe, 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 absenteeism, and better performance on cognitive tasks.[1,2,3,4,5,6,7] Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.[8,9,10] 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.[11,12,13,14]

This policy outlines LMC's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in LMC have access to healthy foods throughout the school day—both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus—in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during, and after school;
- Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of LMC in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- LMC establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about, and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

I. School Wellness Committee

Committee Role and Membership

LMC will convene a representative school wellness committee (hereto referred to as the SWC) that meets at least one time per year to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this school-level wellness policy (heretofore referred as "wellness policy").

The SWC membership will represent the Lubavitch Mesivta student body and include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; students; representatives of the school nutrition program (ex., school nutrition director); teachers; school administrators (ex., superintendent, principal, vice principal), school board members; health professionals (ex., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public. To the extent possible, the SWC will include representatives from the school and reflect the diversity of the community.

Leadership

The designated Superintendent will convene the SWC and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure the school's compliance with the policy.

Designated Individual:

Name	Title	Email address	Role
Sholom Halberstam	School Principal	rh@lmchicago.com	Superintendent of this School Wellness Committee (SWC)

II. Nutrition

School Meals

Our school district is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and zero grams *trans* fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

LMC participates in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and *after school snack.* LMC is committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings;

- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations. (LMC offers reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards.)
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using some of the Smarter Lunchroom techniques:
  - Sliced or cut fruit are sometimes available
  - Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students
  - All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal
  - Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options

- *LMC child nutrition program will accommodate students with special dietary needs.*
- *Students will be allowed at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they have received their meal and are seated (meets HSP Gold level). Students are served lunch at a reasonable and appropriate time of day.*
- *Participation in Federal child nutrition programs will be promoted among students and families to help ensure that families know what programs are available in their children's school.*

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day. LMC will make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. In addition, students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day. *Water cups/jugs will be available in the cafeteria.*

- *All water sources and containers will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene standards.*

Competitive Foods and Beverages

LMC is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus during the school day support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (i.e., "competitive" foods and beverages) will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day, and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits.

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, foods and beverages are NOT sold to students on the school campus during the school day.

Celebrations and Rewards

All foods offered on the school campus will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards including through:

1. Celebrations and parties. LMC will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas. Healthy party ideas from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and from the USDA.

2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. LMC will provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards; and
3. Rewards and incentives. LMC will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children. Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior. *[Meets HSP Silver]*

Fundraising

LMC will use only non-food fundraisers, and encourage those promoting physical activity (such as walk-a-thons, jump rope for heart, fun runs, etc.).

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. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff and teachers, parents, students, and the community.

LMC will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs.

Nutrition Education

LMC aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other classroom instruction through other subjects
- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Include nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education

LMC will include in the health education curriculum the following essential topics on healthy eating:

- The relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention
- Food guidance from MyPlate
- Reading and using USDA's food labels
- Eating a variety of foods every day
- Balancing food intake and physical activity
- Eating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grain products

- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain *trans* fat
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars
- Eating more calcium-rich foods
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices
- Accepting body size differences
- Food safety
- Importance of water consumption
- Importance of eating breakfast
- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants
- Eating disorders
- The Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Reducing sodium intake
- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers, and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior
- How to develop a plan and track progress toward achieving a personal goal to eat healthfully
- Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior
- Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior

USDA's Team Nutrition provides free nutrition education and promotion materials, including standards-based nutrition education curricula and lesson plans, posters, interactive games, menu graphics, and more.

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

LMC is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. LMC strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health, and physical activity. These efforts will be weakened if students are subjected to advertising on District property that contains messages inconsistent with the health information LMC is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. It is the intent of LMC to protect and promote student's health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus, consistent with LMC's wellness policy.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Food advertising and marketing is defined[15] as an oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller, or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product. This term includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Brand names, trademarks, logos or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or its container.
- Displays, such as on vending machine exteriors.
- Corporate brand, logo, name, or trademark on school equipment, such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards, or backboards (Note: immediate replacement of these items

are not required; however, districts will consider replacing or updating scoreboards or other durable equipment over time so that decisions about the replacement include compliance with the marketing policy.)

- Corporate brand, logo, name, or trademark on cups used for beverage dispensing, menu boards, coolers, trash cans, and other food service equipment; as well as on posters, book covers, pupil assignment books, or school supplies displayed, distributed, offered, or sold by LMC.
- Advertisements in school publications or school mailings.
- Free product samples, taste tests, or coupons of a product, or free samples displaying advertising of a product.

III. Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should participate in 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive, school-based physical activity program (CSPAP) that includes these components: physical education, recess, walk and bicycle to school, and out-of-school time activities and LMC is committed to providing these opportunities. Students at LMC are encouraged to ride bikes and go walking during their recess and free time, have organized sports games during their recess time and use the workout rooms at the local Jewish Community Center. Each student has a membership at the local JCC.

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, physical activity breaks) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason. LMC will provide teachers and other school staff with a list of ideas for alternative ways to discipline students.

To the extent practicable, LMC will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. LMC will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education

LMC will include in the health education curriculum the following essential topics on physical activity:

- The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity
- How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight
- How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process
- How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease
- Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition
- Differences between physical activity, exercise, and fitness
- Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout, and cool down
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity
- Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community
- Preventing injury during phyical activity
- Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia, and sunburn while being physically active
- How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time, and type of physical activity

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- Developing an individualized physical activity and fitness plan
- Monitoring progress toward reaching goals in an individualized physical activity plan Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids
- Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers, and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to physical activity and fitness
- How to influence, support, or advocate for others to engage in physical activity How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activity

Physical Activity Breaks

LMC recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered **periodic opportunities** to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. LMC recommends teachers provide short (3-5 minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

LMC will provide resources and links to resources, tools, and technology with ideas for physical activity breaks. Resources and ideas are available through USDA and the Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

Before and After School Activities

LMC offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after the school day (or both) through a variety of methods. LMC will encourage students to be physically active before and after school by going to the local Jewish Community Center workout room and spend their recess time playing ball, walking and biking.

Active Transport

LMC will support active transport to and from school, such as walking or biking. LMC will encourage this behavior by engaging in *six or more* of the activities below; including but not limited to:

- Designation of safe or preferred routes to school
- Secure storage facilities for bicycles and helmets (e.g., shed, cage, fenced area)
- Instruction on walking/bicycling safety provided to students
- Crosswalks exist on some streets leading to schools

IV. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

Staff and Community Wellness and Health Promotion

The SWC will also focuses on staff and community wellness issues, identify and disseminate wellness resources, and perform other functions that support staff and community wellness.

LMC will implement strategies to support staff and community wellness in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. LMC promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost.

Professional Learning

When feasible, LMC will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (e.g., increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or incorporating nutrition lessons into math class). Professional learning will help District staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing district reform or academic improvement plans/efforts.

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