



## School Wellness Policy

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# School Wellness Policy

*STEP Inc*

*2025*

## **Leadership<sup>1</sup>**

The Director of Youth Services, Larry Darnell Moore II (p) 540-483-0681 with support from the STEP Board of Directors, shall implement and ensure compliance with the School Wellness Policy (Wellness Policy) by leading the review, update, and evaluation of the policy.

## **Public Involvement<sup>2</sup>**

STEP LIFES Academy will invite a diverse group of stakeholders and the public to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the Wellness Policy. The public will be notified through social media posts, the STEP website, local postings, and community agency requests for opportunities to participate.

## **School Meals<sup>1</sup>**

STEP LIFES Academy will participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). All meals served to students meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established under the Healthy Hunger-free Kids Act of 2010, as specified in the Code of Federal Regulations at [7CFR210.10](#) and [7CFR220.8](#).

LIFES Academy will provide breakfast through at least one alternative breakfast service model in addition to the traditional breakfast served in the cafeteria to encourage breakfast consumption and ensure access for every student. Alternative breakfast models include Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab-and-Go Breakfast, and Second Chance Breakfast.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Requirement by Code of Federal Regulations: *Local School Wellness Policy* ([7CFR210.31](#))

<sup>2</sup> Recommended best practice by the Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition Programs.

### **Foods Sold Outside of School Meal Programs (Smart Snacks)<sup>1</sup>**

Any foods and beverages sold to students at school during the school day other than those foods provided as part of the school meal programs shall meet the standards established in USDA-FNS Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools (Smart Snacks) rule. The school day is defined by USDA as the period from midnight the night before to 30 minutes after the end of the instructional day. This includes foods and beverages sold in vending machines and a la carte.

### **Foods Provided, Not Sold<sup>1</sup>**

STEP LIFES Academy requires food offered on the school campus to meet or exceed the USDA-FNS Smart Snacks rule including those provided at celebrations or classroom snacks brought by staff or family members. Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward or withheld as punishment.

### **Food and Beverage Marketing<sup>1</sup>**

Marketing of any foods and beverages on the school campus during the school day must meet the USDA-FNS Smart Snacks rule.

### **School-Sponsored Fundraisers<sup>3</sup>**

Fundraising during and outside school hours will sell only non-food items or foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA-FNS Smart Snacks rule. LIFES Academy will promote physical activity fundraisers such as walk-a-thons, jump rope for heart, and fun runs.

Any fundraiser that sells food or beverages may not be conducted during meal service times. This includes from 6:00 a.m. to the end of the breakfast period and from the beginning of the first lunch period to the end of the last lunch period.

The fundraiser designee approves, tracks, and monitors fundraisers to ensure compliance with the nutrition standards for school-sponsored fundraisers. The fundraiser designee for STEP, Inc., LIFES Academy is the Director of Youth Services, and a fundraiser-tracking document is kept on file in the main office.

### **Nutrition Education<sup>1</sup>**

STEP, Inc. LIFES Academy will provide at least 140 minutes of nutrition education to every student and exceed the expectations of the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Health Standards of Learning (SOLs) by integrating nutrition concepts and skills into mathematics,

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<sup>3</sup> Requirement by Virginia Code: *Regulations Governing Nutritional Standards for Competitive Foods Available for Sale in Public Schools* ([8VAC20-740](#))

language arts, social science, and elective courses throughout the school year. The cafeteria environment will reinforce nutrition education provided in the classroom.

### **Nutrition Promotion<sup>1</sup>**

STEP LIFES Academy will promote positive nutrition habits in the cafeteria, classrooms, and throughout the school environment. The school may participate in nutrition promotion through farm to school activities, such as:

- Local foods served in school are promoted with signage and/or social media posts;
- Special events revolve around agriculture or farming;
- Career exploration, internships, and mentoring opportunities are available;
- An active school garden is operated and garden produce is offered in the cafeteria;
- A local agricultural farmer visits our school each school year;
- Students take field trips to local agricultural farms.<sup>2</sup>

### **Physical Education/Physical Activity<sup>1</sup>**

STEP LIFES Academy will provide every student with physical education that exceeds the expectations of the VDOE Physical Education SOLs and teaches the skills needed to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of personal fitness and develop the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and confidence needed to be physically active for life. A program of physical activity is provided for all students in grades kindergarten through five consisting of at least 20 minutes per day or an average of 100 minutes per week during the school year. A program of physical activity is available to all students in grades six through 12 with a goal of at least 150 minutes per week on average during the school year.

### **Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness<sup>1</sup>**

STEP LIFES Academy will seek to provide school climates that support social and emotional wellbeing and promote positive relationships among students, staff, parents, and community members. Using the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), LIFES Academy will provide students with instruction to increase self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

### **Triennial Assessment<sup>1</sup>**

STEP will evaluate compliance with the Wellness Policy no less than once every three years and make the results available to the public on the STEP website. The assessment will include the extent to which the school is following the policy regulations, the extent to which the policy compares to a local model policy, and a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the policy. The assessment results will be used to update the Wellness Policy.

**Public Update and Information<sup>1</sup>**

Annually, STEP LIFES Academy will inform families and the public about the content, implementation, and/or any updates to the Wellness Policy through the STEP Inc. website and STEP Board of Director meetings.