



LOCAL SCHOOL WELLNESS PLAN

Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School LOCAL SCHOOL WELLNESS PLAN

HISTORY

Urban Corps of San Diego County was established in fall 2011, as a locally-funded charter school authorized by Mono County Office of Education. UCCS has been designated as a Provision 2 SFA by the California Department of Education (CDE).

Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School currently serves approximately 222 students in grade 12, whose ages range from 18 to 26, many of whom are refugees or newcomers to the United States and/or have had significant gaps in their education. Additionally, many of our students are also parents with young children working toward earning their high school diploma while learning hands-on job skills through the Corps member program.

Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School student demographics include: 56.6% Hispanic or Latino, 11.4% African-American, 17.5% Middle Eastern, 6.6% White, 7.0% Asian, 0.4% Native American, and 0.4% Pacific Islander of which 98.7% are identified as Socio-economically Disadvantaged. UCCS operates across four sites: San Diego, Escondido, National City, San Bernardino, Los Pinos, and Vista.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

Urban County of San Diego County Charter School Governing Board recognizes that there is a link between access to nutritional meals and education, physical activity, access to health services, and school attendance and that wellness is affected by all of these elements. The governing board also recognizes the important connection between a healthy diet, food security, and a student's ability to learn effectively and achieve academically in school.

The Governing Board recognizes that it's the school's role, as part of the larger community, to model and actively practice, through policies and procedures: the promotion of family health, physical activity, and good nutrition.

The Governing Board is committed to supporting Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School's Local School Wellness Plan and the collaborative work contained in this document.

INTRODUCTION

The students of Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School face increased health risks that can affect their wellness, and quality of life, which will affect their life span. Our school is committed to providing an environment where students can learn to make healthy choices for lifelong health and academic achievement taking a "whole (child) student approach.

The Urban Corps Governing Board has adopted the following School Wellness Policy and guide for implementing a comprehensive health and wellness plan. The following research statistics in the areas of Nutritional Standards, Nutrition Services, Physical Education, Health Education, Health Services, Safe Food/Safe Environment, Positive Attendance, and Community Involvement, reflect the need for a strong and achievable wellness policy. As a result of our student demographics, our school differs from traditional high schools. UCCS provides every student with a high-quality education that includes wrap-around services as outlined in this plan.

NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS

UCCS adheres to mandated laws and policies governing school food nutrition including USDA School Meal Requirement Standards and CA State Nutrition Standards for reimbursable meals. Our menus comply with federal, state, and local regulations. Meals served under the provisions of the following programs comply with nutrition standards mandated by the USDA, which include breakfast and lunch meals that provide the Recommended Dietary Allowances consistent with the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans:

- School Breakfast Program (SBP)
- National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

UCCS is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus during the school day support healthy eating. No food or drinks are sold outside of the school meal program for students, including competitive food and beverages.

UCCS will use posters, promotional materials, and announcements at all sites to encourage students to participate in the school's Breakfast and Lunch Program.

Additionally, menus will be posted at the school sites and on the website.

NUTRITION SERVICES

Studies show that good nutrition increases student achievement. However, studies also show that food insecurity of low-income adults in California has increased. Students in food-insecure households have increased absences and tardiness and demonstrate poor cognitive function resulting in lower academic performance. The following are statistics from the Hunger Fact Sheet, reported by the California Association of Food Banks:

- **California Food Insecurity Rate: 11.7%**
- **Californians facing food insecurity: 4.6 million**
On average, 1 out of every 8 Californians does not know where their next meal will come from.
- **Children in California experiencing food insecurity: 1.7 million**
With a child food insecurity rate of 19%, around one in five children in California may go to bed hungry each night. This places California at the 20th highest child food insecurity rate in the nation.
- **Children in California experiencing summer hunger: 1.7 million**
85% of children who benefit from the federally funded free or reduced-price lunches during the school year miss the similar lunch programs available in the summer. Every summer, 17 of 20 low-income students fall into the summer nutrition gap.
- **Californians in poverty: 7.9 million**
California has the nation's highest rate of poverty at 20.6% according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure. Food insecurity often goes hand-in-hand with poverty, but this relationship can vary depending on medical expenses, employment status, and cost of living.

- **Unemployment rate in California: 5.4%**
Unexpected or extended periods of unemployment can often render a household food insecure. Some areas of California have among the country's highest unemployment rates.
- **Adults in California who are obese: 24.2%**
While it may seem counterintuitive, obesity and food insecurity often go hand-in-hand. High prices and limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables can restrict the ability of low-income individuals to make healthy food choices. With limited time, funds, and options, people may turn to inexpensive, unhealthy foods that can lead to obesity and other negative health outcomes.
- **Californian adults who are prediabetic or undiagnosed: 46%**
A third of young adults are prediabetic. Food insecurity is a major risk factor in the onset of diabetes and can also jeopardize an individual's ability to manage their disease. Access to healthy food has been found to help control the disease and to help individuals adhere to strict medication requirements. Within the state 9%, or 2.5 million, adults are diagnosed diabetic.
- **Eligible families currently receiving CalFresh assistance: 66%**
CalFresh, formerly known as "food stamps," helps millions of families afford the monthly food they need. As of 2014, California had the 4th lowest SNAP participation rates in the nation, in front of Nevada, North Dakota, and Wyoming. Of the 66% receiving the benefit, 74% are households with children and 50% are working families.

UCCS provides its students with a healthy breakfast and lunch, at no cost, as a Provision 2 status school. Obtaining student input and feedback is critical not only to the success of our program but also to ensure a high student participation rate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

Breakfast and Lunch will be served daily at the times indicated in the bell schedule, which may vary by site and day of the week.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & ACTIVITY

All students participate in physical education exercises/activities every morning as part of the school's routine. Physical activity provides our students with opportunities to participate in physical activity every morning. The 7:15 am morning ritual of "PT" at Urban Corps (UCO) affiliated sites and 6:00 am at California Conservation Corps (CCC) affiliated sites helps bond Corps members as a team and build discipline before students disburse to work or the classroom. Times for "PT" may vary depending on vocational education activities at the CCC and UCO campuses. UCCS staff are encouraged to participate. UCCS does not provide a Physical Education Program and/or courses. In addition, students who participate in the Corps Member program also are involved in physical activities 3-4 times per week as part of their Vocational Job Training Program along with their instructors. Physical education and activity

All UCCS students are of adult age (ages 18 - 26 years old). As such, communication takes place directly with the student rather than the parent as a result of their adult age and FERPA requirements.

HEALTH & NUTRITION EDUCATION

UCCS provides its students with a healthy breakfast and lunch, at no cost, as a Provision 2 status school. Meals are vended from Top Notch. Additionally, our students are required to enroll and complete a Life Skills course that institutes a health and nutrition education course as part of

the high school graduation requirements. Additionally, our students will have the opportunity to participate in experiential learning experiences such as our school's garden and extracurricular cooking class that link healthy eating habits and healthy living.

All teachers at Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School are appropriately credentialed and assigned for the courses they are assigned to teach. UCCS provides all students with access to a standards-aligned curriculum.

HEALTH SERVICES

Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School is committed to improving the health of every student to enhance overall wellness. To support student wellness, our charter school has partnered with numerous healthcare providers and free and low-cost clinics. Our students have access to free health-related workshops presented by leading agencies in the region. CCS has partnered with Family Health Centers of San Diego to offer students free medical services, including pregnancy testing, HIV testing, and STD testing. UCCS offers students easy access to mental health counselors, a school social worker, and a school psychologist. Additionally, community partners provide bi-annual workshops, training, and resources on mental health services and mental illness for students and staff. Additionally, Live Well San Diego provides free community resources for healthy living.

SAFE FOOD/SAFE ENVIRONMENT

At Urban Corps, student safety is our top priority, and every staff member is responsible for ensuring that safety. Providing safe food is essential to delivering quality meals to our students. Our food service employees are committed to maintaining high sanitation standards, including:

- All meal service employees are certified in food safety and sanitation, with recertification every five years.
- We strictly follow the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) system at all sites.
- Regular health inspections are conducted by:
 - San Diego County Health Department (at least twice per year)
 - Meal service employees
 - Director of Student Services (bi-monthly)

POSITIVE ATTENDANCE

Research indicates that there is more to student success than cognitive ability, curriculum, and instruction. Therefore UCCS implements a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support approach which encourages schools to solve academic gaps by addressing the needs of the whole student. Overall school climate and attendance rates are key elements to ensuring students feel safe and ready to learn. Studies over the past few decades have identified a critical link between exposure to community violence and its impact on school performance (ie. lower grade point averages, high chronic absenteeism rates, increased suspension and expulsion rates, and decreased graduation

rates).

Research has demonstrated that attendance has a statistically significant and quantitatively relevant effect on student learning. Additional research has demonstrated exposure to traumatic/stressful events limits brain functioning, which leads students to fall behind in school, develop unhealthy relationships with peers, and potentially create problems with teachers and the school principal. UCCS staff (classified and certificated) teach and support positive attendance behaviors; and closely monitor attendance. The following staff members are involved in the monitoring of attendance: teachers, registrar, Student Services Specialist, Vocational Coordinators, Student Services Coordinator, Meals Manager, Director of Student Services, Director of Academics, Vocational Supervisors, and Vocational Managers.

To improve attendance rates/reduce chronic absenteeism rates, UCCS has developed and implemented a reward program for students who demonstrate perfect attendance weekly. Students with perfect attendance also receive awards recognition certificates, including Student of the Quarter, and Student of the Year Awards.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Urban Corps of San Diego County has developed numerous partnerships with community-based organizations throughout the County of San Diego that support the school's mission and vision.

- ACCESS - provides case management and support services
- San Diego Youth Services - provides workshops on suicide prevention and mental health check-ins
- Mission Federal Credit Union - provides students with financial tools, services, and workshops
- Aimloan.com – provides scholarships for graduates who pursue post-secondary education.

COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

Urban Corps of San Diego County provides every student with a high-quality personalized educational plan that meets high school graduation requirements. In addition, students who participate in the Corps Member program receive paid job training while earning a high school diploma. Our Corps Member program provides students with job skills that focus on construction, recycling, environmental, and community projects which may include: graffiti abatement, planting trees, rehabilitating low-income homes, improving public parks, and working on the San Diego River.

Additionally, UCCS provides students with workshops in the following areas:

- College Application Process including essays.
- Applying for financial aid
- Preparing for a job interview
- Researching careers

SCHOOL WELLNESS COMMITTEE - IMPLEMENTATION

Urban Corps of San Diego County has established and expanded the School Wellness Committee to include a diverse representation of school staff, students and health professionals:

- Director of Student Services
- Director of Academics
- Meals Manager
- Student Services Coordinator
- Teachers
- Student Ambassadors
- Classroom Assistants
- Community Partners

The goal and purpose of the school wellness committee are to review and revise the school's Wellness Policy annually and to, address the health needs of the students. The School Wellness Committee's goal is to ensure a coordinated approach in addressing the wellness and safety of students, and staff.

Our responsibility to the commitments outlined in the Local School Wellness Policy requires that we continually review and revise the wellness policy annually and to assess its impact triannually. Our updates reflect the input of our school community members: students, teachers, school administrators/health professionals, the governing board, and the public. The Local School Wellness Committee will meet at least twice per academic year (January and July) and obtain input from diverse stakeholders. The School Wellness Committee will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and will use the Local School Wellness Policy Evaluation Checklist every three years (CDE, NSD – 6/17 version). Annually, the School Wellness Committee will notify the public about the content and implementation of the Local School Wellness Plan and will provide the UCCS governing board with updates and publish these findings to the public

POLICIES

The Director of Student Services and the Meals Manager are dedicated to ensuring compliance with all federal and state regulations at every level. They also focus on increasing student participation in the school's breakfast and lunch programs. Additionally, they are responsible for establishing guidelines for the sale of non-school meal food and beverages on campus.

UCCS prohibits the marketing and/or advertising of foods and beverages that do not meet the Smart Snack Guidelines. Additionally, all foods, snacks, and beverages are required to meet the United States Department of Aquiculture (USDA) SSIS Rule enacted by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010 to federal law.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

The following are the requirements of the UCCS School Wellness Policy that will be adhered to.

- ◆ **WELLNESS POLICY REQUIREMENT #1: Set goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote school health and wellness.**

To help ensure the health and well-being of each Corps Member and student attending Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School, and to provide guidance to school personnel in the areas of nutrition, physical activity, and food services, the Governing Board encourages teachers and staff to recognize the breakfast and lunch period as an integral part of the educational program of our school. The Governing Board will ensure that:

- No student at Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School goes hungry during the academic school year (year-around schedule).
- An economically sustainable meal program makes available a healthy and nutritious breakfast and lunch to every student so that students are prepared to learn to their fullest potential.
- Lunch periods shall be scheduled so that students have at least 30-minutes to eat their meal, especially after periods of exercise.
- All school eating areas shall contain free, safe, drinking water sources and facilities for washing hands and maintaining excellent hygiene.
- Meals will be attractively presented and served in a pleasant environment with sufficient time for eating while fostering good eating habits, enjoyment of meals, good manners, and respect for others.
- In conjunction with Top Notch, food vendor, Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School will promote healthy eating habits by acknowledging students who eat nutritious, unprocessed foods.

Waste Reduction

The Governing Board recognizes that school meal programs that utilize pre-packaged, processed foods consistently generate more solid waste than those that cook from whole ingredients.

Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School has chosen Top Notch as its vendor because of its environmentally safe practices and only partners with suppliers who are committed to healthy, sustainable, and environmentally friendly business practices.

Top Notch's environmentally safe practices adhere to our school's mission and reflect the core values of our organization concerning recycling and sustainability.

❖ WELLNESS POLICY REQUIREMENT #2: Establish nutrition guidelines for all foods available on campus during the school day.

A key part of Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School's educational mission is to improve the health of the entire community by teaching students how to develop and maintain lifelong healthy eating habits. This mission is achieved through nutrition education, daily morning physical education, and the meals provided at school. The Governing Board will ensure that:

- All students are provided universal meals regardless of students identity.

- The nutritional value of food served will meet USDA Dietary Guidelines through the provision of nutritious, fresh, tasty, locally grown food that reflects community and cultural diversity.
- Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School will provide students with at least 15 minutes to eat for breakfast and at least 30 minutes for lunch.
- Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School shall provide “Healthy Snacks,” and provide students with a list of healthy, affordable food choices for snacks.
- Foods offered to students and employees of Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School during the day as an incentive in school offices shall be consistent with the goals of the policy.
- Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School will limit food-related celebrations during the school day to birthday parties and will discourage serving foods and beverages that do not align with the goals of this policy.
- Students and staff are encouraged to offer party snacks that are consistent with these goals and, whenever possible, to serve them after the lunch hour.
- Food served at school will carry sufficient nutrition information to allow students to make informed dietary choices.
- Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School will offer a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of the week.
- No unhealthy food or beverage item may be advertised on school grounds, and fast food and “branded” food items shall not be offered for sale on campus during school hours.
- Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School shall not have vending machines accessible by students.

❖ **WELLNESS POLICY REQUIREMENT #3: Ensure that guidelines for school meals are not less restrictive than those set at the federal level by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).**

Urban County of San Diego County Charter School and Top Notch ensure that the policies are not less restrictive than those set by the USDA or California State Law.

❖ **WELLNESS POLICY REQUIREMENT #4: Establish a plan for measuring the impact and implementation of the local wellness policy.**

Urban Corps Staff will monitor the fiscal status of the National School Breakfast (NSB) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to ensure that the encroachment to the general fund is kept as low as possible while abiding by the Buy American Provision. As Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School wishes to ensure that students' dietary needs are met and as the

Charter School realizes that our population needs to be fed breakfast and lunch each day, we realize that encroachment on the general fund is inevitable. Charter School staff will strive to increase participation and maximize reimbursement through accurate and efficient record-keeping and prompt submission of reimbursement claims.

❖ **WELLNESS POLICY REQUIREMENT #5: Involve students, staff, the governing board, and the public in the development of the Local Wellness Policy.**

Membership on the Local School Wellness Committee will be reviewed annually to ensure accountability and effective implementation of the plan. Student ambassadors will play a key role in promoting the Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP) across all sites and will be crucial to its success. Additionally, UCCS will conduct annual student surveys to gather input and feedback. Each year, the committee, consisting of students and key staff, will review the implementation of the wellness policy. For the list of committee members and their roles, see the "School Wellness Committee" section.

GOALS FOR SCHOOL WELLNESS

The following are the goals for the UCCS School Wellness Policy:

- **NUTRITION EDUCATION:** Every UCCS student will be required to pass a Life Skills course that includes topics on healthy eating and the mind-body connection.
- **NUTRITION PROMOTION:** UCCS will annually increase student awareness about healthy diets through the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) at all sites. Members of the UCCS School Wellness Committee will develop a plan to promote the school's SBP, and NSLP while introducing students to nutritious food options.
- **NUTRITION PROMOTION:** UCCS does not allow vending machines and/or the sale of non-healthy, non-USDA-approved foods, snacks, and beverages onsite for student consumption.
- **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:** 100% of UCCS students will participate in morning physical activity as part of the school's program requirements. Exception will only be made for students with disabilities and/or injuries documented by a medical professional.
- **PHYSICAL EDUCATION:** Physical education is not included in the UCCS Charter Petition and therefore does not provide PE courses. The State Board of Education (SBE) provides charter schools with this flexibility.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

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1. mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax:
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email:
Program.Intake@usda.gov

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