



Twin Cities Academy Wellness Policy

Purpose: Twin Cities Academy is committed to creating an environment that promotes a healthy social, physical and psycho-social environment for our community, and providing our students with the tools to practice a healthy lifestyle outside of our campus.

Oversite: To that end our school administrators, food service staff, board members, students, health and mental health professionals, parents and the public were invited to participate in the creation of the policy, and are tasked with continued implementation and evaluation of our policy. Our Executive Director oversees compliance issues. Our policy, policy goals, and measures taken to implement our policy can be viewed by the public on our website.

Policy Outline

1. Provide a safe, supportive environment for staff and students
 - a. Mental Health Professionals available daily
 - b. Health Care Staff
 - c. Anti bullying policy
 - d. Educators

2. School Nutrition
 - a. Lunch Room
 - b. Healthy Snack Policy

3. Exercise promoted through PE in Middle and High School.

4. Health Education provided to Middle and High school students

1. Safe Supportive Environment

- **Mental Health Staff:** TCA employs three full time and one part time **Licensed Social Workers**, one **Licensed School Psychologist**, one **Licensed School**

Counselor and contracts with 2 **licensed therapists** who practice in our building, to ensure our students can be seen as soon as possible for social emotional health needs and are educated on improved social and academic functioning, as well as positioning them to be successful in their careers.

- TCA contracts with Navigate Care to establish Individual Health Plans to ensure students are able to receive the necessary care they need to promote positive educational outcomes and are available to respond to any health related questions posed by TCA staff and families.
- TCA maintains an inhouse Health Aide to evaluate minor illnesses and injuries, perform hearing and vision screenings and help parents assess when their student may need additional health care, or needs to be home. The Health Aide also assists students with regular health care needs, dispenses medications as prescribed by the student's physician, and performs as liaison between families and TCA for health related issues.
- TCA holds high expectations that students and staff are all treated with respect regardless of race, gender identity, socioeconomic status, or religious beliefs.
- Staff are trained annually to respond to health emergencies.
- TCA maintains a comprehensive Anti-Bullying Policy that emphasizes opportunities for restitution. At all times, TCA administrators approach these situations with the best interests of all parties involved, keeping students in school whenever feasible to prevent lost educational days.

2. School Nutrition

- TCA believes that good nutrition is essential to the learning process. All students may participate in the free and reduced breakfast and lunch programs.
- In the lunchroom - CDC Good Foods provides lunch for our students and staff. Their nutrition information can be accessed online through our website. CDC Good Foods promotes positive eating habits by providing
 - Fresh vegetables and fruits
 - Locally harvested produce when feasible
 - Natural foods and high quality meats
 - Products with moderate sugar and sodium levels

- Whole grain breads and cereals
- Low-fat dairy, non-dairy and 100% juice beverage options
- Cooking techniques that preserve flavor and nutrition
- Cooked products that are baked or steamed, never fried
- Using our extensive customer base to buy more efficiently
- Buying locally produced and harvested items whenever feasible
- Derive less than 10% from saturated fat
- Contain less than 300 mg of cholesterol per day
- Minimal grams trans fats per serving
- Minimizing waste and establishing guidelines on portion control

All meals provided by Done Right Foods and meet or exceed the USDA nutrition standards for reimbursable meals and meet or exceed the nutrition regulations for the National School Lunch Program. Those standards can be viewed here http://www.makingitcount.info/sites/default/files/pictures/BRK_daily_weekly%20Reg_K-12_2017.pdf, and <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/NSLPFactSheet.pdf>

- Fresh fruits and vegetables are readily accessible and are positioned according to the Smarter Lunchroom Techniques, to improve opportunities for students to choose these items.
- TCA teachers assist children to plant and cultivate a garden to enhance knowledge of the farm to food chain, and create a sense of ownership around the creation of food.
- Healthy eating is promoted through signage in the lunchroom and atrium, and is part of the middle and high school health curriculum.
- All snacks served and sold either during lunch, or at athletic events, meet the Smart Snacks nutrition standards, being 200 calories or less, sodium limited to 200 mg or less, fat to not exceed 35% of all calories, zero grams of trans fats allowed, sugars limited to 35% of total calories. Schools may sell plain water, carbonated or noncarbonated, low fat milk and milk alternatives, 100% fruit and vegetable juices.
- Our Food Service Manager is certified by ServSafe through the State of Minnesota, and we have one additional employee also certified by ServSafe to ensure high quality and hygienic food service to our students.

- Students have the opportunity to wash their hands on the way to lunch, and hand sanitizer is available to all students in a variety of places throughout the school environment to include classrooms and the lunchroom.
- 3. As a means of promoting a healthy lifestyle and improving the ability of our students to learn and our educators to teach, TCA promotes physical activity by providing**
- Daily access to the gymnasium prior to the school day.
 - Opportunities for Middle and High school students to participate in school related athletics, competitive and noncompetitive.
 - Student lessons and physical activity outside during other content area courses happens periodically.
 - Educating students on the health benefits of exercise in health class and during Physical Education.
 - Physical Education as a requirement for graduation and all middle school students have Physical Education annually.
 - Students who have higher movement needs are allowed movement breaks as necessary throughout their day to enhance their ability to learn.
 - Because students' ability to focus and learn is greatly influenced by the amount of activity available to them, students are never denied PE or recess due to incomplete work.
 - As per national regulations through the SHAPE program, our PE instructors are certified through the state of Minnesota
 - Educators have the opportunity to create and participate in physical activity that is socially rewarding.
- 4. TCA is committed to providing students with the tools they need to flourish outside the bounds of TCA. To that end, Health Education is provided by MN state licensed educators and encompasses the topics of**

- Nutrition
- Physical fitness as it relates to wellness
- Personal hygiene
- Social health, developing a positive relationship with oneself and with friends and peers
- Sex education
- Sleep hygiene
- Drug education