



Wellness Policy

Whole School-Whole Community-Whole Child

Malaika Early Learning Center (MELC) focuses on developing the whole child. MELC is committed to ensuring the optimal development of all students. Our vision is that MELC students are great by the age of eight-Great by 8.

Policy Preamble

Malaika Early Learning Center (hereto referred to as the District) is committed to the optimal development of every student. Good nutrition and regular physical activity before, during, and after the school day are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. The District believes that we need to create and support health-promoting learning environments throughout our schools, giving students the opportunity to achieve success. This policy outlines the District's approach to ensure all students practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day.

Policy Leadership

The designated official for oversight of the wellness policy is Tamara Johnson. The official shall convene the Wellness Committee and lead the review, updating, and evaluation of the policy.

To assist in the creation of a healthy school environment, the District shall establish a Wellness Committee that will provide an ongoing review and evaluation of the Wellness Policy. The Committee shall meet no less than one time during the school year to implement, assess and review, and make recommendations for changes to the Wellness Policy.

The District shall invite a diverse group of members to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy. Members may include:

- Administrator
- School food service representative
- Community member/parent

Research shows that good nutrition and physical activity can lead to positive student outcomes. Therefore, MELC participates in programming that supports the positive well-being of everyone.

This policy outlines the efforts to ensure MELC provides opportunities that promote the health and well-being of students, staff and families.



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Nutrition Standards for All Foods

The District is committed to serving healthy meals to our students. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, model healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

Standards and Guidelines for School Meals

The District is committed to ensuring that:

- All meals meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established under the Healthy Hunger-free Kids Act of 2010. The policy should include a link to USDA meal pattern requirements or list individually.
- All schools in the District participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the School Breakfast Program National School Lunch Program.
- All meals are accessible to all students., Withholding food as a punishment shall be strictly prohibited.
- All meals are appealing and attractive and served in clean and pleasant settings., Drinking water is available for students during mealtimes.
- Students are provided at least 20 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 30 minutes to eat lunch after being seated.
- Lunch shall be served between 11:00am-12:30pm.
- All school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff shall meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals.

In addition, the District’s nutrition services shall notify parents of the availability of the breakfast, lunch, and summer food programs and shall be encouraged to determine eligibility for reduced or free meals.

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| <p>Nutrition Education & Promotion: Schools shall provide nutrition education that helps students develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors. Nutrition education shall be provided to families via handouts, newsletters, postings on the web-site, presentations, and workshops. The District is committed to providing a school environment that promotes students</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All meals are in compliance with National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Meal Pattern Tables and Components can be found using this link. • Monthly menus for breakfast and lunch are provided to families. |
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| <p>to practice healthy eating and physical activity. Students shall receive consistent nutrition messages that promote health throughout schools, classrooms, cafeterias, and school media.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually families are notified of Malaika’s participation in the USDA food programs. • Per our school handbook families are encouraged to provide healthy snacks. • The cafeteria bulletin board display has nutritional games posted. The display will be refreshed twice annually. • |
| <p>School Meals: Malaika is committed to serving healthy meals daily.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malaika is a Community Eligible Program site. This allows for all students to receive free meals regardless of their status. This also protects the rights of all students. • All meals are provided from our selected food vendor and served by trained and certified staff. • Breakfast is provided daily for students in the cafeteria and 20-25 minutes are provided for this meal. • Lunch is provided daily for students in the cafeteria and 30 minutes is provided for this meal. • Drinking water is provided daily for all meal times. • Our selected food vendor ensures that local foods are purchased for preparing foods that are served. |



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| <p>Other Foods & Beverages: <i>Foods and Beverages Sold Outside of the School Meals Program</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sale of foods and/or beverages containing caffeine (with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine) at all grade levels during the school day are prohibited. • Malaika does not participate in food fundraisers. <p><i>Foods Provided but Not Sold</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The District encourages foods offered on the school campus meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards including those provided at celebrations and parties and classroom snacks brought by staff or family members. Food rewards or incentives shall not be used in classrooms to encourage student achievement or desirable behavior. • Families are allowed to provide afternoon snacks for students. Per the handbook, the snacks need to be healthy snacks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malaika only offers meals within the National School Lunch and School Breakfast food programs. • Malaika allows families to provide afternoon snacks for students. Per the school handbook the snacks need to be healthy snacks. Resources such as Smart Snacks and other resources are provided to parents to support healthy choices. • Malaika has outlined expectations for birthday celebrations in the school handbook. Additionally, birthday treats are limited to 1-2 items and must be store bought with detailed ingredients. Birthday treats can be dropped off and staff will distribute the treats at the appropriate time. • Additionally, food is not used as a reward. |
| <p>Physical Activity: The District shall provide students with age and grade appropriate opportunities to engage in physical activity.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malaika requires at least 30 minutes daily for recess/physical activity for students. • Teachers promote movement in the classroom using strategies such as Go Noodle. • Staff and families are also encouraged to engage in physical activity and |



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| | <p>wellness strategies to support their own health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malaika partners with other organizations such as STYRV365 (tennis) to support physical activity for students, staff and families. |
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| <p>Wellness: As appropriate, schools shall support students, staff, and parents’ efforts to maintain a healthy lifestyle.</p> <p><i>Staff Wellness</i> The District will implement activities to promote healthy eating and physical activity among school staff, such as distribution of an employee health newsletter to promote healthy behaviors.</p> <p><i>Community Engagement</i> The District shall work with community partners, including STRYV365, Health & Wellness Specialist to support district wellness. The District shall provide information on how the public can participate in the school wellness committee on an annual basis.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Malaika the well-being of everyone is important. Staff and families are encouraged to make healthy choices. • Staff and families are encouraged to provide give input on policies and procedures annually or as needed. • Malaika offers staff a “Wellness Space” for relaxation and rest when needed. • Ongoing professional development in health, nutrition and/or wellness will be provided to staff. • Malaika will continue to consult with the contracted Health & Wellness Specialist to support the well-being of students, families and staff. |
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| <p>Monitoring & Evaluation: The Wellness Committee shall evaluate compliance with the Wellness Policy no less than once every three years. The assessment will include the extent to which each school is in compliance with the policy and how the policy compares to a model policy, as established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The District shall notify school staff, students, and</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration will ensure the compliance of the Wellness Policy. • Food Service staff will report directly to the administration. • Staff, families and board members will have opportunities to provide input and/or monitor the objectives and goals of the Wellness Policy. |
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households/families of the availability of the wellness report via newsletters and website postings. The report will be made available at www.malaikaelc.org.

Marketing

Schools will restrict food and beverage marketing to only those foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards set forth by USDA's Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools (Smart Snacks) rule. Marketing includes brand names, trademarks, logos, or tags except when placed on a food or beverage product/container; displays, such as vending machine exteriors; corporate/brand names, logos, trademarks on cups, posters, school supplies, education materials, food service equipment, and school equipment (e.g. message boards, scoreboards, uniforms); advertisements in school publications/mailings; sponsorship of school activities, fundraisers, or sports teams; educational incentive programs such as contests or programs; and free samples or coupons displaying advertising of a product.

- Malaika has completed one triennial assessment and will stay in compliance with conducting them as required. As well as posting it for public viewing. [Most current results can be accessed using this link.](#)
- Malaika has and will continue to seek consultation from SFA representatives to revise and develop policies in accordance with the guidelines.
- Malaika is an equal opportunity employer and complies with all nondiscrimination requirements including the USDA Nondiscrimination Statements and Laws, [click here for the statement.](#)