



Sample School Food Policy:

Lagunitas Elementary School District Food Policy

Responsibilities

The School Board of Trustees recognizes the important connection between a healthy diet and a student's ability to learn effectively and achieve high standards in school. The Board also recognizes the school's role, as part of the larger community, to promote family health, sustainable agriculture and environmental restoration. The School Board of Trustees recognizes that the sharing of food is a fundamental experience for all peoples; a primary way to nurture and celebrate our cultural diversity; and an excellent bridge for building friendships, and inter-generational bonds.

Mission

The educational mission is to improve the health of the entire community by teaching students and families ways to establish and maintain life-long healthy eating habits. The mission shall be accomplished through nutrition and healthy eating education, garden experiences, the food served in schools, and core academic content in the classroom.

Goals

- Ensure that no student in the Lagunitas Elementary School District is hungry.
- Ensure that a healthy and nutritious snack and lunch is available to every student at each school so that the students are prepared to learn to their fullest potential.
- Eliminate the reduced-price category for school lunch, breakfast and snacks, so that all low-income children have healthy food available at no cost.
- Ensure that all qualified children become eligible for free meals.
- Ensure maximum participation in the school meal program by developing a coordinated, comprehensive outreach and promotion plan for the school meal programs.
- Shift from food-based menu planning to nutrient-based planning (as set forth under USDA guidelines) to allow for more flexible food selection.
- Ensure that the nutritional value of the food served significantly improves upon USDA Dietary Guidelines by providing nutritious, fresh, tasty, locally grown food that reflects San Geronimo Valley's cultural diversity.
- Ensure that the food served shall be organic to the maximum extent possible, as defined by the California Certified Organic Farmers.
- Eliminate potential harmful food additives and processes, such as bovine growth hormones, irradiation, and genetically modified foods.
- Serve meals in a pleasant environment with sufficient time for eating, while fostering good manners and respect for fellow students.
- Maximize the reduction of waste by recycling, reusing, composting and purchasing recycled products. Each school site shall have a recycling program.
- Ensure that food served will be of the highest quality district-wide.

Strategies Integration into the Curriculum

- Integrate eating experiences, gardens, and nutrition and healthy eating education into the curriculum for math, science, social studies and language arts at all grade levels.
- With a school garden established in the school, give students the opportunity to plant, harvest, prepare, cook and eat food they have grown.
- Encourage farmers and farm workers to come to the school classroom and arrange for students to visit farms.

Student Participation

- Solicit student preferences in planning menus and snacks through annual focus groups, surveys, and taste tests of new foods and recipes.
- Ensure that 5 students are represented on the Nutrition Advisory Council. Waste Reduction
- Ensure that cafeterias are part of the environmental education of students and staff through reducing waste, composting, recycling and purchasing recycled material.

Sustainable Agriculture

- Purchase food from school gardens and local farmers as a first priority, based on availability and acceptability. Cafeteria Staff will coordinate its menus with school garden production and provide to garden coordinators a list of the produce it wishes to purchase.
- Work with other Marin County school districts to increase the amount of products purchased from local farms and organic food suppliers. Nutrition Education and Professional Development * Provide regular professional development to enable the Cafeteria Staff to become full partners in providing excellent food for our students.
- Provide regular training, at least annually, to teachers and the Cafeteria Staff on basic nutrition, nutrition education, and benefits of organic and sustainable agriculture.
- Provide Cafeteria Staff with USDA approved computer software, training and support to implement nutrient-based menu planning.

Public Information

- The Nutrition Advisory Council shall regularly make progress reports on the Food Systems Project to the Lagunitas School community and to the San Geronimo Valley community.

Public Policy

- Advocate for label disclosure: —Request State and Federal representatives support legislation that will clearly label food products that have been irradiated, genetically modified or have been exposed to bovine growth hormones. —Send a School Board of Trustees resolution requesting support for labeling legislation to: 1) Every School Board in the State of California. 2) The State School Boards Association. 3) The Nation School Boards Association. Establishment of a Nutrition Advisory Council
- Nutrition Advisory Council shall be established to discuss food-related topics of concern to the school community and help make policy recommendations to the School Board of Trustees.
- The 20 Member Nutrition Advisory Council shall be as follows: 1) 6 Community/Parent representatives appointed by the San Geronimo Valley Healthy Community Collaborative. 2) School Administrator. 3) The School Nurse. 4) Up to 3 Classified employees appointed by their employee organization. 5) Up to 3 Teachers (one from each program) appointed by their employee organization. 6) 5 Students (3 middle school and 2 elementary school) appointed by the student council.
- The Advisory Committee shall meet at least six times a year at hours convenient for public participation

Maintenance and Repair of Equipment

- The School Board of Trustees instructs the Maintenance Committee to include kitchen facilities, food preparation and storage of equipment as high priority in its comprehensive maintenance policy.
- Modernize computer equipment and programs, and institute an automated accounting system. Community Use of School District Property
- District facilities, including school kitchens may be available to community based groups for their use and enjoyment under terms established by the School Board of Trustees.

A Garden in Every School

The garden classroom is an ideal setting in which students begin to understand the complexities of natural systems and the need to conserve resources. The Project calls for the creation of a garden classroom in the Lagunitas Elementary School District, and the integration of a curriculum which promotes awareness of the relationship between the way food is grown, the environment, and health. An integrated curriculum utilizes the garden as a context for teaching subject matter in the state frameworks. Math, history, science, literature, writing, art and music—all can be associated with activities in the garden and these subjects can be enriched and anchored by the energy and excitement found in the garden classroom. Through studying the entire food system, from seed to plate, students come to understand how food reaches the table and the relationship of agriculture and environment. The garden classroom is used to illustrate cycles and systems, such as soil fertility, waste cycles, and watersheds. As students come to understand their relationship to natural systems and cycle, they can begin to form a context for more sustainable and equitable patterns of living. Key to this understanding is the little garden at the school and lessons it has to teach. The partners in this effort share a common vision of sustainability and concern for our children and their future. They recognize a need to understand our place in nature, and to know more about food and ecosystems and the cycles of life in order to create sustainable communities. Approved July 24, 2001