



Village Ranch, Inc. Wellness Policy (School Food Services Program)

Cokato and Annandale Locations

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assure a campus environment that promotes and protects residents and/or students health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. Village Ranch recognizes nutrition education and physical education are essential components of the educational process and good health fosters student attendance and learning.
- B. Village Ranch's environment should promote and protect residents and/or students health, well-being, and ability to learn by encouraging healthy eating and physical activity.
- C. Village Ranch encourages the involvement of residents and/or students, mental health practitioners and skills workers, teachers, food service staff, and other interested persons in implementing, monitoring, and reviewing Village Ranch's Wellness Policy.
- D. Children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active to grow, learn, and thrive.
- E. All students in grades 6-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- F. Qualified food service personnel will provide residents and/or students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; try to accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students and/or residents to eat.

III. GUIDELINES

A. Foods and Beverages

1. All foods and beverages made available on campus will be consistent with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
 - a. School Meals: Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:
 - be appealing and attractive to children,
 - be served in clean and pleasant settings,
 - meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations,

- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables,
 - serve only 1% and fat-free skim milk and nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA).
2. Food service personnel will take every measure to ensure students and/or residents' access to foods and beverages meet or exceed all federal, state, and local laws and school policies.
 3. Food service personnel shall adhere to all federal, state, and local food safety and security guidelines.
 4. Village Ranch will make every effort to ensure our students and/or residents have access to breakfast and lunch that meets all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations, and all residents and/or students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals, that are reimbursed, are meeting the USDA nutrition standards.
 5. Village Ranch will provide students and/or residents access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
 6. Village Ranch will make every effort to provide students and/or residents with a sufficient mealtime and lunchroom climate by including:
 - a lunchroom environment that provides students and/or residents with a relaxed, enjoyable climate should be developed.
 - a lunchroom environment that is a place where students and/or residents have adequate space to eat, pleasant surroundings and adequate time for meals (the American Food Service Association recommends at least 20 minutes for lunch from the time they are seated.)
 7. Village Ranch will discourage tutoring, therapy or skills sessions, or any other activities during mealtimes, unless students and/or residents may eat during such activities.
- B. Village Ranch Food Service Program/Personnel
1. Village Ranch will provide healthy and safe school meal programs that strictly comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations.
 2. Village Ranch shall designate our Food Administrator to be responsible for the food service program, whose duties shall include the creation of the nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available on campus to ensure food and beverages choices are consistent with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
 3. As part of Village Ranch's responsibility to operate a food service program and will provide continuing professional development all food service personnel on campus.
- C. Nutrition Education and Promotion
1. Village Ranch will encourage and support healthy eating by students/residents and engage in nutrition promotion that is:

- offered as part of a comprehensive program designed to provide students/residents with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.
- enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and includes participatory activities, such as field trips.

D. Physical Activity

1. Students and/or residents need opportunities for physical activity and to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior. Health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities such as watching television.
2. Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons, where appropriate. Teachers can provide short physical breaks between lessons or classes as appropriate.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- A. After approval by the CEO and Board of Directors, the Wellness Policy will be implemented throughout the campus.
- B. Village Ranch’s food service staff will ensure compliance within the food service area and will report to the food service program administrator.
- C. Our food service program administrator will provide an annual report to the CEO setting forth the nutrition guidelines and procedures for selection of all the foods made available on campus.
- D. The CEO or designee will ensure compliance with the Wellness Policy and will provide an annual report of the compliance to the Board of Directors.
- E. Village Ranch will post this policy in the cafeteria area and on our website at: *www.villageranch.com*

Legal References: 42 U.S.C. § 1751 et seq. (Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act)
 42 U.S.C. § 1771 et seq. (Child Nutrition Act of 1966)
 P.L. 108-265 (2004) § 204 (Local Wellness Policy)
 7 U.S.C. § 5341 (Establishment of Dietary Guidelines)
 7 C.F.R. § 210.10 (School Lunch Program Regulations)
 7 C.F.R. § 220.8 (School Breakfast Program Regulations)

Local Resources: Minnesota Department of Education, www.education.state.mn.us
 Minnesota Department of Health, www.health.state.mn.us