



# LOCAL SCHOOL WELLNESS PLAN

2017-18

## **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 LEA by the California Department of Education (CDE).

Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School currently serves approximately 381 students in grade 12, whose ages range from 18 to 25, 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: 40% Hispanic, 28.6% African-American, 19.9% Middle Eastern, 5.8% White, 5.7% Asian, of which 95.5% are identified as Socio-economically Disadvantaged. UCCS currently has 3 sites: San Diego, Vista and National City.

### **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, 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 support 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, 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 including 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)
- After School Meal Supplement (AMS)

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 beverages are sold and served 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:

- CA Food Insecurity Rate: 12.5%
- CA facing food insecurity: 4.9M
- Children in CA experiencing food insecurity: 1.9M: approximately one in five children in CA go to bed hungry each night. This places CA at the 19<sup>th</sup> highest child food insecurity rate in the nation.
- Children in CA experiencing summer hunger: 1.7M – Every summer 17 of 20 low-income student fall into the summer nutrition gap.

- CA in poverty: 7.9M. CA 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 CA: 5.4%
- Adults in CA 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.
- CA adults who are pre-diabetic or undiagnosed: 46%
- Eligible families currently receiving CalFresh Assistance: 66%. CalFresh formerly known as "food stamps," helps millions of families afford the food they need each month.

UCCS provides its students with a healthy breakfast, lunch and after-school supplement, at no cost, as a Provision 2 status school. Annually students participate in a taste test in selecting a vendor for meal services. Obtaining student input and feedback is critical not only to the success of our program, but also to ensure high student participation rate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP), National School Lunch Program (NSLP), and After-school Meal Supplement (AMS) program.

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. After-school meal supplement will be served after-school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION & ACTIVITY**

All students participate in physical education exercises/activity every morning as part of the school's routine. Physical activity provides our students with opportunities to participate in physical activity every morning. The 7:30am morning ritual of "PT" helps bond Corps members as a team and build discipline before students disburse to work or the classroom. UCCS staff are strongly encouraged to participate. In addition, students who participate in the Corps Member program also are involved in physical activities 3-4 times per week as part of the Vocational Job Training Program along with their instructors.

UCCS students are of adult age, enrolled in grade 12. UCCS does not provide a Physical Education Program and/or courses. 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, lunch and after-school supplement, at no cost, as a Provision 2 status school. Meals are vended from Volunteers of America, who also provides our students with nutrition education during the school year. Additionally, our students are required to enroll and complete a health and nutrition education course as part of the high school graduation requirements. This course is

aligned to the CA Nutrition Standards. Additionally, our students will have the opportunity to participate in experiential learning experiences such as our school's garden and the link between healthy eating habits and healthy living, which will also be integrated into the health education course.

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 standards-aligned curriculum.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School is committed to improving the health of every student in order to enhance overall wellness. To support student wellness, our charter school has partnered with numerous health care providers, free and low cost clinics, including the North County Health and Human Services Department that provides a nurse onsite at the school 3 times per month. Our students have access to the flu shot, Hepatitis A Vaccine, and access to free health related workshops. UCCS has also partnered with Family Health Centers of San Diego to provide our students with access to free medical care including free pregnancy testing, HIV and STD testing. UCCS provides our students with access to a mental health counselor onsite and available daily. Additionally, the National Alliance for Mental illness provides annual workshops, trainings and resources on mental health services and mental illness for students and staff. SAY San Diego provides workshops on drugs, alcohol, and tobacco awareness and education. Additionally, Live Well San Diego provides free community resources for healthy living.

## **SAFE FOOD/SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

Student safety is a paramount obligation at Urban Corps, and keeping our students safe is every staff member's responsibility. Serving safe food is the foundation to providing quality food service to our students. Food service employees are committed to following the strict sanitation practices:

- Every meal services employee is certified in food safety and sanitation; and is recertified every five years.
- Adherence to the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) system at all sites.
- Health inspections are conducted regularly by the following:
- San Diego County Health Department: at least twice per year
- Meal services employees
- Director of Student Services inspects sites on a bi-monthly basis.

## **POSITIVE ATTENDANCE**

Research indicates that there is more to student success than cognitive ability, curriculum, and instruction. 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 lower grade point average (GPA), high chronic absenteeism rates, increased suspension and expulsion rates and decrease graduation rates.

Research has demonstrated that attendance has a statistically significant and quantitatively relevant affect on student learning. Additionally, research has demonstrated that students who are exposed to traumatic or stressful events, brain functioning is impacted, which leads students to fall behind in school, fail to develop healthy relationships with peers and/or 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, case managers, Vocational Coordinators, Meal Manager, Director of Student Services, Director of Academics, Human Resources manager, Human Resource Assistant/receptionist, Vocational Supervisors, and Vocational Managers. This team meets on a weekly basis to discuss and identify attendance issues, and retention concerns. Every student has an assigned Case Manager who communicates with students on an ongoing basis.

In an effort to improve attendance rates/reduce chronic absenteeism rates, UCCS has developed and implemented a reward program for students who demonstrate perfect attendance on a weekly basis. Students with perfect attendance also receive awards recognition certificates, including Student of the Quarter, and Student of the Year Awards. UCCS employs 5 Case Managers who are directly assigned to work with students and are responsible for monitoring absences, communicating with students, and identifying and providing resources to improve student attendance rates.

### **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: Case Management and Support Services
- Catholic Charities: provides onsite academic tutoring
- Read San Diego: provides onsite academic tutoring
- Men's Warehouse: provides professional attire for students to wear for job interviews and graduation at no cost.
- 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 qualify have the opportunity to participate in the Corps Member, a paid job training program while earning a high school diploma. Our Corps member program provide our

students with job skills that focus on construction, 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 on 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:

- Dean of Education
- Director of Student Services
- Meals Manager
- Student Ambassadors
- Lead Case Manager
- Mental Health Counselor
- School Nurse

The goal and purpose of the school wellness committee is to review and revise the school's Wellness Policy, address the health needs of the students, 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, revise, and update the policy. Our updates reflect the input of our school community members: students, teachers, school administrators/health professionals, governing board and the public. The Local School Wellness Committee will meet at least twice per academic year (January and July) and obtain input and feedback from 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 (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.

### **POLICIES**

The Director of Student Services and Meals Manager are committed to ensuring schoolwide compliance on all levels encompassing federal, and state regulations. In addition, they are committed to increasing student participation rates in the school's breakfast and lunch program. They are also responsible for developing guidelines on the

sale of non-school meal program food/beverages on school campus.

UCCS prohibits the marketing and/or advertising of foods and beverages that do not meet the Smart Snack Guidelines. Additionally, the sale of all foods, snacks and beverages are required to meet the United States Department of Agriculture (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, and to work to implement the goals of this policy. 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, lunch and after-school snack, to every student so that students are prepared to learn to their fullest potential; (Campuses in National City and Vista only participate in the NSLP program).
- Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School shall use food as an integrator and central focus of education about human events, history, and celebrations, and shall encourage classes to use food and cooking as part of a learning experience that sheds light on customs, history, traditions, and cuisine of various countries and cultures;
- Lunch periods shall be scheduled so that students do not have to eat lunch unusually early or late, and ideally so that they come after periods of exercise; (Late lunch exemptions are made for campuses in National City and Vista)
- All school eating areas shall contain free, safe, drinking water sources and facilities for washing hands and hand sanitizing;
- Students shall play a role in a recycling program that begins with the purchase of recycled products and maximizes the reduction of waste by recycling, reusing, and purchasing recycled products;



- 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 Volunteers of America, food vendor, Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School will promote healthy eating habits by acknowledging students who eat their vegetables

## **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 Volunteers of America as its vendor because of their environmentally safe practices and only partner with suppliers who are committed to healthy, sustainable, and environmentally friendly business practices. The environmentally safe practices include:

- Recycling and composting virtually all kitchen waste
- Use of energy efficient insulated food storage units
- Use of recyclable packaging whenever possible
- Hot food containers that are 100% biodegradable

Volunteers of America environmentally safe practices adhere to our school's mission and reflect the core values of our organization with respect to recycling and sustainability.

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

Part of the educational mission of Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School is to improve the health of the entire community by teaching students ways to establish and maintain life-long healthy eating habits. The mission shall be accomplished through nutrition education, daily morning physical education, and the food served at school. The Governing Board will ensure that:

- All students will become eligible for free or reduced meals through NSLP and/or Provision 2 guidelines.
- Maximum participation in the school meal program will be achieved by developing a coordinated, comprehensive outreach and promotion plan, and by putting systems in place that ensure the elimination of the stigma of accepting "free lunch".
- The nutritional value of food served will significantly improve upon USDA Dietary Guidelines through provision of nutritious, fresh, tasty, locally grown food that reflects community and cultural diversity;
- Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School will offer daily breakfast to all students who attend a campus participating in the School Breakfast Program;

- Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School will provide students with at least 15 minutes to eat for breakfast (if applicable to school campus) and 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 (if applicable to school campus);
  - Foods offered to students and employees of Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School during the day as a snack, an incentive, or in school offices, whether provided by Volunteers of America or the staff shall be consistent with the goals of the policy;
  - Urban Corps of San Diego County Charter School shall limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to birthday celebrations and should discourage serving foods and beverages that are not consistent with the goals of the policy;
  - Students and staff are encouraged to provide party snacks that are consistent with the goals of the policy, and to see to it that such items are served after the lunch hour whenever possible;
  - 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 shall offer a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of a week when possible;
  - 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 as part of any school meal program or as a la cart items;
  - 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 Volunteers of America representative 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 of San Diego County will work in conjunction with our food vendor, Volunteers of America, to survey our students to measure the impact of our wellness policy. Student achievement will be monitored and reviewed to measure the impact of

the wellness program on our students' academic progress.

Urban Corps Staff will monitor the fiscal status of the National School Breakfast (NSB) National School Lunch Program (NSLP); and After-School Meal Supplement (AMS) to ensure that the encroachment to the general fund is kept as low as possible. 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 has a need to be fed breakfast, lunch, and after-school meal snack 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 development of the Local Wellness Policy.**

Membership to the Local School Wellness Committee will be evaluated annually to ensure accountability and plan implementation is met. Our student ambassadors will participate in promoting the LSWP across all sites and will be instrumental to the success of our plan. Additionally, UCCS will administer annual student surveys to gather input and feedback from our students. The committee of students, and key staff will review the implementation of the wellness policy annually. See "School Wellness Committee" for roster of committee members/positions.

## **GOALS FOR SCHOOL WELLNESS**

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

1. **NUTRITION EDUCATION:** Every UCCS student will be required to enroll and pass the Nutrition Course as part of the high school graduation requirement. This course is standards-based nutrition education curriculum.
- **NUTRITION PROMOTION:** UCCS will annually increase student participation in 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, in addition to informing all students of the school's Provision 2 status.
  - **NUTRITION PROMOTION:** UCCS will 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. As a charter school that only serves grade 12, the CA Physical Fitness Test (PFT) is not administered.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

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