

# The Children's Center of Hamden and Whitney Hall Day School

## Wellness Policy Summary of Findings

### Strong Policies and Aligned Practices

The Children's Center has strong policies and practices in nutrition education for students in all grade levels, including integration of agriculture through the school garden and classroom curriculum led by the staff Horticulturalist and the Culinary Arts Instructor.

The food service department has implemented all state and federal requirements for school breakfast and lunch meals. Annual food service staff training is done that reinforces meal standards and healthy food preparation practices. All students are offered breakfast and lunch daily including whole grains, proteins, fruit, vegetables and low fat milk. Water is offered throughout the school day and a water dispenser is set up on the serving lunch during meal service. Student access to foods and beverages that do not meet the federal Smart Snacks standards is limited to occasional classroom celebrations.

All students receive 100 minutes of comprehensive physical education per week with the Physical Education Instructor. There is community involvement such as an annual basketball clinic with local college students, and field trips to parks and sporting events. Students are also offered activity breaks during the academic school day when they can go outside for a walk, and the gymnasium is available after school hours for supervised student use.

### Implementation Plans and Updates to Wellness Policy

The Children's Center and Whitney Hall Day School have good practices in place that meet the goals of the written Wellness Policy. However, there are many wellness practices in place that are not outlined in the policy.

The Wellness Policy has been updated to include language describing current practices that were not previously outlined in the policy, including:

- Each member of the Wellness Committee will assure the components of the policy that are pertinent to their area of expertise are carried out.
- Marketing of food or beverages does not take place on campus.
- Staff members eat meals with students and encourage healthy food choices.
- Student surveys are done at least once per year to assess food preferences, and the menus will be adjusted based on the results of these surveys.

## **Opportunities for Growth**

The School Wellness Committee meets quarterly to discuss wellness initiatives, discuss and plan wellness events, and evaluate adherence to the Wellness Policy. The committee consists of the Children Center's Vice President of Education, the Culinary Arts Teacher, the Physical Education Teacher, the staff Horticulturalist, the staff Registered Dietitian, the Residential Clinical Therapist, and the School Clinical Therapist. The policy is evaluated through an extensive formal process every 3 years, and the results of this assessment are posted on the school website, including the extent to which the policy is in practice, how the policy compares to required standards, and what progress has been made to attain the goals of the policy.

