

Nightingale Montessori School Wellness Policy

Updated: November 13, 2025 by the Wellness Committee

- The NM Wellness Committee regularly meets throughout the academic year. Students, parents, staff and/or community members are welcome to join the committee.
- The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that the Wellness Policy is implemented.

Nutrition Education and Promotion Section Nightingale Montessori recognizes the lunch period as an integral part of the educational program. The school kitchen serves as a "learning laboratory" to allow students to apply nutrition skills taught in the classroom. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products will be encouraged. Education regarding local procurement and organic practices will be instilled.

Farm to School. As part of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Farm to School Programs will connect schools with local farms. Nightingale Montessori, to the extent possible, will buy and feature farm fresh foods; incorporate nutrition education curriculum; and provide students experiential learning opportunities.

- The Nutrition Education Curriculum uses the school garden as a teaching tool
- The Nutrition Education Program works with the school meal program to develop school gardens and uses the cafeteria as a learning lab
- Field trips: students have an opportunity to visit local farms where produce and other foods are purchased for school needs
- The healthiest food choices will be opportunities for students to participate in culinary activities to encourage students to make healthy choices

Nutrition: Education Goals Nightingale Montessori will encourage and support healthy eating by students and engage in nutrition promotion that is:

- Offered as part of a sequential, comprehensive program for all grade levels (including Health and Family and Consumer Science) designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.
- Integrated into other areas of the curriculum such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects, where appropriate and provides eating experiences, gardens and cooking classes.
- Enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and includes participatory activities, such as international festivals, healthy fundraisers, taste testing and field trips to include local farms and gardens, food banks.
- Be a part of the curriculum where students will learn to develop lifelong skills in nutrition, health education and physical activity meal preparation, encompassing good hygiene, food safety and green practices throughout all programs.

Physical Education Goals: Nightingale Montessori offers structured and unstructured physical activity opportunities at all levels. The curriculum supports structured and unstructured physical activity time. In addition, we will utilize working in school gardens (and composting programs) as well as sponsoring clubs such as Yoga club, Ski Club, and Running Clubs during the academic school year.

- To promote an active lifestyle, students have opportunities for at least 30 minutes per day for outdoor (weather permitting) or indoor physical activity
- Recess, PE or other physical activities are not withheld from students as a consequence for poor behavior or incomplete class work
- NM prohibits students to be exempt from outdoor physical education/activity as it is a founding principle that this opportunity promotes an active lifestyle and is an integral part to our curriculum

Goals of the physical education program:

- To develop individuals who have skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthy physical activity.
- To help students recognize the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and/or social interaction.
- To develop competency in a variety of motor skills, and movement patterns
- To achieve skills to maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.
- To exhibit responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.

Reimbursable School Meals: Meals served through NM's food services program comply with the National School Lunch and Breakfast standards for meal patterns, nutrient levels, and calorie requirements for all ages served.

Breakfast is provided to all students through the USDA School Breakfast Program

- NM has implemented a token system to protect student privacy of qualifications for free or reduced-price meals
- NM will serve students a reimbursable meal, regardless of whether the student has money to pay or owes money
- Applications for free/reduced priced meals are sent home to all families at the beginning of the school year. The application is also available on SchoolCues
- NM provides periodic food promotions (local, cultural, or ethnic foods) to encourage taste testing of healthy new foods being introduced on the menu
- After obtaining food, students will have at least 20 minutes to eat lunch
- Free water will be available in the cafeteria during mealtimes
- All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA Professional Standards for Child Nutrition Professionals
- School meals will include fresh, locally grown foods in school meals from farms engaged in sustainable practices whenever possible and these foods will be promoted in the cafeteria
- NM is in compliance with all federal and state nutrition standards for all foods served in schools
- No competitive foods or beverages may be sold during the school day
- Any food fundraisers served during the school day must meet Smart Snack Standards
- Only water, milk and 100% juice are sold to students during the school day
- Snacks served in aftercare meet the requirements of the USDA program
- NM prohibits the use of food or beverages as rewards for academic, classroom or behavior performances
- All students can bring a reusable bottle of water from home. Students are provided free access to drinking water during the day.

Smart Snacks We choose to maintain our Smart Snacks policy that was adopted in 2016 as part of the US Healthier School Challenge. We promote healthy options during meals, snack times and celebrations. Celebrations, holidays, and birthdays include only healthy options, or they can take on a non-food focus and instead provide opportunities for more time to enjoy fun activities. Our school policy is to offer healthy celebratory foods for birthday and holiday celebrations.

- Staff is encouraged to model healthful eating behaviors to students. Staff dines in the lunchroom with students, encouraging students to try new foods.
- Students are involved in the daily lunch preparation and encouraged to participate in the development of creative and descriptive names for menu items.
- The school participates in other food programs such as Farm to School, working at Food Banks and working with local farms.
- Approved Smart Snack list available at: <https://www.aps.edu/coordinated-school-health/wellness/nutrition-1/aps-approved-snack-list-11-29.17-1>