

UCAP Wellness Policy

Approved 11/13/2025

Policy Statement

The UCAP School promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. The UCAP School is committed to the optimal development of every student. The UCAP School supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. By facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity, schools contribute to the basic health status of students. Improved health contributes to optimal student performance potential.

Physical Education and Physical Activity

The UCAP School will deliver a rigorous, sequential, developmentally appropriate 6th through 8th grade physical education curriculum for a mandated minimum of an average of 100 minutes a week (including Health), aligned with the Rhode Island Physical Education Framework, to develop physically educated students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity.

- Basic health and physical education instruction shall comply with Rhode Island standards. Recess and after-school activities shall not be defined as physical education.
- Students are given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education classes and movement breaks.
- Schools encourage families to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.
- Withholding physical activity as a disciplinary strategy in the classroom or in the school environment is strongly discouraged.

Health Education

Health education is an essential component of a student's core educational program. The UCAP School will deliver a diligent, sequential, and differentiated 6th through 8th grade health curriculum aligned with the Rhode Island Health Education Framework and Rhode Island Department of Education Comprehensive Health Instructional Outcomes, resulting in students with the knowledge and skills to embrace healthy lifestyles. Instruction is integrated and is provided as a class period. Health education classes are integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects.

Health Education will include instruction in the following content areas appropriate to grade and developmental level

- Personal health
- Social and emotional health & learning
- Injury prevention
- Nutrition
- Sexuality and family life
- Disease control and prevention
- Substance use and abuse prevention

Nutrition Standards For All Foods Available On School Grounds

- The school breakfast, lunch, and after school snack programs will comply with the USDA Requirements for Federal School Meals Programs and the RI Nutrition Requirements.

In the cafeteria, students will have

- Adequate space to eat and a clean, pleasant environment

- Adequate time to eat meals – 20 minutes or more for lunch
- Convenient access to hand washing and/or hand sanitizing facilities before meals

Celebrations/Events

- Celebrations/events include, but are not limited to, birthdays, holidays, potluck dinners, etc. The UCAP School may choose to handle celebrations/events in a variety of ways including but not limited to:
 - Non-food celebrations are encouraged during the school day. However, The UCAP School allows celebrations involving food after school hours because we recognize that foods are an essential part of our families' diverse cultures. For events beyond the school day, our families are encouraged to contribute foods from their individual cultures so long as these foods are tree nut and peanut-free and are appropriate to the event.
 - Energy Drinks: Caffeinated energy drinks are strongly discouraged on school grounds and not provided during school events.
 - It is strongly encouraged that celebrations comply with the RI Nutrition Guidelines. Additionally, for equity purposes and due to sodium and sugar sensitivities, we ask that families refrain from packing snacks that are high in sugar and/or sodium.
 - The food service provider(s) will ensure food safety standards are met and to reduce the risk of foodborne illness.
 - Attention to student allergies is required, and teachers must collaborate with the School Nurse to ensure that allergy precautions are maintained.
- Opportunities for fundraising for the school by the students are not offered at The UCAP School. Therefore, there are no expectations outlined in this policy in terms of food.

Food Safety

- All foods available to students will comply with state and local food safety and sanitation regulations.
- In order to keep food safe, sharing of food by students is discouraged.
- Food is not allowed out of the cafeteria and eaten in other spaces, and only allowed in unusual circumstances and/or with permission from school administration.
- State and federal guidelines shall be implemented by the food service provider(s) in order to prevent food illness in schools. Emphasis on communicating proper food handling practices (e.g. for cooking, cooling, hygiene, etc.) for educators, administrators, parents, students and health practitioners is essential to health and wellness.
- Access to food service operations is limited to Food Service staff and personnel authorized by the Executive Director or designee.

Wellness Policy Communication

The UCAP School communications should inform families, staff and the public each year about basic information on the Wellness Policy, including its content, updates to policy and implementation status and any events or activities related to wellness policy implementation, the revision process and/or the implementation and monitoring of the Wellness Policy.

Compliance with Laws, Confidentiality Requirements

The Executive Director will ensure that all UCAP personnel and all UCAP contractors comply fully with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations, and with all Board policies.