

iLEAD Lancaster Charter School Health and Wellness Policy

Overall Food Policy

Responsibilities

iLEAD Lancaster recognizes the important connection between a healthy diet and a student's ability to learn effectively and achieve high standards in school. We also recognize the school's role, as part of the larger community, to promote family health, sustainable agriculture and environmental restoration.

iLEAD Lancaster recognizes that the sharing of food is a fundamental experience for all people; a primary way to nurture and celebrate our cultural diversity; and an excellent bridge for building friendships, and inter-generational bonds.

iLEAD Lancaster is sensitive to the allergic disposition of their learners, faculty and staff, including but not limited to severe peanut and tree nut allergies. Administrators, faculty, learners and parents will work together to provide a safe learning environment for all of its community.

iLEAD Lancaster is sensitive to the cultural and/or religious diets of their learners, faculty and staff, including but not limited to vegetarianism and being kosher. Administrators, faculty, learners and parents will work together to provide a comfortable learning environment for all of its community.

Mission

The educational mission is to improve the health of the entire community by teaching learners and families' ways to establish and maintain life-long healthy eating habits. The mission shall be accomplished through nutrition education, garden experiences, food brought into the school, the food served in school, and core academic content in the classroom.

Goals

1. Ensure that a healthy and nutritious lunch and snacks are available to learners so that learners are prepared to learn to their fullest potential.
2. Ensure that the nutritional value of the food served significantly improves upon USDA Dietary Guidelines by providing nutritious, fresh, tasty, locally grown food that reflects iLEAD Lancaster's cultural diversity. Encourage the use of whole, fresh, unprocessed foods and ingredients whenever possible.
3. Strive that the food served should include whole grains and be organic to the maximum extent possible, as defined by the California Certified Organic Farmers.
4. Eliminate food choices with potential harmful food additives, preservatives, artificial flavors and colors and processes. Food with hydrogenated oils should be avoided.
5. Serve meals in a pleasant environment with sufficient time for eating, while fostering good manners and respect for fellow learners.
6. Maximize the reduction of waste by recycling, reusing, composting and purchasing recycled products. iLEAD Lancaster shall have a recycling program.
7. Ensure that a full service kitchen may eventually be installed at school site.
8. Offer cooking, nutrition, food, botany, recycling and other pertinent classes to our staff and learners.

9. Learners in all grades receive nutrition education that is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy eating behaviors.
10. Nutrition education is offered in the school dining room as well as in the classroom.
11. Learners receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, cafeterias, homes, community and media.
12. iLEAD Lancaster's health education curriculum standards and guidelines include both nutrition and physical education.
13. Nutrition is integrated into the health education or core curricula (e.g., math, science, language arts).
14. Offer and promote healthy food and beverage products, when possible, at school-sponsored events.
15. Encourage the use of non-food items for fundraising. If food items are used for fundraising, strive to meet the above criteria.
16. Faculty and staff are encouraged to model good eating habits while in the presence of learners.

This policy does not restrict what parents may provide for their own child's lunches or snacks, but does restrict what items parents can provide other children at school. However, parents are highly encouraged to follow the food policies of the school when packing lunches and snacks for their children.

Suggestions for Healthy Food Choices in Meals and Snacks

In light of the fact that childhood obesity and nutritional deficiency-related diseases are on the rise in the United States, we are obligated to promote and mentor healthy eating habits and balanced lifestyles through student education. Our goal is improving the well-being of the entire community through teaching learners ways to establish and maintain lifelong health through better eating habits and physical activity.

In keeping with this goal, iLEAD Lancaster adopted the stipulation that foods offered to learners and employees during the day in classrooms, school offices and on school grounds be as healthful and nutritious as possible. Facilitators, administrators and parents who model healthy behavior increase the likelihood of having a positive influence on student behavior.

Recommended beverages, fresh fruits & vegetables, and snacks

Whenever possible, choose fruits, vegetables and beverages that are organically grown and are pesticide-, hormone-, and antibiotic-free. These guidelines apply to food offered in the lunch program and snack bar. iLEAD Lancaster encourages these guidelines be followed when parents and learners are packing food from home or bringing in food for school parties (ie: birthday celebrations etc.) Try the following healthy options or think of your own:

1. Water and sparkling waters
2. Herbal teas (hot and iced)
3. Pure 100 percent fruit juice and fruit juice blends
4. Sparkling 100 percent fruit juice and fruit juice blends
5. Blends of 100 percent juice and sparkling water
6. Natural fruit-flavored waters
7. Milk (or alternative milk products like Soy Milk or Rice Milk)
8. Whole and freshly cut fresh fruit, local and seasonal if possible
9. Raisins and dried fruit, including 100 percent fruit roll-ups and fruit leather strips
10. Fresh veggies served with low-fat salad dressing, dips, salsas, bean dips or hummus (pureed chickpeas)

11. Yogurt parfaits made with fresh fruit and healthy condiments, such as granola (without nuts) or dried fruits
12. Fresh fruit salad
13. Fruit juice smoothies
14. Any fruit or vegetable served as crudité
15. Trail mixes (without nuts)
16. Fruit concentrate- and honey-sweetened yogurt with some granolas (without nuts)
17. Real cheese and whole grain crackers
18. Tortilla chips and salsa, guacamole, or bean dips
19. Select snack bars
20. Air-popped popcorn
21. Compressed rice and grain cakes

Birthday Parties and other Class Celebrations

At iLEAD Lancaster, we understand that many families and learners enjoy celebrating milestones such as birthdays with their classes. In accordance with the iLEAD Lancaster Food Policy, non-edible items are encouraged over edible ones. Examples include bubbles, stationary, pencil/paper and rubber affinity bracelets. Learners are also encouraged to donate a book to the classroom library. A special bookplate will be put in the book with the name of the learner who donated it. If families still want to bring in baked items, we ask that parents choose treats from the above list or that are as healthy and organic as possible. We encourage our families to purchase food items from stores. Stores like Trader Joes and Whole Foods have many choices that are healthy and affordable.

Candy or Sticky Sweets

In light of the fact that childhood obesity and nutritional deficiency-related diseases are on the rise in the United States, we are obligated to promote and mentor healthy eating habits and balanced lifestyles through student education. Our goal is improving the well-being of the entire community through teaching learners ways to establish and maintain lifelong health through better eating habits and physical activity.

In keeping with this goal and progressive schools throughout the country, iLEAD Lancaster adopted the stipulation that candy be restricted from campus and school activities. Candy, or any processed food made predominantly from sweeteners or artificial sweeteners with a variety of minor ingredients includes hard candy, jellies, marshmallow candies, fondant, licorice, spun candy and candy coated popcorn.

Staff may not provide candy to learners under any circumstances as a reward, but may be used occasionally as an educational tool (e.g., sorting M & Ms).

Food provided for learners as part of a class or school cultural heritage event for instructional or enrichment purposes would be exempt from this policy.

This policy does not restrict what parents may provide for their own child's lunches or snacks, but does restrict what items parents can provide other children at school. However, parents are highly encouraged to follow the food policies of the school when packing lunches and snacks for their children.

Food Rewards

In light of the fact that childhood obesity and nutritional deficiency-related diseases are on the rise in the United States, we are obligated to promote and mentor healthy eating habits and balanced lifestyles through student education. Our goal is improving the well-being of the entire community through teaching learners ways to establish and maintain lifelong health through better eating habits and physical activity.

In keeping with this goal and progressive schools throughout the country, iLEAD Lancaster adopted the stipulation that food not be used as reward or punishment for academic or instructional achievement, performance, effort or activity in any respect or for behavior modification or punishment.

Physical Activity Guidelines

Facilitators and other school and community personnel should not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, lunch, physical education) unless it is a logical consequence for a student's actions or choices.