

The Effective Achievement of Local School

Wellness Policy Goals: El Sol Science and

Arts Academy

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Abstract

To ensure that they properly meet the needs of their students and staff, the client, El Sol Science and Arts Academy, has requested an evaluation of whether they effectively met their local school wellness policy goals. El Sol Science and Arts Academy is a public charter school located in Santa Ana, California, that serves nearly 1000 mostly low income, minority students, with 73% of their student population qualifying for free or reduced meals. This capstone investigates this main problem by conducting two surveys, one interview, and content analyses. The findings reveal that El Sol has effectively met many of the wellness goals outlined in their wellness policy, nutrition, physical activity, and staff wellness, yet some elements remain incomplete, student emotional health.

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Executive Summary

Given rising obesity rates, as well as the association between high body mass index (BMI) and low academic performance, the Child Nutrition and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act was passed by Congress in 2004. This act required all local education agencies who participate in the National School Lunch Program to implement wellness policies. The client for this project, El Sol Science and Arts Academy, a public charter school located in Santa Ana, California, serves nearly 1000 mostly low income, minority students, with 73% of their student population qualifying for free or reduced meals. Therefore, El Sol partnered with the University of California, Irvine, Sue and Bill Gross School of Nursing to develop a local school wellness policy. To ensure that they properly meet the needs of their students and staff, the client has requested an evaluation of whether El Sol effectively met their local school wellness policy goals.

This capstone investigates this issue by conducting two surveys, one interview, and content analyses. Then response frequencies and coding are calculated with the use of Excel software. The findings reveal that El Sol has effectively met many of the health and wellness initiatives outlined in their wellness policy, nutrition, physical activity, and staff wellness, yet some elements remain incomplete, emotional health. Due to the findings, it is recommended that El Sol evaluate emotional health curriculum, programs, and services, require all teachers to receive credentials, create new wellness campaign, staff wellness room, logic models, and processes for reporting bullying, and monitor frequency of celebrations and physical education excused absences. With this information, the client will be better able to identify if they are effectively supporting their students, staff, and community.

Wellness is a key factor in maximizing the development of youth. Wellness is defined as a conscious, deliberate process that requires a person to become aware of and make choices for a more satisfying lifestyle (Swarbick, 2006). These choices include adequate sleep and rest, eating nourishing foods, getting enough exercise, avoiding self-destructive behavior, and being with others in mutually supportive ways (Swarbick, 2006). Promoting these habits among youth can have a significant effect on quality of life. For instance, research shows that academic performance in children is negatively linked with higher adiposity and lower physical fitness, while being physically active has a positive effect on children's self-esteem and health risk behaviors (Freed, McCarthy, and Roberts, 2009, Efrat, 2011). Therefore, making the correct lifestyle choices in childhood is instrumental in future outcomes.

However, in impoverished, immigrant communities, wellness is especially difficult as the lack of resources and systemic supports result in a considerably underserved population. Schools are an ideal place for providing such assistance, as children spend a significant amount of their developmental years on school campuses (Lobstein, Baur, and Uauy, 2004). In 2004, the Child Nutrition and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act was passed by Congress. This Act required that all local education agencies that participate in the National School Lunch Program create and implement wellness policies.

One such local education agency is El Sol Science and Arts Academy, a public charter school located in Santa Ana, California that serves nearly 1000 mostly low income, minority students, with 73% of their student population qualifying for free or reduced meals. El Sol developed a comprehensive wellness policy in partnership with the University of California, Irvine Sue and Bill Gross School of Nursing (Appendix K). This policy was centered around the following themes: nutrition, physical activity, mental health, staff wellness, safe and healthy

school environment, illness prevention, and medication administration. The included themes were designed to tackle El Sol's recent rise in obesity, as well as incidents of bullying and negative self-talk. To address the health of their students and staff, ensuring the effectiveness of their wellness policy is necessary. Therefore, the client, El Sol Science and Arts Academy, has requested an analysis of the effectiveness of their local school wellness policy in order to ensure that they are properly meeting the needs of their students and staff. As such, this capstone investigates the following research question: Is El Sol effectively meeting the goals of their wellness policy? Since the safe and healthy school environment, illness prevention, and medication administration goals were evaluated in 2016, the research focuses on nutrition, physical activity, emotional health, and staff wellness.

This project contains five sections. The first details the literature on the importance of nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and staff wellness in schools, as well as expressed barriers to implementing local school wellness policies. This section also includes background on El Sol Science and Arts Academy. The second section introduces the research question, hypothesis, and variables. The third section details the measurements, data collection, sampling plan, and data analysis. Next, the fourth section includes an analysis of the results, while describing their significance to El Sol Academy. Lastly, the fifth section contains a list of recommendations.

Literature Review

Once Congress passed the WIC Reauthorization Act in 2010, all local education agencies that participated in the National School Lunch Program were required by law to create local school wellness policies. This federal mandate recognizes that, as a site where students spend a large allotment of their time, the programs and services that schools provide have an impact on

student health. However, the work does not end with simply creating a policy. Evaluating the effectiveness of local school wellness policies is a key aspect of benefitting the health of youth in America. Therefore, local education agencies must understand the importance of wellness policies and effectiveness in a national context, as well as the barriers and best practices.

Research on the evaluation of wellness policies in schools is limited. However, available literature on physical activity and nutrition express that schools can create healthy behavior in students which will in turn lead to higher academic achievement (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014, 2). On the other hand, literature on mental health notes that schools are an essential and productive location for identifying, and addressing the emotional and behavioral health of students (Hoagwood and Rones, 2010). Additionally, research on staff wellness shows that teachers are susceptible to burnout, which negatively affects the achievement of students (Romano and Wahlstrom, 2010). Lastly, literature on barriers to implementation expresses that discrepancies in system support are damaging to the effectiveness of school wellness policies (Black, Eidel, Fox, Hager, Lopes, Penniston, Rubio, and Saksvig, 2016)

In this review of literature, the significance of local school wellness policies according to the themes of nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and staff wellness are explored. The summary is followed by a discussion of the barriers that have prevented implementation of wellness goals in schools, which can prevent effectiveness, as well as a brief background of El Sol Science and Arts Academy. This review of literature is meant to support the pressing need to effectively address local school wellness policies, so that the health of youth, and eventually entire communities, is made a priority.

Importance of Wellness Policies

Nutrition. Literature on school nutrition demonstrates that interventions can change behavior (Bevans, Sanchez, Teneralli, and Forrest, 2011). In a cross-sectional observational study on the eating behaviors of 2039 students from 22 schools, Bevans et al. (2011) found that, among students who infrequently purchased a la carte food items, the availability of nutritious foods during school lunch periods was associated with healthier eating behaviors. Therefore, this research shows that policies that address the risks that unhealthy food options pose can effectively serve students. Similarly, Crawford, Sanchez-Vaznaugh, and Sanchez (2015) note that policies prohibiting the sale of unhealthy foods and drinks in schools are associated with lower proportions of overweight students. It should also be noted that the authors of this study found that the decrease in total BMI is accelerated in socioeconomically advantaged neighborhoods. However, there are additional methods to curb nutrition behavior, such as nutrition education.

Most literature focuses on the impact of proper nutrition education. Guarino, Parmer, Powers, and Struempfer (2005), who utilized a control and intervention group to analyze the impact of nutrition education in elementary schools, found that the intervention group's consumption of junk food decreased and nutrition knowledge increased. Similarly, Carraway-Stage, Diaz, Duffrin, Hovland, and Showers (2015) found that nutrition based education led to an increase of student's understanding on how to make healthier life choices. This association suggests that schools are a great resource to inform youth on health. Alberts, Huh, Larsen, Liao, and Robertson (2016), from their research on public schools in California, discovered that nutrition education even has an impact on the healthy choices of kindergarteners. Clearly, literature on nutrition education and healthy food options in schools agree that interventions are an effective and valuable approach.

Physical Activity. Literature suggests that physical activity is positively associated with academic achievement. For instance, Siegel (2006) found that reading and math scores "improved significantly as the number of physical fitness tests achieved increased" (9). Additionally, Freed et al. (2009) found that students with higher BMI than standards set by the Center for Disease Control, scored lower on California standardized math, reading, and language tests than students who met BMI standards. However, it should also be noted, that recent research shows that several socioeconomic factors impact the likelihood that BMI will decrease (Rosenberg, Sallis, Conway, Cain, and McKenzie, 2006). Yet, given the relationship between BMI and testing, it is important information to consider. This relationship was also found for students who did not meet the California Fitnessgram standard mile time. Essentially, scholars agree that physical activity in schools is a necessary component to create a thriving learning environment. This is explained by the connection between increased physical activity and improved cognition and memory (Efrat, 2011). According to Chaddock-Heyman, Cohen, Hilman, and Kramer (2014), "higher fit children have larger brain volumes in the basal ganglia and hippocampus, which relate to superior performance on tasks of cognitive control and memory" (25). All in all, ample literature shows that physical activity is essential in schools.

Student Mental and Emotional Health. According to Avenevoli, Benjet, Burstein, Cui, Georgiades, Jian-ping, Merikangas, and Swendsen (2010), about 25% of children experience a mental health disorder annually, with the age of onset in childhood or early adolescence. There is substantial evidence in literature that reveals the implications that poor mental health has on performance in school and outcomes later in life. Desocio and Hootman (2004) stipulate that emotional and behavioral disorders are associated with poor academic functioning, chronic absenteeism, and disciplinary concerns. Moreover, students with emotional and behavioral

disorders have the highest dropout rate of all disability categories, as well as high rates of unemployment, criminal activity, substance abuse, and even suicide (Leigh, Woods-Groves, and Huddle, 2014). Therefore, literature on mental health largely recommends intervention in schools. In fact, most individuals who receive any mental health services, receive them in school (Hoagwood et al, 2010). In general, there is a lack of services delivered directly to students with emotional disorders, which shows the need for programs that are delivered or developed by the professional mental health community through an integrated approach with schools (Wagner, Friend, Bursuck, Kutash, Duchnowski, Sumi, and Epstein., 2006). Therefore, although mental health services in schools remain a work in progress, they are valuable to youth and the larger community.

Staff Health. According to the literature, k-12 teaching is associated with emotional exhaustion and burnout (Romano et al, 2010). Thus, staff wellness is of pertinent concern. Romano et al. (2010) conducted a study on 215 k-12 educators, finding that these educators reported moderate to high stress levels, with middle school teachers experiencing more stress than those teaching older students. This is due to several stimuli, such as student demands, physical demands, and lack of funding. Additionally, according to Chang (2009), teachers may feel frustrated, bored, and depleted due to the culture of isolation. Multiple studies report that this stress leads to burnout and affects the experiences of students (Romano et al., 2010, 123). Teacher stress and burnout is found to lead to absenteeism and a diminished capacity to effectively teach students. Furthermore, Miller, Murnane, and Willett (2008) found, in a study of northern United States school districts, that each 10 additional days of teacher absence reduces mathematical achievement by 3.3% of a standard deviation (1). Therefore, literature shows that ensuring the wellness of educators is integral to the success of schools and their students.

Barriers to Implementation

Communication and Resources. Most schools do not provide adequate financial or personnel resources to carry out the implementation of wellness policies, according to literature. In a study involving administrators from 300 high schools, representing 22 states in 4 regions, Budd, Schwarz, Yount, and Haire-Joshu (2009) reported that “the core domains least likely to be implemented were communication and promotion” (3). So, compared to their communication of physical education (PE) or evaluation components, the administrators were least likely to communicate and promote wellness to their students. This was determined to be difficult because the wellness instruction requirements were not definable, measurable, or affordable. Therefore, communication at several levels, including when creating the policy, allocating funds, and in speaking to students, prevented proper implementation.

In a study involving administrators from 24 support systems and 1,349 schools, researchers Black et al (2016) focused on schools with low-income students. Through their surveys, they found the greater likelihood of the implementation of wellness policies was observed among schools with perceived system support. Therefore, they suggest the formation of school-level school health councils supported by system-level resources that are well-communicated and accurately perceived. This recommendation suggests that ample resources aid in appropriate understanding of wellness goals and efforts. In Colorado, the implementation of wellness policies in rural schools was evaluated by Beatty, Belansky, Cutforth, Gilbert, Delong, Marshall, Ross, and Scabro (2009), by interviewing food service providers from 18 randomly selected schools. The policies were found to contain vague language, and it was discovered that there were insufficient resources devoted to the local school wellness policy. Additional factors included the principals’ minimal knowledge about the policy and the absence of accountability

mechanisms. Thus, financial resources and effective communication are shown to be an obstacle to implementation of wellness policies in a wide range of communities.

Buy-in. Although minimal, literature has shown that lack of buy-in from school and district stakeholders complicates implementation of school wellness policies. In a study conducted in Nevada by Bancroft, Benedict, Spears, and Kerwin (2013), wellness coordinators, principals, and food service managers from 12 elementary schools participated in interviews. It was found that employees “were unfamiliar with specific requirements and noted a lack of communication since the policy was first enacted 3 years ago” (S76). As a result, they did not view the policy as a high priority. This study further emphasizes the importance of fully communicating both the requirements and the importance of wellness to those who are expected to implement the wellness policies. This also shows the value in gaining support through communicating the benefits of wellness policies to achieve full implementation. Similarly, through an online survey involving school board members from across the country, the California School Boards Association et al. (2008) found that getting buy-in and support from stakeholders was cited as a large concern.

Summary of the Literature

Overall, the literature shows that effective local school wellness policies are foundational in supporting the development of youth. First, literature on nutrition suggests that providing healthy options and proper nutrition education will improve the behavior of students. Second, literature on physical activity states that physical activity is positively associated with academic achievement. Third, literature on mental health resources shows that these resources are lacking, yet support not only performance in school but constructive behavior outside of the academic environment. Additionally, literature indicates that teachers are at risk of burnout, which

negatively affects the students, and therefore administration must prioritize staff wellness. Lastly, literature agrees that the most frequent barriers to the implementation of local school wellness policies are poor communication, a lack of resources, and low stakeholder buy-in.

Organization Background

El Sol Science and Arts Academy (El Sol) is a public charter school located in Santa Ana, California. Since opening in 2001, the school has provided instruction through dual-immersion curriculum, in which students learn in both Spanish and English. El Sol's mission is to provide a rigorous academic environment that prepares students for entrance into a college preparatory track at the high school of their choice and to create a culture of kindness, creativity, courage, and honesty that will permit their graduates to assume leadership roles and achieve their dreams. The student population is 95% Latino, 1.11 % Asian, 1.22% African American and 1.33% White. In addition, 45% of students are English Language learners (ELLS). Furthermore, about 73% of their total student population, 975, qualifies for free or reduced meals, provided by the federally funded School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program (El Sol Academy, 2017).

El Sol considers itself a Community School and that distinction combined with its academically successful performance has resulted in numerous awards and recognition. El Sol was the California Charter School of the Year, a White House Bright Spot for Hispanic Education, a California Distinguished School and a Title I Academic Achievement Awardee. El Sol has many partnerships. Important partnerships include Sapphire at School, an organization that provides fresh breakfast, lunch, and snacks daily. El Sol has partnered with Second Harvest Food Bank to create a permanent school pantry to distribute food to those in need both at the school and in the community. El Sol also opened the SOS – El Sol Wellness Center, a Federally

Qualified Health Center run by the nonprofit Share Our Selves (SOS), to provide healthcare services, health education, and social services to El Sol students, faculty, staff, and Santa Ana families. Students also receive nutrition and emotional health classes, from UCI nursing students as part of their community health clinical training rotation. Nutrition classes are provided for parents as well. Additionally, El Sol contracts with the Orange County Department of Education for mental health services, including a full time clinical social worker and three clinical interns.

Other important health partners include the UCI eye institute mobile vision van, Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County, the Children and Families Commission of Orange County, Pediatric Exercise and Genomics Research Center and many others. Faculty and staff benefits include therapy, through insurance, and a 24 Hour Fitness gym pass. These initiatives reflect El Sol's strong sense of community responsibility and desire to have a large-scale impact. The residents, 334,909, of Santa Ana are predominantly Latino (78.2%), Asian (10.4%), and White (9.2%). Of this population, 22% are below the poverty level. In the 92701 zip code, residents live with the highest density, lowest income, and highest crime rates in the county. It is El Sol's hope that the surrounding community will benefit from the students' experience, development, and achievement. As an organization that provides health and wellness programs and services to not only their students but to the city of Santa Ana, evaluating the effectiveness of reaching the goals of their local school wellness policy is a productive way to reach their mission and values (El Sol Academy, 2017).

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this research is to determine if El Sol effectively met their wellness policy goals. Given El Sol's goals of community involvement and work with underserved populations, achieving the goals of the policy is necessary.

Methodology

This project focuses on El Sol Science and Arts Academy's local school wellness policy. It addresses the research question: Is El Sol effectively meeting the goals of their wellness policy? In order to address this question, two surveys and one interview were conducted, while data on student BMI, absences, bullying incidences, and teacher credentials were compiled, and the school lunch menu was compared to federal nutrition standards. The survey data were analyzed by calculating response frequencies, the interview data were coded, and the student BMI, absences, and bullying incidences were compared over the course of three years. This section outlines the methods by first discussing the sample groups, which is also noted in Appendix B. Then it discusses how the surveys were created and distributed. Finally, the process in which the data are analyzed is explained as well. Based upon research discussed in the literature review, the hypotheses are:

1. El Sol effectively acknowledges the need to provide healthy food.
2. El Sol Science and Arts Academy effectively follows the state physical education guidelines.
3. El Sol Science and Art Academy effectively supports the emotional well-being of each of its students.
4. El Sol Science and Arts Academy effectively encourage its staff to lead healthy lifestyles both on and off campus.

Sample

The groups who were asked to participate in the study are the stakeholders mentioned in the wellness policy, including the health clerk (n=1), Sapphire, the food service provider, (n=1), teachers and extended day instructors (n=63), and students (n=481), using a combination of cluster and purposive sampling. According to the wellness policy, the teachers provide physical education, help to enforce the nutrition requirements, and benefit from the staff wellness

program. The health clerk delivers emotional health services and resources on campus, and is intended to be most aware of student and teacher emotional health. Hence, the opinions of the teachers and the clerk will provide insight into the goals that policy enforcement achieved.

Although all teachers were surveyed, only 4th- 8th grade students were asked to participate, as they were determined to be able to maturely answer the survey questions.

Measurement and Data Collection

To determine if El Sol effectively met their wellness goals, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected, also known as mixed methods (see Appendix A). These data were intended to measure effectiveness by answering the research question: Is El Sol effectively meeting the goals of their wellness policy? The 4 goals included in this research paper are related to nutrition, physical activity, emotional health, and staff wellness. The independent variables are the actions of stakeholders, which impact the effectiveness of the wellness policy goals. Therefore, the independent variables are the (1) student BMI, (2) school menu nutrition value, (3) frequency of birthday celebrations, (4) student physical activity, (5) teachers' PE standards knowledge, (6) expressed student support, (7) bullying incidents, (8) suspensions, (9) expressed teacher support, and (10) teacher physical activity, with the dependent variable being effectiveness of reaching the wellness policy goals (Appendix A).

The quantitative data were compiled from surveys, teaching credentials that represent knowledge of physical education standards, the nutrition value of school lunches, student BMI, absences due to suspension, and bullying incidences, while the qualitative data were compiled through an interview with El Sol's health clerk. Two surveys were created to account for the unique involvement of students and teachers in the ability to effectively meet wellness goals. For example, the teachers were asked about their enforcement of the policy and how it impacted

personal choices, while students were questioned about their nutrition and physical activity choices, as it relates to the wellness policy (Appendix B and C). The surveys were delivered on paper, and to ensure a high response rate, a statement on behalf of the client and researcher was emailed the day the surveys were distributed, and the following week as a reminder. Since she works in the front office and communicates with students and staff about emotional health needs, the interview with El Sol's health clerk was intended to discover if enough resources are provided to achieve the nutrition and emotional health goals of the wellness policy. The interview was also used as valuable insight, in the case that the surveys receive a low response rate and are therefore not completely representative of the target population. Regarding the remaining data, student BMI testing is conducted by volunteers at the close of each school year. In addition, annual absences, bullying incidences, and credentials are reported to the state each year. Finally, the school menu nutrition information, from April, was provided by the food service provider, Sapphire.

Data Analysis

Effectiveness was measured by behaviors and attitudes, as it relates to the four goals. For each hypothesis, effectiveness is defined differently, which is detailed in Appendix A. Thus, to measure effectiveness, the data were analyzed in several ways. Concerning survey data, each response was coded into a number scale. For example, question 2 of the student survey asks if students eat a lunch from school or bring lunch from home. The response of "school lunch" has a value of 1, while "from home" has a value of 2. The frequency, or how often each response was selected, was then calculated. Next, the annual sums of student BMI were compared across 3 years, and a line graph was created to demonstrate if a trend is present. This process was repeated for the annual total of student absences due to suspension and bullying incidences.

Furthermore, the sum of credentials was determined, then represented by a ratio to show the portion of teachers and extended day instructors who met the physical activity goal.

Additionally, a content analysis of the April lunch menu was conducted. The nutrition values of the school lunches were compared to the standards of the policy (Appendix E). Then the amount of days that Sapphire followed the nutrition standards was represented by a ratio. Nutrition goals were met if Sapphire complied for at least 24 out of the 30 days, or 80% of April. For the quantitative data analysis process, the software Excel was utilized. Finally, interview responses were thematically coded. This was done through discovering patterns in the data, based upon a shared characteristic, and then arranging these into several categories. The interview responses were grouped together by question. Therefore, six excerpts were coded and several patterns were identified within each excerpt.

Validity and Reliability

This analysis relies on valid and reliable methods. To ensure internal validity, the wellness policy was assessed by wellness goals. This allowed for all areas to be evaluated for effectiveness. Furthermore, the services and resources provided to the students and staff are also available to Santa Ana residents. Therefore, the impact on student and teacher choices may be evident among the larger population. However, schools who engage with the surrounding community less may not have similar results, which effects generalizability. Additionally, this study can be repeated each year, reflecting reliability. Yet, it is the goal of El Sol to consistently improve healthy choices and decrease obesity over time, showing that the results, if effective, will not be consistent, or perfectly reliable. It is also important to consider the political climate and the extreme factors that a typical El Sol student may face, which make achieving wellness more difficult and therefore limit generalizability.

Findings

Survey

Nutrition. There were 420 out of 481 students who responded to the survey, at an 87% response rate, while 21 out of 63 teachers and extended day instructors responded, a 33% response rate (see Appendix B, Table 2). The students' responses reveal that they are making the conscious decision to avoid unhealthy food yet not entirely (see Appendix B, Table 2). For instance, most students do not consume soda. According to the wellness policy, this drink is not allowed on campus and students are encouraged to avoid soda. The wellness policy also specifies that student lunches should not include chips, candy, or fried foods. The clear majority, 54%, of students responded that they only consume these foods 1-3 days per week (see Appendix B, Table 1). Also, lunches from home should contain one serving of fruit and vegetables each, while Sapphire provides 2 ½ servings of fruit and 3 ¾ servings of vegetables per week (see Appendix J). Most students indicated that they either consume fruits for part of the week (1-3 days) or most of the week (4-6 days), and they eat vegetables for part of the week. Therefore, students are consuming these vital foods, yet the consistent intake of fruit and vegetables is lacking. Furthermore, students responded that they eat grains for most of the week or part of the week, and eat meat for part of the week or most of the week. Their lunch from home should include one source of lean protein and one source of whole grains per day, while Sapphire serves 8-9 servings of grains and meat per week (see Appendix J). These responses revealed that students are being provided with healthy food, both through what El Sol provides on campus and what El Sol discourages students from consuming on campus.

Within the teacher and extended day instructor survey, most staff responded that they only allow birthday celebrations once a month (62%) or never (38%) (see Appendix C, Table 1).

When foods are brought in, 57% of teachers and extended day instructors responded that they very often follow the two-bite rule. Furthermore, foods are either rarely (62%) or never (33%) used as a reward in the classroom (see Appendix C, Table 1). These responses reflect a key aspect of parent and faculty involvement in achieving the nutrition goal, as allowing competitive foods to be presented in school can dissuade students from avoiding unhealthy foods.

Furthermore, by students staying away from processed foods and teachers and extended instructors limiting the times they provide celebrations, which typically include unhealthy foods, it can be determined that El Sol is effectively acknowledging the need to provide healthy food.

Physical Activity. El Sol aims to follow state PE guidelines for their physical activity goal. The Local Control Accountability (LCAP) report shows that El Sol has in fact met the hourly requirement. The survey responses reflect that not only are students receiving the required amount of active play at school, they are also continuing this practice outside of school (see Appendix B, Table 3). However, 12% of students did not receive the required amount the week prior to completing the survey (see Appendix B, Table 3). Therefore, El Sol is effectively meeting the annual state physical education guidelines, yet adjustments could be made to encourage consistent physical activity in their students at school on a weekly basis, which is covered further in the discussion section.

Emotional Health. El Sol seeks to “support the emotional well-being of each of its students” (see Appendix J). Therefore, four questions were asked to gauge the prevalence of bullying, support, and negative self-image. There were 235 or 57% of students who disclosed that they have never been bullied with 27% rarely experiencing bullying, and 83% responded that they do not bully others. (see Appendix B, Table 4). Although, 23% of students occasionally experience negative self-image, the majority rarely or never do (see Appendix B, Table 4).

However, when asked if they have a teacher or faculty member to talk to when having a bad day, this was thinly distributed. In other words, there is no majority and the percentages for each response are similar. Due to this insight about staff and faculty support, the threshold was not met.

Staff Wellness. Most teachers and extended day instructors acknowledge that they always have someone to talk to when they are having a bad day, they are satisfied or very satisfied with the resources for their emotional support, and satisfied with resources to limit stress (see Appendix B, Table 5). 48% of teachers and extended day instructors noted that they were physically active for 1-3 days per week. Despite 10% not engaging in physical activity, most teachers were active in some regard (see Appendix B, Table 3). Although their physical activity isn't required, this habit contributes to proper wellness. Therefore, it can be concluded that El Sol effectively encourages its staff to lead healthy lifestyles both on and off campus.

Interview

The themes gathered from the interview with El Sol's health clerk include: Resources, Communication, Observations, Bullying, Effectiveness, Stress, Policy Violation, Policy Enforcement, and Denial (see Appendix D, Table 7). These themes summarize the key findings regarding nutrition, emotional health, and staff wellness. For instance, the health clerk stressed that there are several "measures of aid", or resources, that she can direct students to. To direct these resources, she relies on her personal observations as well as those of parents, faculty, and staff. Furthermore, the open line of communication with various stakeholders is something that she is confident in. This is important, as the wellness policy notes that "it is crucial that the entire El Sol community is able to participate in its development" (see Appendix J). Moreover, the

health clerk believes that the policy, as written, is effective in addressing the areas of wellness in detail.

However, the themes reveal that certain goals of the policy are not being enforced. Specifically, as someone who works in the front office, the health clerk believes that the plan to limit birthday celebrations to once a month is being violated. In addition, though she considers stress as the main emotional concern among staff, she disclosed that staff wellness is not a top priority, compared to supporting students and parents. This stress is not limited to workload, and is also a result of teachers shouldering the burden of student and parent stress. On the other hand, bullying was cited as the main emotional concern of students. In this case, there is frequent communication on the issue, with bullying taken into deep consideration. An interesting theme from the interview was denial. According to the health clerk, parents and staff do not always accept recommendations from El Sol, due to culture. In summary, this interview revealed that El Sol may not be effectively achieving the nutrition and staff wellness goals of the wellness policy.

Menu

After comparing the nutrition standards of the wellness policy to the nutrition information of the food served by Sapphire, it is clear that Sapphire is helping El Sol to effectively achieve their nutrition goal, with 100% of their April breakfast and lunch menu meeting the wellness policy standards (see Appendix E, table 8). Therefore, students who receive lunch from school, are receiving nutritious meals if competing foods are not also being served. An example of Sapphire's daily nutrition information can be found in Appendix E.

Student BMI

The possible change in physical activity levels as well as nutrition choices of students is reflected in the student BMI rates (Appendix F). By California standards, the BMI rates of only

5th grade and 7th grade students are required. Thus, Table 10 and Figures 1 and 2 in Appendix F show the change per 5th and 7th grade over three years. After the wellness policy went into effect in May 2014, the rate of 5th graders in the healthy fitness zone (HFZ) increased in subsequent years, while the number of 7th graders in the HFZ decreased. Furthermore, since the wellness policy was created, 5th graders in the health risk and needs improvement zone has decreased, while 7th graders have no clear pattern. Overall, when comparing the same students' BMI overtime, the percentage of those at health risk decreased by 8%. These findings may reflect that El Sol is effectively meeting the nutrition goal.

Student Suspension Rates and Bullying Incidences

Student suspension rates and bullying incidences are a key indicator of the emotional health of students at El Sol, due to their expression of their emotions as well as the students' ability to view the campus as a welcoming space. Over the past three years, bullying had increased and then fell to original levels (see Appendix G, Figure 3). It is possible that as the years went by, prevention tactics were not effective; or, a single incident caused a large fall out that was difficult to control. If adjustments were not made since 2015-2016, it is possible that a spike could occur again. On the other hand, suspensions decreased significantly (see Appendix H, Figure 4). This could mean that fewer incidences occurred. However, this could also be the result of a change in parameters to keep students from missing school. Therefore, one form of incidents that typically indicate poor emotional health seem to be decreasing, while the other has alarming changes reflecting that El Sol may not effectively supports the emotional wellbeing of its students.

Credentials

The credentials of El Sol teachers and instructors are presented in their annual School Accountability Report Card (SARC). Appendix I reveals that nearly all teachers have followed this area of the wellness policy, aside from three who have temporary credentials and are still clearing their California Teaching Credential. However, there is one credentialed PE teacher for 6th - 8th grade students, whose sole job description is to provide PE instruction. A credential allows El Sol to determine if teachers are aware of the PE requirements, so that state guidelines can be followed. However, this is not enough to determine that El Sol does not effectively follow state physical education guidelines.

Discussion and Recommendations

Discussion

Although El Sol is moving in a positive direction towards achieving their wellness objectives, especially considering the ample programs, resources, and services, they have not effectively met all of their wellness policy goals. However, the findings do indicate that the that El Sol effectively acknowledges the need to provide healthy food, the first hypothesis. This is done through the healthy lunches and breakfast distributed through Sapphire. However, there are discrepancies regarding compliance with the plan to limit the frequency of birthday celebrations, given the survey responses and interview, which suggests that some teachers do not enforce this plan. This can be solved by monitoring the frequency of the birthday celebrations, as discussed in the recommendations. Nevertheless, since students are making nutritious decisions on their own, as shown by their survey responses, and celebrations do not hold as much weight as daily lunch and breakfast, this reveals the positive impact of El Sol's nutrition efforts. Finally, the rate of students with a BMI of "health risk" decreased over the course of 3 years.

Also, El Sol effectively follows the state physical education guidelines, the second hypothesis. The survey shows that El Sol meets the weekly hourly requirement and students are even active outside of school. However, El Sol should address the three teachers that are not permanently credentialed and the survey responses revealing that a small number of students may not be meeting the weekly requirement. The lack of credentials raises questions about whether they fully know the PE standards, especially since page 13 of the policy requires this. Nevertheless, El Sol effectively follows the state physical education guidelines.

Despite certain findings showing positive effects, the lack of consistency indicates that changes should be made. The emotional health goal cannot be determined as effectively met given that most students either rarely or never have someone to talk to when they are having a bad day. However, there are emotional health services and classes provided to students in grades K - 8. Although El Sol provides resources to “support the emotional well-being of each of its students,” the findings reveal that this is not occurring effectively (see Appendix J). Though, most students are immigrants or the family members of immigrants. Frequent Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids as well as the harsh language towards immigrants during the election year, has a large effect on the emotional health of students, faculty, and staff and their willingness to focus on wellness. Therefore, targeting this issue is difficult, and the emotional health of students is an area that needs more observation and evaluation.

Lastly, the staff wellness goal is being effectively met because most teachers engage in physical activity and are satisfied with resources for stress and emotional support. Although, the health clerk acknowledged that stress is still an issue for faculty and staff, and staff “fail in helping each other,” El Sol has met the criteria of the methodology. Furthermore, she noted that they may be refusing help due to denial. These findings parallel Bancroft et al.’s (2010) study,

which cites employee buy-in as an impediment to effectively implementing wellness policies.

Since these stakeholders may not be following the birthday policy or utilizing available resources due to denial, this reveals the need to comprehensively promote wellness in the lifestyles of all stakeholders so that the goals can be effectively met across the board. This also relates to Budd et al.'s (2009) findings on local school wellness policies, that "the core domains least likely to be implemented were communication and promotion". The interview suggests that the importance of staff wellness may be communicated the least, which explains their denial of resources.

Furthermore, this project highlights the importance of creating more focused implementation and evaluation goals.

Recommendations

El Sol Science and Arts Academy clearly provides ample resources to their students, faculty, staff, and parents. However, minor changes in communication, buy-in, and enforcement should be made to ensure that the Academy is effectively meeting their wellness goals. To follow "the state physical education guidelines to help promote strong and flexible bodies and minds, and to prevent childhood obesity," it is key that El Sol ensures that all teachers receive their credentials within the next two years (see Appendix K). In addition, teachers should be reminded that when students have an excused absence from instructed physical activity, that they remain somewhat physically active that day, such as a light walk. To proclaim that El Sol effectively "acknowledges the need to provide healthy food", it is important that the birthday policy is enforced to prevent competing foods from interfering with Sapphire's nutritious food (see Appendix K). This requires communication, as the inconsistent findings revealed poor communication of responsibilities and expectations. Therefore, it is recommended to ensure that a staff member monitor the food brought into the school. Furthermore, there should be more

advertising for the school pantry, in the case that students are unable to receive nutritious food for financial reasons.

To guarantee that El Sol effectively “supports the emotional well-being of each of its students”, it is recommended that the UCI nursing faculty review their curriculum for both nutrition and emotional health classes in the next year, considering my findings regarding negative self-image, bullying, and the lack of support for “bad days” (see Appendix K). This evaluation should also determine how many students, staff, and family members utilize the existing services for emotional health. Additionally, reporting and addressing bullying should be made easier as the reported incidences do not match the number of students who expressed through the survey that they are being bullied. This could be done by providing a slip specifically for reporting incidences and setting up meetings in the front office. To effectively “encourage its staff to lead healthy lifestyles both on and off campus”, El Sol should determine if they use the provided programs, resources, and services (see Appendix K). The interview revealed that the Academy’s focus is on parents and students. Therefore, it is suggested to require the faculty and staff to make personal wellness goals. At the beginning of the next semester and at the end of the year, faculty and staff should check-in with the health clerk to determine if they are on track to reach their goals. Moreover, the wellness policy proposed that El Sol consider a staff wellness room. Given the newly available space on campus, it is advised to institute this within the next year. Furthermore, it is suggested to launch a competition to determine who spends the most days at the gym each month, to encourage physical activity and the use of the gym pass.

There are several ways to motivate all stakeholders to create a lifestyle of wellness. For example, wellness posters can be advertised in classrooms and around the campus. Furthermore, wellness mantras can be developed annually for each grade, as well as for faculty and staff. El

Sol should also consider including a wellness section in the weekly newsletters, to notify families of recommended nutritious food and servings, foods allowed in school, resources to obtain this food for a reasonable price, and emotional health advice or resources. This is a cost-effective way to address the possibility that needs and resources are not being communicated equally across all stakeholders. Furthermore, a survey section should be provided on the back of newsletters, so that families may provide feedback on the effectiveness of the newsletter. On the other hand, this information could also be provided over social media outlets, especially through a wellness campaign. Finally, logic models should be developed based on each goal to encourage the use of implementation plans for programs, services, and goals, and to more easily measure progress in the future (see Appendix J). Creating SMART specific, measureable, achievable, relevant, and time-based goals, is an easy way for all implementers to be aware of their objectives. Therefore, El Sol should create logic models using SMART goals for each of their wellness programs and services.

Limitations

Upon completing the data analysis and interpreting the findings, several limitations were noted. First off, there were minor typos in the nutrition and physical activity sections of the student survey, as both the option of 4-7 days per week and 1-2 times per day were provided (Appendix B). Although this may have caused confusion, one option indicates most of the week while the latter is at least once a day or more. Also, students were asked if they received lunch from home or from school, yet there was not an option for both or none to communicate under or over eating. Since several students did not answer this question, under or over eating could be an issue. The timeline changed as well, causing certain students to respond to the survey after Memorial Day weekend. This could have negatively impacted their nutrition responses.

Regardless, the findings showed that students limit the amount of processed food in their diet. Also, due to the age of those who responded, they may have not taken the survey as seriously. Yet, the high response rate helps to account for this. For student BMI, student retention can have an impact on the findings, as it was compared by grade rather than per student.

Additionally, the month of April was used for Sapphire's nutrition information findings, which includes Spring Break. However, the detailed nutrition information checklist that Sapphire keeps, shows that the policy is taken very seriously. Finally, for the teacher survey, many may have felt nervous to answer honestly. This could help to explain why the interview findings did not coincide with the survey findings. Unfortunately, the response rate was not as high as expected, which could have accounted for this limitation. An important aspect to consider overall, is that the goals were very broad. Therefore, effectively meeting the four goals is difficult, especially considering the obstacles that a typical El Sol student, teacher, or extended day instructor may deal with. Consequently, these findings reflect a need for restructuring measurements, as noted in the recommendations.

Conclusion

This research paper answered if El Sol effectively met their wellness policy goals. By conducting an interview with the health clerk, as well as collecting survey responses, teaching credentials, bullying incidences, absences due to suspension, student BMI, and the nutrition information of school breakfast and lunch, two hypotheses were accepted and two were rejected. Although the nutrition, physical activity, and staff wellness goals are effectively met, emotional health is not. Considering the totality of these findings, it is clear that El Sol is working towards a culture of wellness, not only within their school but for the entire city of Santa Ana. If they apply the recommendations, they will be able to effectively meet each of their goals by 2020.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Variables and Measurement

Type of Variable	Variable Name	Measure	Data Source
Hypothesis 1: El Sol effectively acknowledges the need to provide healthy food.			
DV	Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obesity rates decline Students are provided nutritious foods on campus 	Student BMI Document Analysis Teacher survey Interview Student Survey
IV	Student BMI	Obesity rates decline	Student BMI
IV	School Lunch Menu Nutrition Value	Students are provided nutritious foods on campus	Document Analysis
IV	Frequency of Birthday Celebrations	Students are provided nutritious foods on campus	Teacher Survey Interview Student Survey
Hypothesis 2: El Sol Science and Arts Academy effectively follows the state physical education guidelines.			
DV	Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student exercise for at least 4 days per week All teachers know PE standards 	Teacher Survey Credentials
IV	Student Physical Activity	Student exercise for at least 4 days per week	Teacher Survey
IV	Teachers' PE Standards Knowledge	All teachers know PE standards	Credentials
Hypothesis 3: El Sol Science and Art Academy effectively supports the emotional well-being of each of its students.			
DV	Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students express that support is given Decrease in incidents requiring disciplinary action 	Survey Interview Suspension Rates Bullying Incidents
IV	Expressed Student Support	Most students express support is given	Survey Interview
IV	Bullying Incidents	Overall decrease in bullying	Bullying Incidents
IV	Suspensions	Overall decrease in suspensions	Suspensions
Hypothesis 4: El Sol Science and Arts Academy effectively encourage its staff to lead healthy lifestyles both on and off campus.			
DV	Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers express that they are supported 	Teacher survey Interview

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers engage in weekly physical activity 	
IV	Expressed Teacher Support	Teachers express that they are supported	Teacher survey Interview
IV	Physical Activity	Teachers engage in weekly physical activity	Teacher survey

Appendix B: Student Survey and Responses

The following questions pertain to student behavior since the El Sol wellness policy was enacted in 2014. Please circle only one option per question.

Nutrition

- How often do you eat breakfast?
 - 1-3 days per week
 - 4-7 days per week
 - 1 time per day
 - I do not eat breakfast
- On most days, do you eat a lunch from school or bring lunch from home?
 - School lunch
 - From home
- How often did you drink soda last week?
 - 1-3 days per week
 - 4-7 days per week
 - 1-2 times per day
 - I did not drink soda last week
- How often did you drink milk last week?
 - 1-3 days per week
 - 4-7 days per week
 - 1-2 times per day
 - I did not drink milk last week
- How many times did you eat fruit last week?
 - 1-3 days per week
 - 4-7 days per week
 - 1-2 times per day

- d. I did not eat fruit last week
6. How many times did you eat vegetables last week?
- a. 1-3 days per week
 - b. 4-7 days per week
 - c. 1-2 times per day
 - d. I did not eat vegetables last week
7. How often did you eat the following last week: Chips, Candy, Fried Food, or Fast Food
- a. 1-3 days per week
 - b. 4-7 days per week
 - c. 1-2 times per day
 - d. I did not eat chips, candy, or fried food last week
8. How often did you consume grains/breads last week?
- a. 1-3 days per week
 - b. 4-7 days per week
 - c. 1-2 times per day
 - d. I did not eat grains/ breads last week
9. How often did you consume meat/meat alternatives last week?
- a. 1-3 days per week
 - b. 4-7 days per week
 - c. 1-2 times per day
 - d. I did not eat meat/ meat alternatives last week
10. What grade are you in?
- a. 4th grade
 - b. 5th grade
 - c. 6th grade
 - d. 7th grade
 - e. 8th grade

Physical Activity

1. How many days were you physically active for at least 30 minutes last week at school (sports, playing outside, etc.)?
- a. 1-3 days per week
 - b. 4-7 days per week
 - c. 1-2 times per day
 - d. I was not physically active last week

2. How many days were you physically active for at least 30 minutes last week, outside of school (sports, playing outside, etc.)?
 - a. 1-3 days per week
 - b. 4-7 days per week
 - c. 1-2 times per day
 - d. I was not physically active last week

Emotional Health

1. If you are having a bad day, there is at least one teacher or faculty member who you can talk to?
 - a. Always
 - b. Very Often
 - c. Rarely
 - d. Never

2. Have you experienced bullying this year?
 - a. Always
 - b. Very Often
 - c. Rarely
 - d. Never

3. Have you bullied someone this year?
 - a. Always
 - b. Very Often
 - c. Rarely
 - d. Never

4. How often do you view yourself negatively?
 - a. Very Frequently
 - b. Frequently
 - c. Occasionally
 - d. Rarely
 - e. Never

Table 1: Student Survey Responses

	Breakfast	Lunch	Soda	Milk	Fruit	Vegetables	Unhealthy	Grains	Meat	Grade	Active- School	Active- Home	Bad Day	Bullied	Bully	Negative
frequency																
1	79	207	107	114	111	156	219	148	159	72	41	96	98	32	10	43
2	243	182	19	178	204	117	63	162	140	97	294	218	70	37	4	24
3	61	0	65	66	80	67	61	65	70	90	67	72	129	111	57	95
4	33	0	228	59	23	73	61	43	40	84	8	20	115	235	344	148
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	77	0	0	0	0	1	104
responses																
	416	389	419	417	418	413	404	418	410	420	410	406	412	415	416	414
percent																
1	19%	53%	26%	27%	27%	38%	54%	35%	39%	17%	10%	24%	24%	8%	2%	10%
2	58%	47%	5%	43%	49%	28%	16%	39%	34%	23%	72%	54%	17%	9%	1%	6%
3	15%	0%	16%	16%	19%	16%	15%	16%	17%	21%	16%	18%	31%	27%	14%	23%
4	8%	0%	54%	14%	6%	18%	15%	10%	10%	20%	2%	5%	28%	57%	83%	36%
5	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	18%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	25%

Table2: Summary of Nutrition Responses

	1-3 days per week	4-6 days per week	1-2 times per day	None
Soda	26%	5%	16%	54%
Milk	27%	43%	16%	14%
Fruit	27%	49%	19%	6%
Vegetables	38%	28%	16%	18%
Processed Food	54%	16%	15%	15%
Grains/ Breads	35%	39%	16%	10%
Meat/ Meat Alt	39%	34%	17%	10%
Breakfast	19%	58%	15%	8%

Table 3: Summary of Physical Activity Responses

	1-3 days per week	4-6 days per week	1-2 times per day	None
Student (School)	10%	72%	16%	2%
Student (Home)	24%	54%	18%	5%
Teachers/ Instructors	48%	33%	10%	10%

Appendix C: Teacher and Extended Day Instructor Survey and Responses

The following questions pertain to how teachers interact with students as well as teacher behavior, since the El Sol wellness policy was enacted in 2014. Please circle only one option per question.

Nutrition

1. How often do you allow birthday celebrations to take place in the classroom (students or parents bring in food for the class)?
 - a. Once a week
 - b. A few times a week
 - c. Once a month
 - d. Never

2. When sweets are served, are they small enough that they may be consumed in approximately 2 bites?
 - a. Always
 - b. Very Often
 - c. Rarely
 - d. Never

3. Is food used as a reward in the classroom?
 - a. Always
 - b. Very Often

- c. Rarely
- d. Never

Physical Activity

1. How many days were **you** physically active for at least 30 minutes last week?
 - a. 1-3 days per week
 - b. 4-6 days per week
 - c. 1-2 times per day
 - d. I was not physically active last week

Staff Wellness

1. If you are having a bad day, there is at least one teacher or faculty member who **you** can talk to?
 - a. Always
 - b. Very Often
 - c. Rarely
 - d. Never

2. How satisfied are you with the resources provided at El Sol for **your** emotional support?
 - a. Very Satisfied
 - b. Satisfied
 - c. Unsure
 - d. Dissatisfied
 - e. Very Dissatisfied

3. How satisfied are you with the resources provided at El Sol to limit the amount of stress in **your** life?
 - f. Very Satisfied
 - g. Satisfied
 - h. Unsure
 - i. Dissatisfied
 - j. Very Dissatisfied

4. Has the wellness policy affected **your** wellness choices at school?
 - a. Extremely Influential
 - b. Very Influential
 - c. Somewhat Influential
 - d. Slightly Influential
 - e. Not At All Influential

5. Has the wellness policy affected **your** wellness choices at home?

- a. Extremely Influential
- b. Very Influential
- c. Somewhat Influential
- d. Slightly Influential
- e. Not At All Influential

Table 4: Teacher and Extended Day Instructor Survey Responses

	Birthday	Sweets	Reward	Active	Bad day	Support	Stress	School Choices	Home Choices
Frequency									
1	0	3	0	10	16	7	3	1	0
2	0	12	1	7	2	9	11	4	7
3	13	5	13	2	1	2	4	8	4
4	8	1	7	2	2	3	2	3	3
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	7
Responses									
	21	21	21	21	21	21	20	21	21
Percent									
1	0%	14%	0%	48%	76%	33%	15%	5%	0%
2	0%	57%	5%	33%	10%	43%	55%	19%	33%
3	62%	24%	62%	10%	5%	10%	20%	38%	19%
4	38%	5%	33%	10%	10%	14%	10%	14%	14%
5	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	24%	33%

Table 5: Summary of Emotional Health Responses

	Always	Very Often	Rarely	Never	
Bad Day (Student)	24%	17%	31%	28%	
Bad Day (Teacher)	76%	10%	5%	10%	
Bullied	8%	9%	27%	57%	
Bully	2%	1%	14%	83%	
	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Negative Self Image	10%	6%	23%	36%	25%

Table 6: Summary of Staff Wellness Responses

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Unsure	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Support	33%	43%	10%	14%	0%
Stress	15%	55%	20%	10%	0%

Appendix D: Interview Questions, Response, and Themes Table

1. Are you able to provide resources to teachers, students, and faculty regarding emotional health?

I don't think I am able to provide the resources, I think I am able to direct them to the correct person to receive those resources. So, if it's you know for a student I would possibly, I wouldn't take it under my own hands. If they are asking me for something, let's say if it's a discipline issue, I would direct it to the person who is in charge of discipline. If it's more like I notice that something is not right, because you spend a lot of time here, I would approach Sara. Like, "hey, I noticed this if you would want to look into it," and then maybe she could direct them to the counselor, discipline, or whatever the case is. So, I don't think I am able to provide it but I think that I am able to direct them. Working in the front office I am confident in that line of communication because [speaking about herself] you are the first face that people see. I feel confident enough to approach Sara. Sometimes it's uncomfortable because I don't want to judge a behavior. For example, "this student looks very sad today". You know, but how do we measure sadness? I've only been here for a school year, so I kind of catch on to their behaviors, or how their personalities they go out through the years. So sometimes I say, "somethings wrong". Or you find out about, there are people who will talk about it, like parents will say "did you hear this?". And you're like "no". You have to take that into consideration. If they say, "So and so's mom is sick." And if that student is not behaving the same or they seem a little different so then I would just tell Sara, that their mom is sick and something is off. Then that is how I would direct it.

2. What are the most common emotional concerns among students?

I think it is mostly bullying, which I think is common anywhere [most schools]. But I also think that they take everything as bullying. Like they might be paying around, but because it is such a big issue I still report it to Mr. Fernandez and say hey "So and so is saying he or she is being bullied." And if there are two students involved in a situation he would go speak to the students and then say "Oh, they were playing around. They settled their differences they were fine". So, I think it's a bit of miscommunication too. But I wouldn't know to what measure people would consider bullying, it depends on that person specifically.

3. What are the most common emotional concerns among faculty and staff?

For faculty and staff, it would be stress. And it isn't just work stress, I would say for teachers, the students here are very open, especially in elementary school. So, they are open to tell you how they feel, and their emotions. And I can only imagine that when approaching their teachers, maybe telling them about their family problems or their friends, sometimes they are like so and so doesn't want to be their friend. I can assume that teachers are feeling like "what am I doing wrong? I'm trying to do the best for the student, but sometimes you can't make every parent or child happy." So, it isn't just the burden of work, but that emotional stress that you're wondering what can I do more for a student or parent or x, y, and z. So that would be the most common thing here.

4. Do you feel that the Wellness Policy is effective in addressing the nutrition of students, faculty, and staff?

I feel that is effective in addressing the nutrition aspect of it, I don't think it is effective in following through. I do know the wellness policy, so I can come up with some examples. For birthday celebrations, it's supposed to happen once a month, preferably the end of the month. But being here [the front office], you can see parents coming in and dropping off food the day of the birthday. I'm not saying that it is wrong because of course they want to make their child feel special so I can't turn them around and say sorry you can't [bring in food], it's only once a month. That's just unfair. It's not a very strict policy. The enforcement part, we are failing. But we do well in addressing the issue, like it shows that we are aware.

5. Do you feel that the Wellness Policy is effective in addressing the emotional health of students, faculty, and staff?

I think we are doing what we can. We have someone who deals with discipline, we have a counselor, we have a speech therapist. We have all of those measures of aid that we can provide our students. I think here however, the culture, being Mexican, most of our community here is Hispanic. You are in denial sometimes. You can go, "hey, your child might need this extra- whatever the case is". And we are a little more in denial. And I would think that as a parent you would say, "no, my child is fine and you're telling me something is wrong." So, you know I think that you could provide those resources but if the parent says no, then you can only go so far. I don't really know what we are doing [accomplishing]. I know what we are attempting to. We were trying to plan a hike because just being outside helps with stress. But I think that our main focus here is our students and our children. So, we fail in helping each other really.

6. Are there any changes that you feel should be made to the wellness policy?

I think that we should be more strict in enforcing it. We should all be on the same page. I've only been here for a year, so that's what I've noticed. It's a great policy and I think that we do a lot. I've read other policies and I think they are very brief. We go into detail and we know what we need and what we want to do. It's just enforcing it and going through with it.

Table 7: Interview Themes

Theme	Meaning	Connotation
Resources	Known system to direct resources towards students out of concern for their wellbeing. There are several measures of aid to provide for the student in multiple areas, as they are aware of the need.	Positive
Communication	Parents and faculty frequently communicate to ensure that the emotional concern for students is addressed. Students are open about their emotions.	Positive

Observations	Parents and faculty notice incidences or needs and report them. Although she works in the front office, the clerk doesn't catch everything, and reports are helpful in addressing that.	Positive
Bullying	Bullying incidences are recognized and addressed. At times, this is miscommunication, but they work to settle differences regardless.	Positive (because it is addressed)
Effective	The policy itself covers the areas it should address, and in detail.	Positive
Stress	Teachers and faculty have stress over the incidences that students and parents must deal with in everyday life, not just workload. They stress about providing enough support and doing their part.	Negative
Policy Violation	Birthday celebrations are more frequent than once a month. Instead, parents drop off food the day of the birthday.	Negative
Policy Enforcement/ Failure	Although there is an attempt, the nutrition policy is not enforced enough. No one is turning birthday celebration food away. Everyone needs to do their part to help one another out for staff wellness to be accomplished, since the focus is mainly on students and parents.	Negative
Denial	Due to culture, as most of the community is Hispanic, parents don't always accept the resources or additional support for their children.	Negative

Appendix E: Sapphire’s Nutrition Information Checklist (4/3/17-4/7/17)

Table 8: Nutrition Responses

Weekly Report Lunch, Grades K-8								
Go to instructions	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekly Total	Weekly Requirement (cups)	Weekly Requirement Check
Minimum Fruit (cups)	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	Yes
Minimum Vegetables	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4	3 3/4	3 3/4	Yes
Cups of DARK GREEN	0	0	0	0	0	0	1/2	No
Cups of RED/ORANGE	0	1/8	3/4	1/8	3/4	1 3/4	3/4	Yes
Cups of BEANS/PEAS(Legumes)	0	1/8	0	1/2	1/4	7/8	1/2	Yes
Cups of STARCHY vegetables	1/4	0	0	0	0	1/4	1/2	No
Cups of OTHER (any other type of vegetable)	1/4	1/8	0	1/8	0	1/2	1/2	Yes
Minimum Meat/Meat Alternate	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00	9	Yes
Maximum Meat/Meat Alternate	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00	10	Yes
Minimum Grain	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	9.00	8	Yes
Maximum Grain	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	9.00	9	Yes
Grain Based Dessert Total for all weekly meals						1.00	No more 2 oz equivalents	Yes
Whole Grain Rich Weekly Amount	Weekly Grains Total:	9.00	Weekly Whole Grain Rich Total:	8.00	Percent of Whole Grain Rich	88.9%	At least half whole grain rich	Yes
Minimum Fluid Milk	1	1	1	1	1	5	5	Yes

Table 9: Nutrition Information Evaluation Summary

Week	Week Met	Week Not Met
4/3-4/7	Spring Break	
4/10-4/14		
4/17-4/21		
4/24-4/28		
Total	100%	0%

Appendix F: Student BMI

Table 20: Student BMI 2013-2016

Student Body Mass Index Overtime (5 th and 7 th grade)						
Year	5 th Grade			7 th Grade		
	Healthy Fitness Zone (%)	Needs Improvement (%)	Health Risk (%)	Healthy Fitness Zone (%)	Needs Improvement (%)	Health Risk (%)
2013-2014	51.1	21.3	27.6	65.7	22.9	11.4
2014-2015	59.4	19.8	19.8	60.2	18.3	21.5
2015-2016	60	17	23	57.1	23.1	19.8

Figure 2: 5th Grade Student BMI Overtime

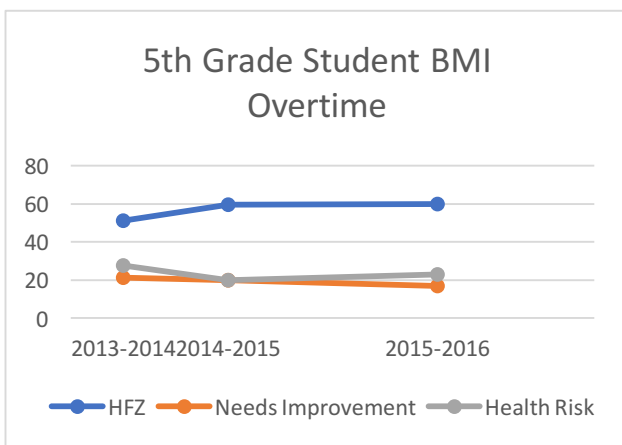
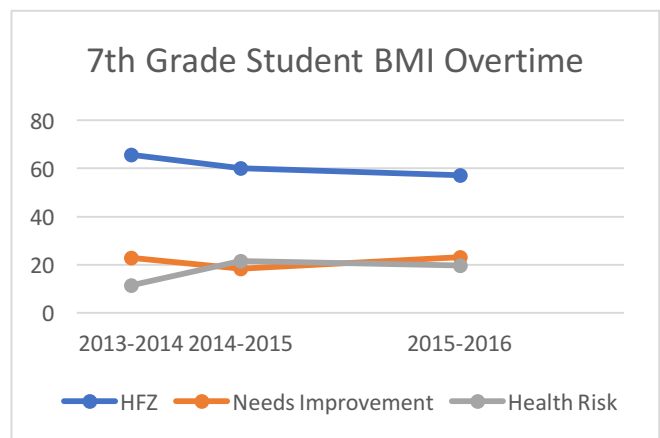
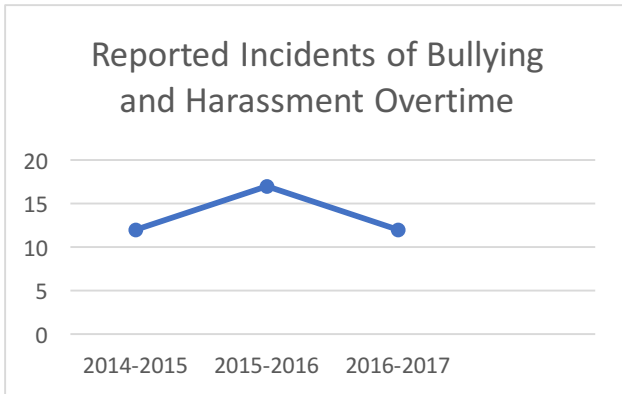


Figure 1: 7th Grade Student BMI Overtime



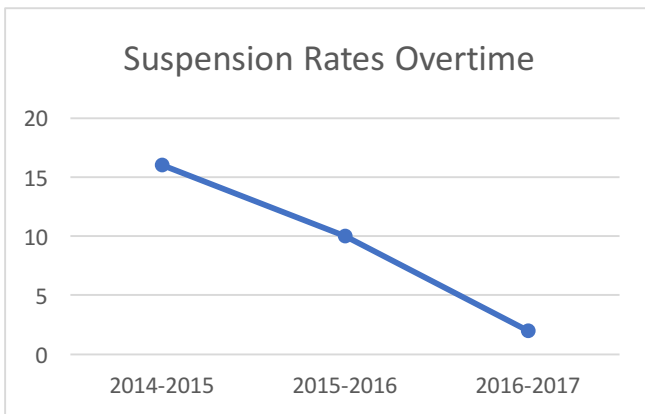
Appendix G: Reported Incidents of Bullying and Harassment Overtime

Figure 3: Reported Incidents of Bullying and Harassment Overtime



Appendix H:

Figure 4: Suspension Rates Overtime



Appendix I:

Table 11: Teacher Credentials

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
With Full Credential	32	34	38
Without Full Credential	0	3	3

Appendix J: S.M.A.R.T. Goals (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Based)

Figure 5: Emotional Health SMART Goals

Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •UCI Student Volunteers •Staff •Faculty •Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Activities: •Emotional Health Classes •Emotional Health Class Evaluation •Counselor •Discipline Staff and System for Reporting •Newsletter •Mantras •Posters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Short Term (6 mo): •Increase programs and services (such as visits to counselor) use by 5% •Medium Term (1 yr): •Decrease expressed feelings of being bullied and bullying at always and very often by 5%. Increase having support on bad days at always and very often by 5%. •Long Term (2 yr): •"El Sol Science and Art Academy supports the emotional well being of each of its students, recognizing that stress and insecurity present significant barriers to health, academic achievement, and the attainment of one's potential."

Figure 6: Nutrition SMART Goals

Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sapphire • Monthly Birthday Celebrations • On Site Pantry • UCI Student Volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities: • Provide lunch and breakfast • Enforce limiting birthday celebrations to one month • Advertise On Site Pantry • Nutrition Classes • Nutrition Class Evaluation • Newsletter or Social Media Campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term (6 mo): • Decrease celebrations to once per month • Medium Term (1 yr): • Increase expressed consumption of vegetables, fruit, and meat/meat alt. at 4-6 days per week by 5% • Long Term (2 yr): • "El Sol Science and Arts Academy acknowledges the need to provide healthy food to grow strong bodies and minds and to promote academic success."

Figure 7: Physical Health SMART Goals

Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers • PE Teacher • PE Equipment • Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily PE Class • Newsletter or Social Media Campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term (6 mo): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet required amount of hours each week • Medium Term (1 yr): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall student BMI decrease by 2% • Meet required amount of hours each year • Long Term (2 yr): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have 3 teachers earn their credentials • "El Sol Science and Arts Academy follows the state physical education guidelines to help promote strong and flexible bodies and minds, and to prevent childhood obesity."

Figure 8: Staff Wellness SMART Goals

Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Staff •Faculty •Benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pre-School Year Wellness Reminder •Gym Pass •Therapy •Newsletter •Mantras •Posters •Goal Setting •Staff Wellness Room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Short Term (6 mo): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •All faculty and staff create and report goals •Medium Term (1 yr): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Decrease expressed feeling of dissatisfaction with support (for emotional health and support) by 5%. •All faculty and staff check in about their goals •Long Term (2 yr): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •"El Sol Science and Arts Academy encourage its staff to lead healthy lifestyles both on and off campus."

Appendix K: Wellness Policy

Introduction

El Sol Science and Arts Academy recognizes the associations between student health, academic success, and overall wellness. Due to the fact that students spend a significant amount of their developmental years on the school campus and engaging in school related events, health at school plays a significant role in overall student well being. The close-knit nature of the El Sol Science and Arts Academy community enables the school to build a strong foundation for teaching excellent lifelong health habits. By educating students and parents about the various aspects of physical and mental health, and by promoting a healthful environment on campus, El Sol has the potential to positively affect the lives of students and their families.

In 2004, Congress passed the Child Nutrition and Women Infants and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act. This act requires that all local education agencies participating in the National School Lunch Program or other child nutrition programs must create a local wellness policy. The legislation also places the responsibility of developing the wellness policy on the local level administrators so that the individual needs of each school or local education agency will be addressed individually (108th Congress, 2004).

Currently El Sol Academy does not have any specific guidelines for holistic health promotion in their students. At the school's request, the Program in Nursing Science at University of California in Irvine has undertaken the development of a comprehensive wellness policy for El Sol as a student leadership project.

A unified effort on the part of school administration, faculty, and parents will help to maximize the school's potential to improve the health and well being of its students. The purpose of this wellness policy is to promote this unity by serving as a common set of guidelines that all members of the El Sol community can follow in their efforts to promote a happy and healthy school environment that is ideal for student development.

In order to ensure that all aspects of a wellness policy are covered in this document, the California Department of Education and the United States Department of Agriculture websites were visited thoroughly, and a sampling of wellness policies were reviewed. This literature review revealed that a wellness policy should serve as a comprehensive health guide to promote student wellness across all school policies and decisions. It must include goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school based-activities that promote student wellness. Efforts should be made to include all stakeholders in the development of the plan, to propose a way to measure the effectiveness of the newly implemented measures, and to make these results available to the public.

The wellness policy for El Sol Academy will address nutrition, physical activity, emotional health, illness, medication administration, a safe and healthy school environment, and staff wellness. It will provide a blueprint for the school to reach its full potential as an agent in promoting the health, well-being, and academic success of its students.

Background

The creation and preservation of good health requires attention to the components of both physical and emotional health. Nutrition, illness care and prevention, environmental health and safety, and exercise are the foundational aspects of physical health. An atmosphere that promotes high self-esteem, healthy choices, and self-respect is vital to the development of emotional health

and resiliency. By working to improve specific aspects of both emotional and physical health, El Sol Science and Arts Academy can improve the overall well being of its students.

Unhealthy body weight represents one obstacle the El Sol community must face in its efforts to promote student health. Childhood obesity is a grave public health challenge of the 21st century. Obesity is a life long struggle: children who are overweight or obese are likely to be overweight or obese as adults. According to the World Health Organization, the death of over 2.8 billion people annually can be attributed to overweight and obesity, thus it is imperative to start a healthy lifestyle at a young age (WHO, 2013). It has also been found that obese children who have poor dietary intake and little physical activity are more likely to have asthma, sleep apnea, type 2 diabetes, renal injury, emotional problems, and other comorbidities (Shi, X., Tubb, L., Fingers, S., Chen, S., & Caffrey, J., 2013). Obese students suffer from lower self esteem, and are more likely to be the targets of bullying. According to JoAnn Stevelos, (2014), 24 percent of boys and 30 percent of girls experienced bullying, teasing, or rejection on a daily basis because of their size (2014).

Physical activity leads to a decline in obesity (California Department of Education, 2009, p.1) as well as symptoms of anxiety and depression (California Endowment, WestEd, University of California, San Francisco, & California Education Supports Project, 2010). The California Department of Education states in their California After School Physical Activity Guidelines that schools that offer physical activity have higher reading, writing, and mathematics test scores (2009, p. 2).

Poor oral health, chronic illness, high levels of stress, and depression have been linked to poor performance in school. Conversely, school based health programs and feelings of school connectedness have been shown to improve children's health and school attendance, and to reduce substance use and early sexual initiation. (California Endowment, et al., 2010)

Due to the fact that children spend most of their day at school, the school's physical environment can have a significant impact on student health. Indoor and outdoor air quality, temperature, lighting, pest control and cleaning procedures, as well as the safety, adequacy, and cleanliness of facilities and buildings have all been shown to play critical roles in reducing illness and stress, thereby improving the ability to learn and concentrate (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2012)

Currently El Sol Science and Arts Academy has many health-promoting assets on its campus: a thriving partnership with the UC Irvine nursing program, whose students provide health screenings, annual immunization drives and health fairs, and health education to the El Sol students and families; an onsite wellness center serving the needs of the families and surrounding community; a terrific vendor providing high quality school breakfasts and lunches; on site dental education, screenings, and treatment by the Healthy Smiles mobile van and professional staff; a licensed mental health counselor on site Mondays, Wednesdays, and half day Fridays; and a faculty who are all certified in leading physical education. In addition, the school recently constructed a Leader in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) silver level classroom building as well as a state of the art playground to encourage safe and active play. The desire to create a kind and supportive learning community is made explicit in El Sol's mission statement. (www.elsolacademy.net/about_us).

While these measures are excellent, a more detailed and comprehensive approach is necessary to achieve optimal health goals. There are several areas where current school policy and practice could be improved. For example, cupcakes, pizza, cookies, and soda are the most common food items brought into the classrooms for school functions or birthday celebrations.

Large portions and frequent consumption of these fat and calorie laden foods is inconsistent with a healthy diet. Also, at the school's most recent lunch audit it was found that some students have been eating both a packed lunch from home and the meal provided to them at school, putting them at risk for inappropriately high caloric intake. A BMI screening conducted in 2013 at the school found that the rate of overweight students doubled and the number of obese students quadrupled between fifth grade and seventh grade (Neudorf, 2013). In addition, bullying and negative self talk were two of the major emotional health issues identified by the faculty.

In order to facilitate the adoption and acceptance of the wellness policy, it is crucial that the entire El Sol community is able to participate in its development. The wellness policy will thereby become a living document for the El Sol community, designed and regularly updated to encourage healthier habits in all its members. To this end, multiple stakeholders were involved in the process.

At an initial meeting, the school's Executive Director and Director of Community Life were consulted regarding the current policies on nutrition, emotional health, physical activity, medication administration, illness, and staff wellness. It was determined that while there are some policies that exist, adherence is inconsistent. In several instances, guidelines have not yet been established.

This was followed by a lengthy and informative meeting with the school's meal provider, Sapphire at School (SAS), whose mission is "to nourish and educate young people for a lifetime of well-being" (www.sapphireatschool.com). SAS meets and exceeds the federal school lunch guidelines (Appendices A and B). By basing their breakfast and lunch options around food items that are locally sourced and in season, they can provide the students with fresh ingredients at an affordable price. Chef Azmin Ghahreman develops his menus around the Mediterranean Food Pyramid (Appendix C), which recommends eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. He prepares food with oils derived from plants and fish to promote the production of good cholesterol, shown to reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer.

Questionnaires were then sent out to the faculty (Appendix D) and parents (Appendix E) asking them for their perspectives on the current health guidelines at El Sol and how they thought they could be improved. Twenty-seven faculty members responded to the survey and almost unanimously agreed that they should serve as role models and promote healthier habits in their students. One faculty member stated that "the most exposure and acceptance to that (healthy) lifestyle, the easier it is to adapt." When the faculty was asked whether they believed that the environment at El Sol is conducive to offering students emotional support, most of the faculty answered "yes" but many of the teachers also believed that the students may not feel that way. The staff offered several suggestions on how to make the students feel more comfortable expressing their needs. These included: having more assemblies that focused on family problems, low self-esteem, negative self-talk, and bullying; employing a middle school counselor; and making more support groups available on campus.

Fifty-four parents responded to the surveys that were sent home with their children. The parents would also like to have a healthier school environment. The majority thinks that some treats should be allowed for student's birthday celebrations but that cutting down the celebrations to once a month might be a better way to minimize unhealthy food consumption. One parent stated that, "as long as the students have a balanced diet and get enough exercise, it is okay to treat them to a treat every once in a while." Another parent said that she believes that treats are okay on birthdays but that teaching them portion control and only giving them a few treats would be a good idea.

Eighty-one second, fifth, and eighth grade students were interviewed at random to determine their food preferences, their attitudes about physical activity opportunities at school, and whether they felt there was an adult on campus to whom they could go with emotional health concerns (Appendix F). In the surveys, a majority of the students indicated that their favorite drink to consume at school is water. The students also stated that their least favorite lunch item was vegetables and pasta was one of their favorites. When the students were asked whether they thought they received enough exercise at school, an overwhelming majority believed that they did. When asked if they felt they had an adult to talk to at school when they were feeling upset, most of the students also said yes and stated that they would talk to their teacher. Only 2 children stated that they would talk to the counselor, which may have been due to the finding that many were unaware of the presence of a counselor on the school campus.

Informal interviews were also conducted with two other staff members who have responsibilities related to the health of students. In response to questions about children coming to school when their condition is bad enough to have stayed at home, they responded that this seems to happen approximately 20% of time. It was felt that parents are very well-informed about the medication administration policy on campus and are aware that they must bring a doctor's note if their child is to receive any medications on campus. There are currently children attending El Sol who require medication or accommodations for epilepsy, asthma, and environmental and food allergies. Peanut allergies are not common, but provisions are made for those children to eat at a peanut free table if necessary. These staff members stated that they feel adequately prepared to handle the medications and situations presently encountered at the school.

After compiling all the data received from the various stakeholders, the wellness policy was developed and follows below.

Wellness Policy

Nutritional Guidelines for Foods at School

El Sol Science and Arts Academy acknowledges the need to provide healthy food to grow strong bodies and minds and to promote academic success.

BEVERAGES

- Water (plain or carbonated)
 - Due to the fact that our bodies are 80% water it is very important to stay hydrated throughout the day so water is El Sol's preferred drink.
- Milk- white or chocolate (skim, 1%, 2%)
- 100% Juice products (plain or carbonated)
 - Even juice products that are 100% juice are high in sugar so it is recommended to limit juice 2-3 times a week.
- NO caffeine, soda, or added sweeteners

SCHOOL BREAKFASTS AND LUNCHES

- El Sol Science and Arts Academy is required to follow the federal student breakfast and lunch guidelines listed in Appendix A & Appendix B.
- Sapphire at School (SAS), the school meal provider, strictly adheres to these regulations.
 - Serves cultural favorites
 - Introduces students to a wide variety of foods
 - Manages to offer high quality food at affordable prices

LUNCHES FROM HOME

- A lunchbox should include: a main course; fruits and vegetables; water; and a snack.
- About 50% of the child's lunch should consist of the fruits and vegetables.
 - all fruits and vegetables (one serving each) are okay
- The main course should include one source of lean protein and one source of whole grains.
 - protein: all foods made from meat, poultry, seafood, beans and peas, eggs, processed soy products, nuts, and seeds
 - whole grains: any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley or another cereal grain
- Examples of main courses:
 - whole grain pasta and turkey meatballs
 - peanut butter and jelly, chicken salad, or tuna salad sandwich on whole wheat bread
 - lean meat (ham, turkey, chicken) sandwich or wrap with or without low fat cheese

- homemade soup
- baked chicken nuggets
- turkey or chicken hot dogs, turkey burgers, or chicken sloppy joes on wheat bun
- turkey meat or chicken tacos
- chicken fajitas
- bean, veggie, and/or low fat cheese quesadillas
- sushi
- mini pizza
- chicken teriyaki and brown rice
- cereal with whole grains
- breakfast burrito
- Examples of snacks (one serving)
 - popcorn
 - rice cake
 - low-fat cheese
 - yogurt
 - trail mix
 - jerky
 - granola
 - graham or animal crackers
 - fig bar
 - baked pita or tortilla chips
 - pico de gallo
 - pretzels
 - whole grain crackers
 - hummus
 - applesauce, fruit cup, fruit leather, or fresh fruit
 - sweet potato or other fresh vegetable
 - hardboiled egg
 - sunflower seeds
 - edamame
 - cottage cheese
- Beverages must follow standards listed above
- The students lunch should NOT include any of the following:
 - chips (unless they are baked)
 - candy
 - soda
 - fruit “juice” drinks with high sugar content
 - fruit roll ups/fruit snacks (unless made with greater than 90% fruit juice and real fruit)

- fried foods

BUYING VS PACKING A LUNCH

- Sapphire at School (SAS) provides El Sol with a monthly menu that is sent out to the parents.
- Parents will decide whether their student will consume the SAS meal for the day OR send them to school with a packed lunch.
- Students will be able to eat only ONE lunch, either the SAS meal or their lunch from home.
 - This will discourage overeating.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS, SCHOOL FUNCTIONS, AND FUNDRAISING

- Any event on the campus of El Sol Science and Arts Academy (including fundraising, birthday celebrations, and festivals) will follow the same nutritional standards listed above or the two-bite rule described below.
- Monthly birthday celebrations will take place in each classroom.
 - On the day designated by each classroom, parents are welcome to bring treats to class as organized by the teacher. Teachers may need to have parents sign up in advance to limit the number of sweet items chosen.
- Parents may bring in sweet items if they are of a small serving size and follow the “two bite” rule.
 - The “two bite rule” means that the portions of sweets are small enough that they may be consumed in approximately 2 bites of them.
 - This allows the students to have sweet treats without consuming excessive sugars and fats. This practice also fosters healthy eating practices and instructs children in appropriate portion size.
- Examples of acceptable special occasion treats
 - books
 - stickers
 - art supplies
 - mini cupcakes
 - brownie bites
 - fruit dipped in a small amount of dark chocolate
 - small cookies
 - fruit smoothies, fruit kabobs, or a fruit salad (may be drizzled with honey or dark chocolate)
 - vegetable platters with hummus
 - mini bagels with light cream cheese (diced fruit or vegetables may be added to the light cream cheese to enhance flavor)
 - popcorn

- This list does not include all treats that may be sold or brought into the classroom.
 - If parents have any questions on what is acceptable, please contact Sara Flores or the student's teacher.
- The faculty should encourage the use of healthy food items for fundraising purposes and inform the students and their parents when food that has been brought to school does not meet the current nutritional guidelines.
- The faculty should also avoid the use of non-nutritious food as a reward in the classroom for the student's accomplishments.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

- Nutrition is currently taught within the science and art curricula.
- El Sol Science and Arts Academy has an affiliation with the University of California, Irvine's nursing program.
 - The nursing students teach nutrition, exercise, emotional health, the body systems, and how to stay healthy to the El Sol students.
 - The El Sol students then present what they have learned about healthy lifestyles to their peers, families, and community during the wellness festival in May.

FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- With the help of the parents, faculty, administration, and staff, students will learn to expand their palate by trying different menu items than they would normally eat at home, including more fruits and vegetables.
 - Possible ways to encourage students to try new menu items could be to have the student's carry a stamp card. The staff that monitors lunch could stamp the card if the student tries a new menu item, eats all of their fruits and vegetables, or brings a healthy lunch from home. Once the stamp card is filled the students could be rewarded with a free dress day or more recess time.
 - Teachers could also display more posters in the classroom regarding nutrition education and develop at least one project a year that aims to increase nutritional knowledge in their students. This could include activities such as the food rainbow where the teacher hangs a rainbow in her classroom and when her students have tried a type of healthy food in a color found on the rainbow, they list it in that section. For example, if a child eats a strawberry, they put the word strawberry on the red stripe in the rainbow. This may encourage healthy eating and make it fun for the students.

Physical Activity

El Sol Science and Arts Academy follows the state physical education guidelines to help promote strong and flexible bodies and minds, and to prevent childhood obesity. These standards can be found at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/pestandards.pdf>

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- All teachers at El Sol Science and Arts Academy are credentialed to teach physical education and follow the state guidelines.
- The El Sol schedule ensures that each student gets the required amount of recess, active play, and physical education time per week.

FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- El Sol Science and Arts Academy will construct additional play areas on both sides of their campus.
- More after school programs such as soccer, basketball, and football will be offered throughout the year at little to no cost.
- El Sol will consider hiring a certified physical education teacher to develop a comprehensive curriculum for the entire student body. This teacher could then rotate instruction between the classrooms each week to support the teachers in leading the physical education exercises.

Emotional Health

El Sol Science and Art Academy supports the emotional well being of each of its students, recognizing that stress and insecurity present significant barriers to health, academic achievement, and the attainment of one's potential.

EMOTIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION

- Beginning in Spring 2014, UCI Program in Nursing Science will present 4-6 hours of an evidence based emotional health curriculum to all grades annually.

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

- El Sol has contracted for a half-time on site licensed mental health clinician to provide individual and group counseling.
 - A teacher, parent, or administrator may refer a child to the mental health clinician for evaluation and treatment.

FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- Increase the hours of availability of the mental health counselor.
- Expand the emotional health curriculum.

Illnesses

El Sol Science and Arts Academy recognizes that a child who is sick is not ready to learn.

- If a child is too ill to remain at school, his/her parent or guardian will be notified and sent home with them.

- El Sol does not believe in sending children home alone so the child will remain in the front office until his/her parent or guardian is able to pick them up from school.

REASONS TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME

(compiled and adapted from the Center for Disease Control and the California Department of Health)

- If your child has a fever over 101° F they should remain at home until their fever has subsided naturally (without medication) for 24 hours.
- If your child is vomiting or has diarrhea they should remain home until they are symptom free for 24 hours
- If your child has pink eye they should be kept home until they have been seen by a medical provider and return to school when their physician states it is appropriate.
- If your child has strep throat they should see their medical provider and return to school 24 hours after taking their first dose of antibiotics or when advised by the doctor.
- If your child has head lice they should remain at home for a maximum of 2 school days provided that they have been given treatment.
- If the parent believes that their child is too sick to perform normal activities at school, keep them home

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

(per El Sol Parent Handbook)

- The following communicable diseases **must be reported to school office**
 - chicken pox
 - pink eye
 - strep throat
 - measles
 - lice
- Please contact the school within 24 hours of diagnosis so that appropriate measures may be considered
- Students must be cleared through the office before returning to class.

FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- El Sol Science and Arts academy will continue to improve adherence to the current guidelines.
- Consider a program for asthma management or other commonly encountered health problems on campus

Medication Administration

It is important for the faculty and staff to help students take all medications as prescribed by the physician's instructions in order to maximize the potential benefits of required medications while

lowering the risk of adverse affects.

MEDICATION POLICY

(per El Sol Parent Handbook)

- Medication forms, obtained from the office, are available for students who are required to receive medication, including over-the-counter medicines.
- A written request from the parent/guardian as well as from the doctor must be on file with the office.
- Parents are to provide the necessary medication in the detailed pharmacy container with the student's full name clearly labeled.
- Any over-the-counter medication must be in the original packaging and clearly labeled with the student's full name.
- ***All medications must be kept in the office. Students are not to be in possession of any medication while on campus.***
- The school should also be notified if a student is on any regular medication regardless of whether it is administered at school.
- Cough drops, medicated or non-medicated, are not allowed on school campus.
- Parents may come to the school office to administer medication.

FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- El Sol Science and Arts academy will continue to improve adherence to the current guidelines.
- Consider in-service education to enhance staff's understanding of commonly encountered medications.

Staff Wellness

El Sol Science and Arts Academy encourage its staff to lead healthy lifestyles both on and off campus. Healthier lifestyles contribute to improved morale, an excellent role model for the students, and a greater commitment to the comprehensive health plan that is being created.

FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- The creation of a staff wellness room will be considered to provide the faculty with a place to relax and rejuvenate during or after the school day.
 - This room could include, but not be limited to, yoga mats, exercise videos, books, magazines, a television, and comfortable seating.
 - Monthly talks or classes on various health and fitness topics could be offered to the staff to increase their knowledge and well being.

Safe and Healthy School Environment

El Sol Science and Arts Academy is aware that the natural, built, and social environments are an important influence on the health and well being of its students and staff.

SAFETY

- Zero tolerance policy for alcohol, drugs or paraphernalia, vaporizers, weapons, or intimidating or threatening behavior on campus. See El Sol family handbook for discipline policy.
- All visitors to the school must register at the front desk and display a visitor badge.
- Playground and internet safety rules- see parent handbook
- All students must be accompanied by an El Sol staff member when crossing the street between the upper and lower campuses.

GREEN BUILDINGS AND PRODUCTS

- A new LEED rated classroom building was recently constructed on then lower campus.
 - Better ventilation and temperature control
 - Noise reduction and improved acoustics
 - Non toxic flooring, cabinetry, and paints
 - Natural lighting to promote views of nature and reduced stress
- More green campus buildings are planned.

HEALTHY PRACTICES

- Paper and plastic are recycled in classrooms.
- An air quality assessment is currently being conducted on campus.

CARING COMMUNITY

- To promote parent involvement, parents are required to volunteer 20 hours on campus per year.

FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- Perform an environmental audit using the Health School Environments Assessment Tool (HealthySEAT at <http://www.epa.gov/schools/healthyseat/index.html>)
- Future remodeling and construction projects on the school campus will follow green building principles to the extent possible.
- Non toxic methods and products will be employed whenever possible for cleaning, pest control, printing, and art projects.
- Recycling will be encouraged. Recycling receptacles will be available next to all waste containers.
- Encourage the use of reusable water bottles. Increase number of water fountains on campus to minimize the use of plastic water bottles.

- More landscaping on school site to mitigate noise, air pollution from adjacent traffic, and to increase healing effects of natural surroundings.

Evaluation

To ensure this becomes a living document, can adapt to changes, and achieves the desired maximum results the effectiveness of the wellness policy must be evaluated on a regular basis.

- The first El Sol Wellness Policy will go into effect at the third annual El Sol/UCI Wellness Festival on 5/17/14.

FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- Consider the creation of a Wellness Board to include parents, students, faculty, staff, and possibly community members to lead an annual evaluation and guide the evolution of the wellness policy.
- Annual satisfaction surveys to be completed by the students on food, physical activity, school environment, and emotional issues.
- Annual faculty surveys to assess the effectiveness of the wellness policy and to identify areas for improvement and innovation.
- Wellness policy should be amended annually or as problems arise.

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APPENDIX A: LUNCH GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL LUNCH PROVIDERCalifornia Department of Education (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/newfbmplunch.asp>)

Amount of Food per Week (Minimum per Day)

Meal Pattern	Grades K–5	Grades K–8	Grades 6–8	Grades 9–12
Fruits (cups) ^b	2½ (½)	2½ (½)	2½ (½)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups) ^b	3¾ (¾)	3¾ (¾)	3¾ (¾)	5 (1)
Dark Green ^c	½	½	½	½
Red/Orange ^c	¾	¾	¾	1¼
Beans and Peas (legumes) ^c	½	½	½	½
Starchy ^c	½	½	½	½
Other ^{c,d}	½	½	½	¾
Additional Veg to Reach Total ^e	1 ^e	1 ^e	1 ^e	1½ ^e
Grains (oz eq) ^f	8–9 (1)*	8–9 (1)*	8–10 (1)*	10–12 (2)*
Meats/Meat Alternates (oz eq)	8–10 (1)*	9–10 (1)*	9–10 (1)*	10–12 (2)*
Fluid Milk (Cups) ^g	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)

Other Specifications: Daily Amount Based on the Average for a 5-Day Week

Meal Pattern	Grades K–5	Grades K–8	Grades 6–8	Grades 9–12
Min-max calories (kcal) ^h	550–650	600–650	600–700	750–850
Saturated fat (% of calories) ^h	< 10	< 10	< 10	< 10
Sodium (mg) ^{h,i}	≤ 640	≤ 640	≤ 710	≤ 740

Trans Fat^h: Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving.

*For the 2012–13 School Year (SY), U.S. Department of Agriculture has lifted the **weekly maximums** for grain and meat/meat alternates. The **daily and weekly minimums** for grains and meat/meat alternates still apply.

2012 Lunch Meal Pattern

- Food items included in each group and subgroup and amount equivalents. Minimum creditable serving is ⅓ cup.
- One quarter-cup of dried fruit counts as ½ cup of fruit; 1 cup of leafy greens counts as ½ cup of vegetables. No more than half of the fruit or vegetable offerings may be in the form of juice. All juice must be 100% full-strength.
- Larger amounts of these vegetables may be served.

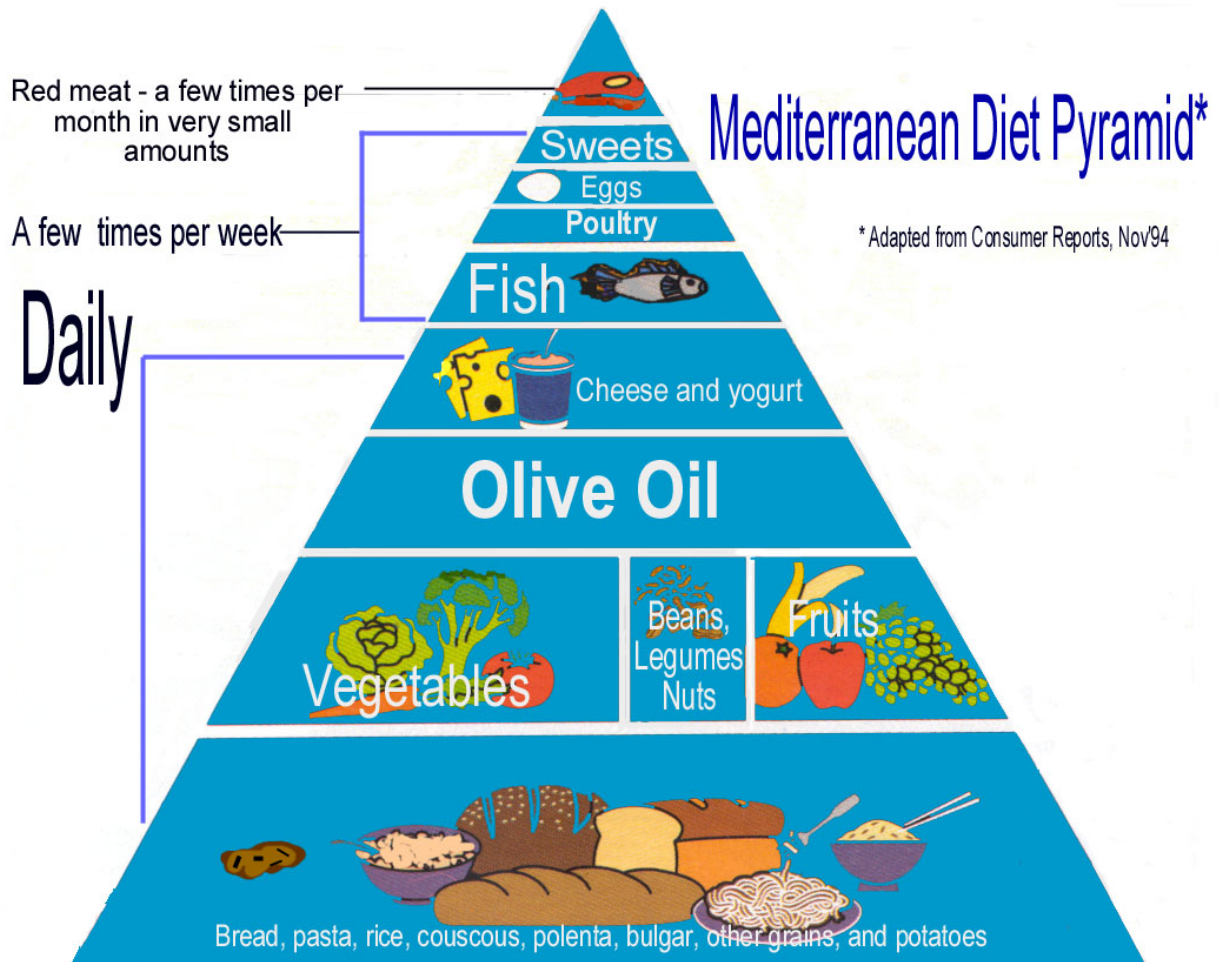
- d. This category consists of “Other vegetables” as defined in §210.10(c)(2)(iii)(E) . For the purposes of the National School Lunch Program, the “Other vegetables” requirement may be met with any additional amounts from the dark green, red/orange, and beans/peas (legumes) vegetable subgroups as defined in §210.10(c)(2)(iii).
- e. Any vegetable subgroup may be offered to meet the total weekly vegetable requirement.
- f. Beginning July 1, 2012 (2012–13 SY), at least half of grains offered must be whole grain-rich. Beginning July 1, 2014 (2014-15 SY), all grains must be whole grain-rich.
- g. Beginning July 1, 2012 (2012–13 SY), all fluid milk must be low-fat (1 percent or less, unflavored) or fat-free (unflavored or flavored).
- h. Discretionary sources of calories (solid fats and added sugars) may be added to the meal pattern if within the specifications for calories, saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium. Foods of minimal nutritional value and fluid milk with fat content greater than 1 percent are not allowed.
- i. Final sodium targets must be met no later than July 1, 2022 (2022–23 SY). The first intermediate target must be met no later than SY 2014–15 and the second intermediate target must be met no later than 2017–18 SY. See required intermediate specifications in § 210.10(f)(3)

APPENDIX B: BREAKFAST GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL LUNCH PROVIDER

Traditional and Enhanced Food-Based Menu Planning Options for School Breakfast Program.

Components	Food Items/Servings	Ages 1-2 Yrs	Preschool	Grades K-12	Grades 7-12*
Grains/Breads**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve one of the following items or combine them to meet the requirements: whole-grain or enriched bread, biscuit, roll, muffin, or cereal. • Examples of serving sizes can be found in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Buying Guide (Outside Source). 	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving	1 serving
Meat/ Meat Alternates**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve one of the following items or combine them to meet the requirements: meat, poultry, fish, cheese, egg, or yogurt. • Examples of serving sizes can be found in the USDA Food Buying Guide (Outside Source). 	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Fruits/Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a minimum of one serving. • A serving can be fruit or vegetable or both, or full-strength fruit or vegetable juice. 	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Milk (Fluid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Served as a beverage or on cereal, or both. 	4 fl oz	6 fl oz	8 fl oz	8 fl oz

APPENDIX C: THE MEDITERRANEAN FOOD PYRAMID



APPENDIX D: FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is designed to help develop a Wellness Policy for El Sol Science and Arts Academy. The Wellness Policy will be a document that outlines a comprehensive health program designed to maintain a high level of well being for the students at El Sol. It will cover proper diet, exercise, emotional stability, and illness prevention. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability to ensure that we can develop the most effective Wellness Policy possible. Your answers will remain anonymous.

Nutrition

1. What food and drink items are usually brought to class functions?

2. What are the biggest complaints the students seem to have about the food?

3. What are the biggest complaints the students seem to have about the beverages served on campus?

4. What foods have you noticed go uneaten the most at breakfast and lunch?

5. What foods are the most popular at breakfast and lunch?

6. Do you think healthy nutritional guidelines are important to follow during school fundraising activities or school functions? Explain.

7. What kinds of foods or treats do you think a parent could bring in for their child's birthday celebration?

- 8. What kinds of foods or treats do you allow a parent to bring in for their child's birthday celebration?

Emotional Support

- 1. Have you noticed any emotional issues that the students face? If so please describe.

- 2. If a student was having a bad day and wanted to talk to a staff member about their problem, do you think they would feel that they have someone to talk to?

- 3. Do you find the environment at El Sol conducive to offering students emotional support?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

- 4. Do you think there are any steps that could be taken to improve the emotional support system at El Sol? If yes, please explain.

Physical Activity

- 1. Do you think the students get enough exercise during school hours?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
- 2. How many hours of exercise a week would you estimate the students receive during school hours?
 - a. 0-2 hours
 - b. 2-4 hours
 - c. 4-6 hours
 - d. 6 hours or more

Illness Policies

1. Have you noticed many children coming to school sick when their condition is bad enough to stay home?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

APPENDIX E: PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey is designed to help develop a **Wellness Policy** for El Sol Science and Arts Academy. The Wellness Policy will be a document that outlines a comprehensive health program designed to maintain a high level of well being for the students at El Sol. It will cover proper diet, exercise, emotional stability, and illness prevention. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability to ensure that we can develop the most effective Wellness Policy possible. Your answers will remain anonymous.

Este cuestionario está diseñado para ayudar a desarrollar una Normativa de Bienestar para El Sol Science and Arts Academy. La Normativa de Bienestar será un documento que resuma un detallado programa de salud diseñado para mantener un nivel elevado de bienestar en los estudiantes de El Sol. Cubrirá dieta apropiada, ejercicio, estabilidad emocional, y prevención de enfermedades. Por favor, conteste a las siguientes preguntas lo mejor que pueda para asegurar que podamos desarrollar la Normativa de Bienestar más efectiva posible. Sus respuestas permanecerán anónimas.

 Parents

1. Do you know what your child eats for breakfast or lunch at school? List a few examples.
¿Sabe lo que su hijo come o desayuna en la escuela? Liste unos pocos ejemplos.

2. Are you more likely to pack your child's lunch or have them get lunch at school? *¿Es más probable que Ud. prepare la comida de su hijo, o que haga que se la den en la escuela?*
 - a. Pack their lunch/ *Que prepare la comida de su hijo*
 - b. Get lunch at school/ *Que haga que se la den en la escuela*
3. Does your child eat breakfast at home or at school? / *¿Su hijo desayuna en casa o en la escuela?*
 - a. At home/ *En casa*
 - b. At school/ *En escuela*
4. Do you know if there are any current policies on what foods and drinks your children are allowed to bring to school? List a few policies that you know. / *¿Sabe si hay alguna norma actual sobre las comidas o bebidas que sus hijos están autorizados a llevar a la escuela? Describa algunas de las normas que conozca.*

5. What foods would you like to see in your child's lunch or breakfast? / *¿Qué alimentos le gustaría ver en el desayuno o la comida de su hijo?*

6. If the school developed stricter nutritional guidelines do you think it would be possible for you to follow them in your child's lunch? (Ex. Only juices with 100% juice, more fruits and vegetables, more whole grains, only baked chips)/ *Si la escuela desarrollara manuales de nutrición más estrictos, ¿piensa que sería posible para Ud. seguirlos? (Ej. solo jugos con 100% jugo, más frutas y verduras, más granos integrales, papas solo asadas)*

a. Yes/ *Sí*

b. No/ *No*

7. Do you think healthy nutritional guidelines are important to follow during school fundraising activities or school? Explain./ *¿Piensa que es importante seguir los manuales de nutrición durante las actividades de recogida de dinero de la escuela o las funciones escolares? Explique.*

8. Do you think healthy nutritional guidelines are important to follow during a student's birthday celebration in class or do you believe cupcakes/cake are okay to bring in? / *¿Piensa que es importante seguir los manuales de nutrición durante la celebración en clase de un cumpleaños de un estudiante, o cree que está bien llevar madalenas/torta?*

9. How would you feel about a monthly birthday celebration in class for every student that had a birthday within that month? / *¿Cómo se sentiría acerca de una celebración mensual en clase para todos los estudiantes que cumplieron años ese mes?*

10. What healthy snacks do you think the 5th grade students could sell before class on Fridays to replace the Krispy Kreme donuts that they used to sell to help raise money for science camp? / *¿Qué tentempiés sanos piensa que podrían vender los estudiantes de quinto grado antes de clase los viernes para reemplazar a los donuts de Krispy Kreme que solían vender para recolectar dinero para el campamento de ciencias?*

11. Does your child have any food allergies?/ *¿Su hijo tiene alguna alergia alimentaria?*

a. Yes/ *Sí*

b. No/ *No*

12. How would you feel about El Sol Academy becoming a “peanut free” zone? (nothing containing peanuts allowed on campus)/ *¿Cómo te sientes acerca de El Sol de la Academia de convertirse en un "libre de maní" zona? (nada que contenga maní permitidos en el campus)*

13. Would you be likely to enroll your child in after school sports programs if these became available? / *¿Inscribiría a su hijo en uno de los programas de ejercicio después de la escuela si estos estuvieran disponibles?*

a. Yes/ *Sí*

b. No/ *No*

14. What makes you more likely to read something that your child brings home? Mark all that apply. / *¿Qué le hace más propenso a leer algo que su hijo trae a casa? Marque todas las que corresponda.*

a. The document has a lot of color/ *Que el documento tenga mucho color*

b. The document requires a signature / *Que el documento requiera una firma*

c. The document is in English / *Que esté en inglés*

d. The document is in Spanish/ *Que esté en español*

APPENDIX F: STUDENT SURVEY

Ask the students the questions in the first column. If they say a response that is already typed next to the question add a tally mark underneath that response. If they say a different response please write in their response and add a tally mark. For the “yes” or “no” questions please use the empty boxes to write down any interesting comments that the kids may have said. If you run out of boxes please use the back of the paper.

Favorite food served at breakfast?	Cereal:	French Toast:	Breakfast burrito:				
Least favorite food served at breakfast?							
Favorite food served at lunch?							
Least favorite food served at lunch?							
What is your favorite thing to drink at school?							
What other drinks would you like to see?							
Do you think you eat healthily	YES:	NO:	Sometimes:	Both:			

at school?							
Do you think you exercise enough at school?	YES:	NO:	Don't know:				
If you were really upset or sad do you have an adult you feel like you could talk to at school?	YES:	NO:					
Who do you think you would talk to?	Teacher:	Counselor:	Parents:	Siblings:	Friends:	Coach:	
Do you have internet access at home?	YES:	NO:	Maybe:				
Do you want to work in health care when you get older? (doctor, surgeon,	YES:	NO:	Write down the students names who answered yes in the next columns so they can be health ambassador s				

nurse, etc?)							
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