

BRIDGES Charter School

Healthy Food Agreement

Educating the whole child is a process that occurs at home as well as at school. Healthy food is a key building block in this process as it is integral to a school environment that promotes and protects our children's health, well-being, and ability to learn. Children are more likely to succeed in caring for their bodies when the entire family works together as a team to support healthy eating habits. Understanding nutrition at a young age will give your children the knowledge and practical skills needed to maintain healthy choices throughout their lives.

Sound nutrition:

- Promotes better student attendance and increased ability to focus, remember, and stay engaged;
- Lowers the risk of preventable, life threatening diseases such as obesity, diabetes, cancer, and stroke.
- Provides the energy (fuel) to be physically active and mentally alert;
- Supports a healthy, physically fit body, which improves a child's self-confidence, especially when faced with the difficulties inherent in puberty.

Research shows that unhealthy eating habits established in childhood can lead to a lifetime struggle for wellness. This Healthy Food Agreement is intended to help establish a school culture that values nutrition. If it is "cool at school" to eat well, then children will engage in better eating habits.

Therefore, all BRIDGES families are asked to commit to the following*:

- **Provide a healthy snack and lunch for your child(ren) daily, with at least three (3) combined servings of "healthy foods".** Additional nonnutritive items (or treats) may also be provided in moderation (i.e. *one* home-baked cookie, *one* small bag of home-popped popcorn, etc.). Families are asked to give extra thought to food choices each week, and proactively include their children when establishing the weekly food schedule. "Healthy food" is defined as:
 - Whole fruits, fresh vegetables, whole grains (rice, flax, oats, wheat, etc), nuts and legumes, lean proteins and dairy products which have minimal or no processing;
 - Foods **without** high fructose corn syrup, hydrogenated oils or trans fats, refined sugars, artificial color and additives, high sodium, or high saturated fat;
 - Water, unsweetened milk, or beverages with high nutritional value (i.e. fruit juice with 100% juice). Note: most juices contain added refined sugar.
- **Support the School culture by not bringing the following food items onto campus or to School events:** Soft drinks, fast food, Lunchables (or similar *highly processed* meal substitutes), Cheetos (or similar *highly-processed* snack bags), and/or candy bars. "Out of sight, out of mind."
- **Follow nutritional guidelines for birthdays, class parties, and special events:** We all enjoy celebrations, and acknowledge that special days like birthdays are traditions that children will carry with them the rest of their lives. However, in order to moderate our student's access to nonnutritive "treats" while they are in our care, food choices for "special days" need to be approved by the classroom teacher, and/or the School's Director, and/or the Education Coordinator (depending on the nature of the activity). Parents are asked to NOT bring treats onto campus at any time (i.e. cupcakes, candies, doughnuts, cookies, etc.) without advance approval. A list of *appropriate treats for sharing* will be generated with input from parents on the Food PMC (Parent Managed Cohort).

*BRIDGES Charter School's official Wellness and Nutrition Policy is in the process of being drafted and will include these requirements. It has not yet been determined if BRIDGES will offer food for purchase.

Please make a copy of this Agreement for your records, and return the signed agreement in your Admissions Packet.

Our family agrees to commit to the BRIDGES Charter School Healthy Food Agreement.

Child/ren's signature/s

Parent/s signature/s