

St. John's Lutheran School's Wellness Policies on Nutrition and Physical Activity

Preamble

Whereas, we believe that God created us and gives us all things, including our health;

Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;

Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;

Whereas, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;

Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;

Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores, and snack bars include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies, and snack cakes;

Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

Thus, St. John's Lutheran School is committed to providing a school environment that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of St. John's Lutheran School that:

- The school will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing the school's nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades PK-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will seek to meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the national school lunch program guidelines.

- Qualified food service professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of all students and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. School Health Committee

St. John's Lutheran School will create, strengthen, or work within an existing school health committee to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The committee also will serve as a resource for implementing those policies. (A school health committee consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, school food personnel, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

School Meals

Meals served will follow the National School Lunch Program Regulations.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals: The school will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Toward this end, the school may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide meals at no charge to all children, regardless of income; promote the availability of school meals to all students; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals.

1 It is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for free, reduced-price, or "paid" meals.

Meal Times and Scheduling

The school:

Will provide students with adequate time for sitting down for lunch (recommended 20 minutes);

Will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.;

Will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;

Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and

Will take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

Will provide students with potable (drinking) water during mealtimes.

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff: As part of the school's responsibility to operate a food service program, it will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in the school. Staff development and training will be required annually to Food Service Coordinator and staff on proper menu planning, food handling and healthy cooking practices according to USDA standards.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages: The school will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Food Allergies and Other Food-Related Restrictions: Documentation will be kept on file in the school office indicating students with known food allergies and food restrictions due to diabetes and other health related needs. Forms requiring a doctor's signature will be provided to parents.

A La Carte: All food and beverage sales to students during the regular day will follow USDA Guidelines and will be ran through the Smart Snack Calculator.

Foods

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program will:

Be appealing and appetizing to children;

Meet, at minimum, the nutrition requirements established by the USDA for federally funded programs;

Contain 0 percent trans fats;

Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;

A food item sold individually will strive to follow the recommended standards of:

Having no more than 30% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans-fat combined;

Having no more than 35% of its weight from added sugars;²

Having no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes.

2 If a food manufacturer fails to provide the added sugars content of a food item, use the percentage of weight from total sugars (in place of the percentage of weight from added sugars), and exempt fruits, vegetables, and dairy foods from this total sugar limit.

Limitations will be placed on the number of extra food purchases available for purchase.

Nutrition standards will be considered when determining portion size.

Students will have the opportunity to provide input on local, cultural and ethnic favorites.

The Food Services Coordinator shall provide periodic food promotions that will allow for taste testing of new healthier foods before they are introduced on the menu.

Fresh fruits and vegetables will be purchased from local farmers when practical.

Classroom Food: Candy will not be supplied from our teachers and staff to students, unless specifically connected with the curriculum. Food given as classroom rewards must be consumed outside of the classroom and may not include students with food allergies. Physical activity awards are encouraged to be given in the place of food rewards.

Fundraising Activities: When applicable, the school will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities (i.e., Jump Rope for Heart). All ready to eat fundraiser foods sold during the school day will comply with the National School Lunch Program and will be Smart snack approved. The school will allow 2 exemptions per school year toward food sold during the school day that is not Smart Snack approved. Fundraiser foods sold that are not ready to eat will be allowed and will not be required to be Smart Snack approved.

Snacks: Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. The school will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations.

Celebrations: Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day. The school will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

Vending: Vending machines will not be accessible to students.

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion: St. John's Lutheran School aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;

Is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;

Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;

Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;

Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise)

Links with school meal programs, other school foods, nutrition-related community services and the food production within the agricultural system.

Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and

Includes training for teachers and other staff.

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting: For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e., at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communications with Parents: The school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school will encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The wellness policy will provide parents a list of ideas for health celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities.

The school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parent's efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

Staff Wellness: St. John's Lutheran School highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Staff Nutritional and Physical Activity

St. John's will promote programs to increase knowledge of physical activity and healthy eating for faculty and staff. Presentations on health and wellness will be provided at least once each school year.

St. John's will allow staff to use school facilities outside of school hours for activities such as group fitness classes, walking programs and individual use.

Staff will be encouraged to participate in community walking, biking or running events.

School staff will be encouraged to develop and implement yearly wellness goals.

School staff will be encouraged to participate in Concordia Plan Services health and well-being programs.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Physical Education (P.E.) PK-8: All students in grades PK-8, including students with disabilities and special health-care needs will receive daily physical education (or its equivalent of 40 minutes/week for elementary school students and 105 minutes/week for middle) during the school year. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Whenever possible, physical education will be taught by a licensed physical education teacher. All staff involved in physical education will be provided opportunities for professional development focusing on physical activity, fitness, health and wellness.

Curriculum: The physical education curriculum will equip students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong enjoyment of physical activity. The curriculum will also promote Christian standards and values as written in Holy Scripture. The PE curriculum aligns with state standards.

Daily Recess: All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which the school should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment. Middle school students will have at least 10 minutes a day of supervised recess.

The school should discourage extended periods (i.e., periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity and Punishment: Teachers and other school personnel will not use excessive physical activity or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

Safe Routes to School: The school will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the school will work together with local public works, county officials, and/or sheriff department in those efforts.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours: School spaces and facilities might be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities also might be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

V. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring: The committee will ensure compliance with established school-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. The principal or committee designee will ensure compliance with those policies in the school and will report on the school's compliance to the school board.

School food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the school principal.

The principal or designee will develop a summary report every three years on compliance with school's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. That report will be provided to the school board, food service personnel, physical education instructor(s), teachers, and parents.

Policy Review: To help with the initial development of the school's wellness policies, the school will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of those assessments will be compiled to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The school will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

3 Useful self-assessment and planning tools include the School Health Index from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Changing the Scene from the Team Nutrition Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and Opportunity to Learn Standards for Elementary, Middle, and High School Physical Education from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education.

Suggestions for Parents (Healthy Snacks)

Homemade Options:

- Grapes, apples, tangerines, bananas and pears are the perfect portable fresh fruit treat.
- Frozen grapes are great for hot days.
- Kids always get a kick out of rabbit bags which combine fresh fruit and vegetables in individual servings.
- Sliced vegetables with bean salsa are a fun and exciting snack!
- Popcorn trail bags are easy. Sweet and salty come together when you mix unflavored popcorn with dry roasted peanuts and a handful of raisins. Package each serving in a mini paper bag for personal deliveries.
- You can't go wrong with an assortment of sliced veggies and a flavorful low-fat dip!
- For a pretty and engaging snack, try apple butterflies!
- Fruit parfaits abide by the guidelines and are totally gorgeous.

Packaged Snacks:

- 100 calorie packs are great options for certain foods. Try low-fat, whole grain crackers and whole grain pretzels. Sweets, even in 100 calorie packs, often have more than 35% of their weight as just sugar, while fried foods, like potato chips, have more fat than is allowed. To be under 35% calories from fat a food cannot have more than 35 calories of fat per 100 calories.
- Baked tortilla chips with 100 calorie packs of guacamole dip can be fun treats.
- Baked potato chips will meet the guidelines at 120 calories and 3 grams of fat.
- Baked whole grain pita chips are a handy option.
- Fill pita pockets with veggies and a little nonfat Italian dressing for a fun snack.
- Prepared veggie and fruit trays with low-fat dips are speedy, fuss-free options.
- For a calcium-rich option, try single-serving, sugar-free pudding cups.

- Light, low-fat yogurt comes in cups and squeeze tubes. As long as it meets the sugar requirements, it is good to go.
- Whole grain cereals like shredded wheat, oatmeal "O's", and Chex are great snack options without added sugar.
- Brown rice cakes are great options. Kids can top them with nut butter and fruit.
- Boxed raisins and other dried fruits are great.
- Whole grain fig cookies like Fig Newtons will work.
- Fruit cups and individual fruit serving cans packed in juice are great packaged snacks, too.

St. John's Lutheran School Wellness Policy Committee –2019

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