

# St. Joseph School's Health and Wellness Policy

Congress passed the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, which requires, by law, that by the first day of the school year of 2006, each school/district participating in the National School Lunch Program adopt local school wellness policies that address healthy eating and physical activity.

To promote student wellness, schools/districts must::

- Set goals for nutrition education;
- Set goals for physical activity;
- Set goals for school based activities;
- Establish nutrition standards for all foods that are available on school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity;
- Involve a broad group of individuals in the development and implementation of the wellness policy; and
- Measure and report the progress of the outcomes of the implementation of the wellness policy.

## I. A VISION FOR SCHOOL HEALTH

### SCHOOL MISSION

St. Joseph's School strives for academic excellence by encouraging the development of each child – mind, body, spirit – within an environment of Christian values and the Catholic faith.

### INTENT

Families are the primary teachers and caregivers for their children (*school philosophy #5*). The present and future health, safety, and well-being of students are also the concern of St. Joseph's School. Schools have a duty to help prevent any unnecessary injury, disease, and chronic health conditions that can lead to future health problems. For students to learn to take responsibility for their own health and to adopt health-enhancing attitudes and behaviors:

- St. Joseph's School shall be a safe and healthy place for children and employees to learn and work with a climate that nurtures learning, achievement, and growth of character (*school philosophy #3*);
- Students shall be taught the basic knowledge and skills they need to make health-enhancing choices and to avoid behaviors that can damage their health and well-being (*school philosophy #4*);
- St. Joseph's School shall reinforce students' adoption of health-enhancing behaviors and school staff shall be encouraged to model this behavior (*school philosophy #2*; and
- School leaders shall ensure that the nutrition, health services, and social services children need in order to learn are provided either at the school or in cooperation with ISD #318 or other community agencies (*school philosophy #8*).

## **RATIONALE**

Health and success in school are interrelated. The nation's leading health authorities recommend that schools take an active role in preventing chronic health problems and ensuring essential knowledge and positive, health-enhancing behaviors are taught and modeled.

## **II. SCHOOL WELLNESS COMMITTEE**

St. Joseph's School will develop a wellness committee that may include any or all of the following: parents, students, staff/faculty, members of the school board, school administrators, and a health professional. The committee is responsible to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise the health and wellness policy.

## **III. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

St. Joseph's School's campus and environment shall be safe. Measures will be taken to reduce potential injury and foster health-enhancing behaviors to ensure students' physical, physiological, spiritual, and social well-being.

## **IV. NUTRITION SERVICES**

### **A. Hot Lunch Program**

1. St. Joseph's School will employ a Certified Food Manager and trained nutrition staff who to serve nutritious, appealing, well-balanced meals; oversee lunchroom helpers, and encourage students to try a variety of foods.
2. Foods and beverages offered over the course of a school week should be nutrient-dense, including whole grain products, fiber-rich fruits and vegetables, and low fat milk as defined by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
3. Food and beverage providers should offer appropriate portion sizes for all ages of students.
4. Hand washing/sanitizing shall be required prior to eating meals and snacks.

**B. Students can bring lunches from home.** It is equally important to pack well balanced meals from home. Try to introduce whole grain bread. Include a variety of fruits, vegetables and a nutritious beverage. When selecting juice, read the label to make sure it is 100% fruit juice and not just 10%. Use snack food sparingly. Keep in mind that bacteria grows rapidly on warm moist food items. To avoid food borne illness always pack lunches from home in a insulated reusable bag with an ice pack to keep the sandwich, milk and other food items below 40 degrees.

It is never too late to begin making nutritious food choices and it certainly is never too early.

### **C. Snacks**

1. At St. Joseph's School, parents provide snacks either for the class or for their student/s. Teachers, when appropriate, will positively and constructively make suggestions for appealing, nutritious foods and proper portions.

2. Classroom celebrations should encourage healthy choices and portion control. Celebrations shall be limited to specific holidays or monthly birthday celebrations coinciding with birthday mass. Parents should receive guidance from the school/teacher on foods that are appropriate for such celebrations.
3. Drinking water and hand washing/sanitizing should be conveniently available to students at all times.

#### **D. Special Accommodations**

It is the responsibility of the parents to notify the Certified Food Manager or school secretary of a student's specific food requirements (i.e.: allergy, diabetes, cultural). The school will make every reasonable effort to accommodate these needs.

#### **E. Fundraising Activities**

To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities will not involve food or will only use foods that meet nutrition and portion standards. St. Joseph's School will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity and learning.

#### **E. Rewards**

St. Joseph's School will limit the use of foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet nutrition standards, as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages, including lunch, as a punishment.

### **V. HEALTH EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

The health education curriculum is designed to motivate and help students maintain and improve their health, prevent diseases, and avoid health-related risk behaviors. The curriculum supports nutrition services and physical education.

### **VI. HEALTH SERVICES**

- A.** St. Joseph's School will ensure access or referral to primary health care services; prevent and control communicable diseases and other health problems; provide emergency care for illness or injury; and is supported by qualified health professionals.
- B.** St. Joseph's School will ensure access or referral to assessments, interventions, and other services for student's mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health whose services are provided by qualified professionals.

### **VII. PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ACTIVITY**

- A.** All physical education classes should be taught by a licensed physical education teacher.
- B.** St. Joseph's School shall ensure that every student from kindergarten through sixth grade receives regular quality physical education in accordance with compulsory education requirements.
- C.** St. Joseph's School shall facilitate students' participation in daily moderate to vigorous physical activity in accordance with nationally recommended guidelines.
- D.** The physical education curriculum shall be coordinated with and support the health education curriculum.

- E. Physical education shall provide safe and satisfying physical activity for all students, including those with special needs.
- F. Teachers should not use participation or non-participation in physical education classes or recess as a way to punish or discipline students.
- G. School Age Care (SAC – after school program) and summer SAC program shall include supervised, age-appropriate physical activities that appeal to a variety of interests.
- H. St. Joseph's School shall ensure that students have adequate space and equipment to participate in safe, structured, physical activity.

## **VIII. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS**

### **A. Backpack Mail**

1. St. Joseph's School will post online and in the school in paper form monthly school lunch menus, school-time and after school activity information, and information on school celebrations and health concerns through School Speak. Parents may feel free to send questions and concerns back to the school through the same means or call the school directly.
2. Teachers and SAC staff may communicate with families through classroom letters/notes regarding specific activities/celebrations. Teachers shall make every effort to suggest nutritious snacks and appropriate portions for said events. Parents may communicate questions/concerns directly to the teacher.

### **B. Website**

St. Joseph's School shall make every effort to post up-to-date information regarding school menus and activities on the school's student information system (School Speak).

## **IX. IMPLEMENTATION**

The School Wellness Committee shall:

- A. Draft a procedure for policy implementation for school board approval; procedure to be reviewed every three years.
- B. Identify specific areas of improvement and set a standard for food items on campus including but not limited to:
  - Nutrition Services (hot lunch)
  - Extracurricular activities/events involving food items
  - Fundraisers involving food items
  - Classroom snacks
  - Classroom celebrations
  - After school SAC and summer SAC
- C. Identify areas of improvement and set a standard for physical activity and physical education.
- D. Identify specific areas of improvement and set a standard for health education.

## **X. ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

- A.** St. Joseph's School's principal will monitor progress and provide follow through on changes with the wellness committee.
- B.** The wellness committee will conduct an assessment and review progress annually.
- C.** The principal shall report the annual assessment and progress to the school board.
- D.** The wellness committee and school board will review the health and wellness policy procedure every three years and recommend changes to the principal.

## **XI. RESOURCES**

<http://www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/fithealthy.html> *National Association for State Boards of Education website*

<http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org> *National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity website*

Local Wellness Policy: A Guide for Development; Minnesota Department of Education

Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization ACT of 2004; Section 204 of Public Law 108-265, June 30, 2004

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