

Zion Lutheran School Wellness Policy

The Gospel Motivates

As leaders of Lutheran schools, we believe that God created us and gives us all things, including our health. Therefore, we thank God for the gift of life and health He has given us—imperfect as it may be with problems of illness and diseases as a result of sin. But knowing what God has done for us through Jesus Christ—the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation—our response is to care for the body that is on loan to us as a way of thanking and praising God. If we view our bodies as His temple, we can begin to see the importance of daily maintenance in order to keep it usable for his service. By keeping our bodies well-maintained and filled with the right kinds of fuel (foods) needed to sustain us, we will be ready at a moment's notice for the demands and tasks He is calling us to do.

(*Adapted from "Fill'er Up-With good Food," by Steve Grunewald, writer/editor of Better Health, a quarterly wellness letter published by Concordia Plan Services of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and published in Shaping the Future, a publication of the Lutheran Education Association, Winter, 2005.)

SCHOOL NUTRITION

It is the belief of Zion Lutheran School, Pierce, Nebraska to strive to make a significant contribution to the general well being, mental and physical capacity and learning ability of each student and afford them the opportunity to fully participate in the education process. Zion Lutheran School promotes a healthy school environment by supporting wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity as a part of the total learning environment. The School supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. By facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity, our school contributes to the basic health status of children.

1. Provide a positive environment and appropriate knowledge regarding food for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors.
 - a. Ensure that all students have access to healthy food choices during school and at school functions.
 - b. Provide a pleasant eating environment for students and staff.
 - c. Strive for a minimum of 20 minutes for students to eat lunch and socialize in the designated cafeteria area.
 - d. Enable all students, to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy food choices for a lifetime.
2. When using food as a part of class or student incentive programs, staff and students are encouraged to utilize healthy, nutritious food choices.
3. When curricular-based food experiences are planned, staff and students are encouraged to seek out good nutrition choices when ever appropriate.
4. Reduce student access to foods of minimal nutritional value.
 - a. In keeping with contractual obligations to the National School Lunch/Breakfast programs, ensure the integrity of the school lunch program by prohibiting food and beverage sales that are in direct conflict with the lunch/breakfast programs.
 - b. Encourage the practice of good nutrition by reducing the sale or distribution of foods of minimal nutritional value through a plan that focuses on:
 - i. Reducing access to non-nutritional foods.
 - ii. Educating students on healthy foods.
 - iii. Selective pricing that favors sales of healthy foods.

STUDENT NUTRITION PROCEDURES

Zion Lutheran School promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity as a part of the total learning environment. The School supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. By facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity, schools contribute to the basic health status of children. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and ensures that no child is left behind.

National School Lunch/Breakfast Program:

- The full meal program will continue to follow the U. S. Government's Nutrition Standards. A yearly contract is submitted to the Department of Public Instruction and is on file in the Food Service Director's office.
- The Food Service Director and Food Service Leaders will be expected to make every effort to follow the District Nutrition Standards when determining the items in a la carte sales.
- A la Carte items that do not meet the District Nutrition Standards may be acceptable for student consumption within moderation (i.e., limit quantity sold to an individual student).
- A la Carte items that do not meet the School Nutrition Standards may be acceptable when offered on an intermittent basis.

Lunchroom Climate:

- A lunchroom environment that provides students with a relaxed, enjoyable climate should be developed.
- It is encouraged that the lunchroom environment be a place where students have:
 - Adequate space to eat and pleasant surroundings.
 - Adequate time for meals (the School Nutrition Association recommends at least 20 minutes for lunch from the time they are seated and at least 10 minutes for breakfast).
 - Convenient access to hand washing facilities before meals.
 - Students are encouraged to eat foods but not forced to eat.

School Nutrition Standards

Zion Lutheran School strongly encourages the sale or distribution of nutrient dense foods for all school functions and activities. Nutrient dense foods are those foods that provide students with calories rich in the nutrient content needs to be healthy. In an effort to support the consumption of nutrient dense foods in the school setting, the District has adopted the following Nutrition Standards governing the sale of food, beverages and candy on school grounds.

Food:

- Any given food item for sale prior to the start of the school day and throughout the instructional day will have no more than 30% of its total calories derived from fat
- Any given food item for sale prior to the start of the school day and throughout the instructional day will have no more than 10% of its total calories derived from saturated fat.
- Nuts and seeds are exempt from these standards because they are nutrient dense and contain high levels of monounsaturated fat. Foods high in monounsaturated fat help lower "bad" cholesterol and maintain "good" HDL cholesterol.
- It is recognized that there may be rare special occasions when the school principal may allow a school group to deviate from these guidelines.
- Encourage the consumption of nutrient dense foods, i.e., whole grains, fresh fruits, and vegetables.

Beverages:

- Sales or consumption of soda or artificially sweetened drinks will not be permitted during the times when school lunch or breakfast, are operating.
- Milk, water, and 100% fruit juices may be sold or distributed on school grounds both prior to and throughout the instructional day.

Rationale for Guidelines—Beverages

Healthiest

- Milk – Low fat (1%) or Nonfat preferred, any flavor
- Water – Pure
- Juice – at least 50% fruit or vegetable juice

Healthier

- Water- Flavored or vitamin enhances
- Low-Calorie Beverage - < 50 calories per 12 ounce serving

Rationale

- Milk: Milk in any form provides vitamins and minerals, but the low-fat and non-fat versions are preferred. Flavored milks are permitted
- Water: Pure water is preferred, but water that is flavored maybe more attractive to someone who doesn't drink plain water. The vitamin-enhanced waters may benefit people with such nutritional needs, although pure water is the healthiest choice.
- Juice: Fruit and vegetable juices should contain at least 50-percent juices.
- Carbonation and caffeine: Carbonation and caffeine in moderation do not have a significant effect on nutrition. Carbonated low-calorie beverages may be another option for people who don't like milk or plain water.
- Low-Calorie: Beverages containing 50 calories of less per 12 oz serving were deemed healthier options. Artificially sweetened drinks are not as healthy as pure water, but may be a healthy alternative for people trying to water their weight or manage their diabetes.

Healthiest	Healthier	Limited
Milk, any flavor – preferably non-fat or low-fat	Flavored or vitamin-enhanced fitness water, sparkling water	
Juice – fruit or vegetable that contains at least 50% juice	Low-calorie, diet sodas, low-cal iced teas, low-cal coffee, sport drinks	Regular soft drinks, Less than 10% juice drinks
Water, pure		

Healthy Snack Guidelines (A snack is defined as any food item outside the lunch program.)

- During school hours, staff should model behaviors.
- Identify healthier and healthiest snacks in vending machines and in cafeteria with signage and/or stickers.
- In middle schools, healthier and healthiest snacks should comprise a minimum of 50% of the snacks.
- In high schools, healthier and healthiest snacks should comprise a minimum of 50% of the snacks.
- Promote healthy snack information and education to student, staff, and parents.
- After School District Sponsored Events--Food offerings at concession stands operated on school campuses (such as, but not limited to, athletic events and concessions, after school programs, performances and school

dances) shall include healthy options such as water, milk, 100% juice and nutritious foods as delineated by the Healthy Snacks guidelines.

Rationale for Guidelines--Snacks

Healthiest – Must meet both criteria

- 3 grams of total fat or fewer per serving (Nuts & seeds exempt from restrictions)
- 35 grams of carbohydrates or fewer per serving (most candies considered in limited category)
- Fruit in any form is permitted, regardless of carbohydrate count.

Healthier – Must meet both criteria

- 6 grams of total fat or fewer per serving (nuts & seed exempt from restrictions)
- 35 grams of carbohydrates or fewer per serving (most candies considered in limited category)
- Fruit in any form is permitted, regardless of carbohydrate count.

Portion Size – Portion size is not defined for any items, but smaller portion sizes are preferred.

Rationale

- Fat: It was determined not to differentiate saturated fat from unsaturated fat. When total fat is considered, saturated fat tends to be low. Nuts & seeds: Nuts and seeds are exempt from the fat guidelines, because they are high in monounsaturated fat, which can help lower “bad” LDL cholesterol and maintain “good” HDL cholesterol. Nuts and seeds have been shown in many studies to reduce the risk of having a heart attack.
- Carbohydrates: The level of carbohydrates was set at 35 grams per serving to include more food items. Most candies are considered in the limited category, regardless of carbohydrate count.
- Fruit: Fruit and vegetables in any form (canned, fresh, or dried) was not restricted by carbohydrate standards because it provides vitamins, minerals, anti-oxidants and dietary fiber that are beneficial to an overall balanced diet.
- Portion Size: Portion size is not defined, because there is variability among products. However, the preference is for smaller-portioned products.

Fundraisers:

All fundraising projects are encouraged to meet the school nutritional standards.

Teacher Incentive

Teachers will consider non-food items as a student incentive. Should teachers decide to use food items as an incentive, they are encouraged to adhere to these guidelines. Food items can be used from the approved list a health snack.

Curriculum:

The health curriculum will educate students to develop the knowledge, attitudes, skills and behavior for life long healthy eating habits and physical activity. Zion’s science and health curriculum supports the philosophy that the quality of life is dependent upon the student’s interaction with their total environment, which includes their physical, mental and social wellbeing. Included in the health curriculum as a performance goal, is that students will learn good food habits to help build and maintain good health.

Physical Education Curriculum:

The physical education curriculum teaches children the importance of exercise and wellness, and exposes students to a wide range of physical activities and skills in order for students to be able to develop the knowledge and skills to be physically active for life. Physical education teachers will follow a physical education curriculum.

Physical Activity

- Physical Activity should be included in the schools daily education program from grades pre-K-8.
- Students can be offered a variety of physical activities outside of the daily education program, including extra-curricular before and after school programs.