

# **Local Health & Wellness Policy**

## **2024-2025**

### **Committee:**

- **Principal**
- **Health Coordinator(s)**
- **Physical Education Department**
- **Nutritional Department (*NSB/LP*)**
- **SNAP-Ed Partner**
- **Board Members (parents/staff)**
- **Student(s)**

### **Sections:**

1. **Nutrition Education and Wellness Promotion**
2. **Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals**
3. **Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages**
4. **Physical Education and Physical Activity**
5. **Wellness Promotion and Marketing**
6. **Implementation, Evaluation and Communication**

**Section 1:****Nutrition Education and Wellness Promotion**

Santa Cruz Catholic School will implement Health & Nutrition Education for grades Kinder through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Nutritional education will be integrated into the curriculum during Physical Education and other areas of the curriculum as necessary. At each grade level, students will be provided with nutrition education and activities that may consist of taste testing, local farm visits, as well as school health and wellness days. These activities will reinforce the guidelines of the USDA School Meal Program. They will be developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and enjoyable.

At each grade level, students will be taught skill-based nutrition education that focuses on health promotion and disease prevention. Students will be taught how to look for and how to read the ingredients of a food item, how to identify the difference between processed foods and whole foods and understand the benefits of plant-based whole foods. Students will be able to find the sugar, fat, and salt content of a food item by reading a Nutrition Facts Label.

Santa Cruz Catholic School teachers will be provided evidence-based gardening education curriculum that they may use to offer education around the local food system.

Santa Cruz Catholic School will provide a consistent message of health and wellness through our classrooms and our health office newsletters to families and encourage all staff to be role models of healthy eating and daily physical activity.

Family nutrition education will be accomplished in the form of handouts, presentations, events, school newsletters, and through any other appropriate means available to reach parents. Students, parents, and families will be provided the opportunity to give input and feedback on the health and wellness goals of their school.

Attractive posters, banners, and student artwork and projects promoting health and wellness will be displayed in school hallways and common areas. Healthy food choices will be attractive and prominently displayed at all school meals and functions where food will be served.

Santa Cruz Catholic School's Coordinated Health Officer(s) will conduct annual reviews to address the wellness policy.

Stakeholders will consist of, at minimum, the principal, 1-2 school nurse staff member(s), 1-2 members from the school board, the physical education instructor, 1-2

members from the breakfast/lunch program, 1-2 parents, 1-2 students, and at least one community health partner.

## **Section 2:**

### **Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals**

It is the intent of Santa Cruz Catholic School to participate in USDA School Meals to either promote or provide breakfast and lunch through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP).

School meals will, at minimum, meet all USDA nutrition standards with increased servings of fresh fruits and vegetables whenever possible.

Clubs and/or meetings for students will not be held during mealtimes unless students are allowed to eat during these meetings.

Students will not be allowed to share food or beverages with other students during mealtimes due to safety regulations. Students must keep their food/snacks to themselves.

If necessary, a special table will be provided as a “food allergy” free zone to accommodate those students with certain food allergies.

Milk sold as part of the school meals program or special milk program will be limited to 1% and skim milk, with chocolate milk being served on Fridays only.

Santa Cruz Catholic School will contract with local public schools or local caterers that follow the USDA School Meals Program to provide school meals to students.

Students are prohibited from leaving campus for lunch.

Students will be provided with a minimum of 20 minutes to eat their lunch in a pleasant, temperature and noise-controlled environment. If schools offer breakfast, students will be provided with a minimum of 10 minutes to eat.

All food service managers, or those individuals providing school meals, will have adequate training in the area of food and nutrition. This professional development will be required annually in the form of Arizona Department of Education training, conferences, videos, and/or written documents, articles, etc.

The school will protect the privacy of students who qualify for free-and-reduced-price lunch (FRPL) by keeping the names of the students confidential between necessary

school staff (i.e. cafeteria staff and teacher). Unpaid meal balances are handled without stigmatizing students by directly contacting parents via phone call. Under no circumstance will students be made aware of unpaid meal balances by cafeteria or any other school staff members.

Families will be provided with information about the FPRL program during school registration. Parents will be provided with an income form to complete at their discretion if they are interested in participating in FPRL program. Nutritional content of school meals will be published on the school website and shared with students and parents.

Parents/guardians will not be allowed to bring high-fat, high-salt, and / or high-sugar fast food for their children's meals.

### **Section 3:**

#### **Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages**

Santa Cruz Catholic School does not provide students with access to vending/soda machines. Competitive foods and beverages will not be sold on school campuses during the school day.

Fresh fruits and vegetables that may be available during the school day will be exempt from any competitive food ban.

The sale of food and beverage will be limited to those sold through the school meal program.

It will be encouraged that classroom celebrations be primarily activity-based. All efforts will be made to include healthy food choices following the recommended Arizona Nutrition Standard and [Smart Snack Standards](#) when food is included in classroom celebrations.

All foods and beverages *offered (served or sold)* before and/or after school will align with the [Smart Snack Standards](#).

Food rewards or incentives will be prohibited. Withholding food as a punishment will also be prohibited.

Students and staff will have access to refill their water bottles with our various censor-water fountains before, during, and after school. Water fountains will be cleaned and maintained on a regular basis. Water bottles will be permissible in classrooms.

**Section 4:****Physical Education and Physical Activity**

Santa Cruz Catholic School will implement Physical Education Standards for grades Kinder through 12 using a written, standards-based PE curriculum.

Students in grades 1-8 will be required to receive 120 minutes/week of physical education per diocesan policy. Kindergarten students will be required to receive 30 minutes/week.

Physical Education classes will have the same student/teacher ratios used in other classes.

The physical education program will be provided with adequate space, shade, water accessibility, and all other safety standards.

Santa Cruz Catholic School will ensure that a safety inspection will be performed annually on all playground sites and sports facilities.

When possible, physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher.

All physical education teachers will receive annual professional development training related to physical education and physical activity.

Sports involvement or other activity related academic classes will not take the place of physical education class.

Regular physical activity throughout the school day will be required. Kinder thru 8<sup>th</sup> grade will utilize classroom “energizers” or similar classroom physical activity breaks during the school day.

When possible, Santa Cruz Catholic School youth sports league will offer boys’ and girls’ volleyball, basketball and for all students in 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade.

When possible, Santa Cruz Catholic School will allow community-based organizations to use sport and/or playground facilities outside school hours. Families will be encouraged to engage in physical activities outside school hours using this sport and/or playground facilities.

Physical activity or recess denied as a form of discipline or punishment will be prohibited. Physical activity being used as a form of discipline or punishment will be prohibited.

All elementary students will have daily recess for at least 20 minutes a day. Recess that is offered in conjunction with lunch will be encouraged to be taken before lunch. Students

that walk or bike to school will be provided with the safest route to school, including crossing guard information when necessary, and will be provided with a safe place to keep their bike. All students that ride a bike to school **must** wear an appropriate bike helmet for safety.

Santa Cruz Catholic School will offer family engagement opportunities in physical activities with students (i.e. Health and Wellness Community Night).

## **Section 5:**

### **Wellness Promotion and Marketing**

By School Year 2025-2026, all food and beverage marketing on the school campus will meet the USDA's Smart Snacks guidelines, including on school property, in educational materials, where food is purchased, in school media, and/or in fundraisers.

Santa Cruz Catholic School will support employee wellness using the following strategies:

- Nutrition challenges (i.e. water challenge, fruit and vegetable consumption challenge)
- Physical Activity Challenges (i.e. step challenge)
- Mindfulness Sessions (i.e. breathing and mindfulness techniques)
- Yoga Sessions (i.e. morning yoga sessions)

## **Section 6:**

### **Implementation, Evaluation & Communication**

To ensure the implementation of our Local Wellness Policy, the Coordinated School Health Officer will be the designated oversight official to perform an annual review to determine policy implementation using the ADE's [School Wellness Report Card](#). The Coordinated School Health Officer will invite all School Health Committee members to participate in the assessment process. The expected date of completion will be.

The public will be notified of the results of the most recent assessment of the implementation of the LWP (ADE's School Wellness Report Card) during school registration and through email communication.

The Coordinated School Health Officer will report to the principal any changes as

necessary. The information will lead to necessary assistance and resources offered at the individual school grade level regarding wellness policy adherence. The Coordinated School Health Officer will seek assistive training support, and follow-up to ensure LWP implementation using available online training offered on the ADE website.

At least once every three years, Santa Cruz Catholic School's Local Wellness Committee will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to meet the USDA's triennial assessment requirements. Santa Cruz Catholic School will submit the most current version of the LWP to be compared against a model policy using the Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT 3.0).

The most recent WellSAT 3.0 Scorecard and Recommendations will be used to revise the LWP, and those results will be made available to the public by posting on the school website. A revised version of the LWP will be published on the school's website and will be shared via email to all families and staff.

Santa Cruz Catholic School's Local Wellness Policy will be made available on-line on the school's website and placed in the Parent/Student Handbook as well.

Parents and students will be provided the opportunity to join the wellness committee or help with the development, review, and update of the LWP during registration and via email.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**School Health Committee Members:**

| <b>Name</b>     | <b>Title</b>  | <b>Email Address</b>   | <b>Role</b>               |
|-----------------|---|--|---------------------------|
| Roxanne Teran   | School Principal  | <a href="mailto:rteran@santacruzschool.org">rteran@santacruzschool.org</a>       | Wellness Committee Member |
| Diana Portillo  | School Nurse<br>(Coordinated School Health Officer)                                   | <a href="mailto:dportillo@santacruzschool.org">dportillo@santacruzschool.org</a> | Wellness Committee Member |
| Matthew Zdrahai | Physical Education Teacher  | <a href="mailto:mzdrahai@santacruzschool.org">mzdrahai@santacruzschool.org</a>   | Wellness Committee Member |
| Josie Noriega   | Cafeteria Manager   | <a href="mailto:jnoriega@santacruzschool.org">jnoriega@santacruzschool.org</a>   | Wellness Committee Member |
| Vaughn Vallejos | Program Coordinator, The AZ Health Zone Cooperative Extension – Nutritional Sciences. | <a href="mailto:vvallejos@arizona.edu">vvallejos@arizona.edu</a>                 | Wellness Committee Member |
| Rachel Ramirez  | Board Member  | <a href="mailto:rachram78@gmail.com">rachram78@gmail.com</a>                     | Wellness Committee Member |
| Anonymous       | School Parent   | N/A  | Wellness Committee Member |
| Anonymous       | Student   | N/A  | Wellness Committee Member |