

ST.PATRICK SCHOOL and EDUCATIONAL CENTER

WELLNESS PLAN

In the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, the U.S. Congress established a new requirement for all local agencies with a federally-funded National School Lunch Program. The local agencies are to develop and implement wellness policies that address nutrition and physical activity. This plan was developed in response to this requirement. It is based on information, procedures and policies from the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA) March 2005. The goal of this plan is to outline policies and procedures that help to create an environment that provides consistent wellness messages, is conducive to healthy eating and physical activity and contributes to the formation of life-long healthy habits.

Introduction

Children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive. Good health fosters student attendance and education. Unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood. Only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Plate.

St. Patrick School and Educational Center is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of St. Patrick School and Educational Center that:

- All students in grades K-1 through Grade 8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- St. Patrick School will provide students with access to a variety of affordable and nutritious foods that meet their health and nutrition needs and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- The school will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program and after-school snacks.)

TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS:

I. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served at School

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- serve only low-fat (1%) milk and FF dairy products
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- All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal
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- Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options

Information about the nutritional content of meals will be available for parents and students upon request. St. Patrick School and Educational Center does not have any vending machines on its premises.

Breakfast

To ensure that all children begin the day with breakfast, either at home or at school in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- St. Patrick School and Educational Center will operate a School Breakfast Program.
- St. Patrick School and Educational Center will publish monthly menus for both the Breakfast and Lunch Programs. These will be distributed via the Family Envelopes or online.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals

St. Patrick School and Educational Center 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 meals¹. We will promote the availability of school meals to all students and encourage participation in the Breakfast and Lunch programs.

Meal Times and Scheduling

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.

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- Will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 15 minutes after sitting down for lunch. Younger children will have an extended lunch period as needed.
- Will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 12 a.m. and 1 p.m.
- Will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students can eat during such activities;
- Will schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods in grades K-1 through 4.
- Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

School Food Service Staff

St. Patrick School and Educational Center contracts with vendors who are approved meal and milk providers. School Lunch helpers will be required to participate in trainings and other programs appropriate to their positions. *e.g.* Serve Safe Training and Food Safety. All adults working within the Breakfast and/or Lunch programs will be subject to CORI checks annually.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

St. Patrick School and Educational Center will abide by the recommendation that states: "Schools should 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." However, there is a "share table" where students can place unwanted, prepackaged food items on the table, for others to take, if they choose.

Beverages

- Allowed: water, fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk
- Not allowed: soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; energy drinks, fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk

Portion Sizes

Portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually will fall within the portions listed below:

- One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky
- One ounce for cookies;
- Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items;
- Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts
- Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;
- Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water;

Fundraising Activities

To support children's health and school nutrition efforts, school fundraising activities involving food will take place on a limited basis: no more than once/month. The school will be limited to two major candy fundraisers each year. The school will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity such as a Jog-a-thon or Walk-a-thon.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day or in Extended Day or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health and will follow the nutrition and portion guidelines as mentioned above.

Rewards

The school will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic performance or good behavior,² and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations

The school will limit the scope and frequency of celebrations that involve food during the school day. The School Health and Wellness Committee will provide families with information regarding nutritionally sound celebration and snack alternatives.

² Unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan (IEP).

Communications with Parents

St. Patrick School and Educational Center 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 nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages.

The school will provide information about physical activity opportunities within the community and will support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.

Food Marketing in Schools

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, the school will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).³ School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages⁴ is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

III. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Physical Education (P.E.) K-1 – Grade 8

All students in grades K-1 -8, including students with disabilities or special health-care needs will participate in weekly physical education classes for the entire school year. Students are required to come prepared for physical education (gym) class. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess

All students will have 20-30 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which they are encouraged to engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity through the provision of space and equipment.

Extended Day and enrichment programs will provide and encourage – verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

Physical Activity and Punishment

³ Advertising of low-nutrition foods and beverages is permitted in supplementary classroom and library materials, such as newspapers, magazines, the Internet, and similar media, when such materials are used in a class lesson or activity, or as a research tool.

⁴ Schools should not permit general brand marketing for food brands under which more than half of the foods or beverages do not meet the nutrition standards for foods sold individually or the meals are not consistent with school meal nutrition standards.

Teachers and other school personnel will not use physical activity (*e.g.*, running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (*e.g.*, recess, physical education) as punishment. In the case of a discipline issue during outside recess, the teacher on duty may have the student walk around the play area rather than participate in games with his/her classmates.

IV. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring

The principal or designee will ensure compliance with these policies and will contract with vendors who will ensure compliance with nutrition policies. The school's Wellness Plan will be reviewed annually by the principal and the Nutrition Program Coordinator.