

St. Peter Catholic School Wellness Policy

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St. Peter Catholic School Wellness Policy on Physical Fitness and Nutrition

June 2017

Preamble: St Peter Catholic School has developed this wellness policy in response to federal and state guidelines, requiring each school that participates in the National School Lunch and or Breakfast programs to have such a policy in place for the 2017-2018 school year. This policy was reviewed and revised in June of 2017.

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, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;

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, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

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

Thus, St Peter Catholic School 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 our 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 district-wide 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.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, our school will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the, National School Lunch Program [including after-school snacks]).
- St Peter School will provide nutrition education and physical education through the physical education classes 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.

I. SCHOOL WELLNESS COMMITTEE

St Peter School will create, strengthen, or work within existing school health councils to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The council also will serve as resources to school sites for implementing those policies. (A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.)

II. NUTRITIONAL QUALITY OF FOODS AND BEVERAGES

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;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables with unlimited seconds on these two
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk³ and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

St Peter School will engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, St Peter will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students through but not limited to the following venues: menus, school website, Option C, local newspaper, on cafeteria menu boards, placards and principal's newsletter.

Free and Reduced Priced Meals

St Peter 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.

Meal Times and Scheduling

- students will have 15-20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- meal periods will be scheduled at appropriate times, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 10:50 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- no tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities will be scheduled during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- recess periods will follow lunch periods whenever possible;
- students will have access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- reasonable steps will be taken to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (*e.g.*, orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Sharing of Foods/Beverages

St Peter School will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies, other restrictions on some children's diets and the spread of communicable disease.

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 whenever possible, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water or milk as the primary beverages. St Peter 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. A list of healthful snack items will be given to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

- If eligible, schools that provide snacks through after-school programs will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program.

Rewards

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

Celebrations

St Peter School will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than three parties per year except under extenuating circumstances. Parties will be held at the end of the school day. St Peter School will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

School Sponsored Events

Healthy choices of foods and beverages will be offered at school sponsored events (such as but not limited to athletic events, dances and plays) in addition to the stand fare at school sponsored events held outside the regular school day.

III. NUTRITION EDUCATION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROMOTION

St Peter School aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. The school will 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, and nutrition-related community services;
- 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 at least 30 minutes per day of vigorous physical activity 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, playing of electronic games and or surfing the web;
- 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

St Peter School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. For those students who bring their lunches, parents will be encouraged to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the nutrition standards. The school will provide parents a list of foods that meet the school's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

The school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' 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.

Food Marketing

St. Peter School is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. After school concession efforts will be supportive of healthy eating by emphasizing the sale of healthy food items

Staff Wellness

St Peter 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. The school will establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member, school health council member, local hospital representative, dietitian or other health professional. (The staff wellness committee could be a subcommittee of the school health council.) The committee could develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff

health and wellness. The plan should be based on input solicited from school staff and should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff. The staff wellness committee should distribute its plan to the school health council annually.

IV. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES/PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Daily Physical Education (P.E.) PK-8

All students in grades PK-8, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive physical education (or its equivalent of 45-90 minutes/week for elementary school students) for the entire school year when it becomes financially feasible.

All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher whenever possible. 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.

Daily Recess

All St Peter School students in grades PK-4 will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

Schools 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 Opportunities Before and After School

St Peter School offers to students in grades 4-8 the opportunity to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities. Volleyball, football, basketball, soccer and track are available to all students providing there is enough interest to maintain a program.

After-school child care and enrichment programs 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

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 a consequence of unacceptable behavior, except in extreme instances.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

School spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations in accordance to established St Peter facility usage guidelines.

V. MONITORING AND POLICY REVIEW

The principal or designee will ensure compliance with established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

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

The principal or designee will develop a summary report every three years on the school's compliance with the established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from various organizations and departments within the school. That report will be provided to the school board, pastor and also distributed to all school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, and school health services personnel.

Policy Review

To help with the initial development, the school will conduct a baseline assessment of the 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, based on data from the assessments.

(Principal)

(Date)

(Pastor)

(Date)

(School Board)

(Date)

