Approved 11/16/22

St. Rose of Lima School Board

**ST. ROSE OF LIMA SCHOOL**

**Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition**

**Preamble**

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, 33% of high school students do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and 72% of high school students do not attend daily physical education classes;

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. Rose of Lima School is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children’s health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of St. Rose of Lima 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 K-5 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
* Foods and beverages served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
* 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, St. Rose of Lima School will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program [including after-school snacks], Summer Food Service Program, Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program, and Child and Adult Care Food Program [including suppers]).
* St. Rose of Lima School will provide nutrition education and physical education 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.

**TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:**

**I. School Health Councils**

The 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 councils 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 Sold and Served on Campus**

**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;[[1]](#footnote-0)
* serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk[[2]](#footnote-1) and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
* ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.3,[[3]](#footnote-2)

Schools should 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, schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

**Breakfast**. To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

* Schools will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program.
* Schools will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom, or “grab-and-go” breakfast.

**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.[[4]](#footnote-3)

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages**. 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.

**Foods and Beverages will not be sold individually.**

**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, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children’s nutritional needs, children’s ages, and other considerations. The school will disseminate a list of healthful snack items 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**. Schools 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,[[5]](#footnote-4) and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

**Celebrations**. Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month.

**School-sponsored Events** (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances).Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day will meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages.

**III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing**

**Nutrition Education and Promotion**.St. Rose of Lima School aims toteach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should 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 the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.,* at least 60 minutes per day) 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;
* 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.

# Communication **with Parents**. The school will support parents’ efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The community will offer healthy eating seminars for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The community organizations will provide parents a list of foods and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties. 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 in Schools**.School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beveragemarketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages. School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages[[6]](#footnote-5) is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

Examples of marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low-nutrition food products; in-school television, such as Channel One; free samples or coupons; and food sales through fundraising activities. Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include: vending machine covers promoting water; pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines; sales of fruit for fundraisers; and coupons for discount gym memberships.

**Staff Wellness**. St. Rose of Lima 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.

**IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

**Daily Physical Education (P.E.) K-12**. All students in grades K-5, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive physical education. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher when possible. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**Daily Recess**. All elementary school students will have at least 30 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 and Punishment**. Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (*e.g.,* running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (*e.g.,* recess, physical education) as punishment.

**Safe Routes to School**. The school will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the school will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school will explore the availability of federal “safe routes to school” funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements.

**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. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. Parish policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

**Policy Review**. Assessments will be repeated every three years (2025) to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school district 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.

1. To the extent possible, schools will offer at least two non-fried vegetable and two fruit options each day and will offer five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of a week. Schools are encouraged to source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practicable. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. As recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. A whole grain is one labeled as a “whole” grain product or with a whole grain listed as the primary grain ingredient in the ingredient statement. Examples include “whole” wheat flour, cracked wheat, brown rice, and oatmeal. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. School nutrition staff development programs are available through the USDA, School Nutrition Association, and National Food Service Management Institute. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. Unless this practice is allowed by a student’s individual education plan (IEP). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)