

# **Sacred Heart Catholic School**

## **Physical Activity and Nutrition Wellness Policy**

### **We believe:**

- Children need access to healthy foods and physical activities in order to grow, learn, and thrive;
- Good health fosters student attendance and positive education outcomes;
- The school environment should promote and protect students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by encouraging healthy eating and physical activity.

**Sacred Heart Catholic School is committed to providing a school environment promoting children's health, well-being, and ability to learn through healthy eating and physical activity.**

Therefore, it is the policy of Sacred Heart Catholic School that:

- we will engage students, parents, teachers and food service professionals in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing our nutrition and physical activity policies.
- all students in grade PreK-8<sup>th</sup> grade, will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- food and beverages served at our 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 and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- we will participate in the available federal school meal program, such as the National School Lunch Program.
- we 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.

### **I. Wellness Committee**

Sacred Heart Catholic School will develop, implement, and monitor our school nutrition and physical activity policies.

The Wellness Committee will consist of individuals representing our school, including parents, school food authorities, teachers, and students. The Wellness Committee will meet annually during the school year.

## **II. Nutritional Quality of Food and Beverages Served at School**

### **School Meals**

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

- will be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- comply with the National School Lunch and Breakfast standards for meal patterns, nutrient levels, and calorie requirement for the ages and grades served;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- serve only low-fat (1%) milk and fat-free milk (to be defined by USDA);
- make water available at all breakfasts and lunches; additionally, students and staff will have access to free, safe, and fresh drinking water throughout the school day. Students are allowed to bring in bottled water from home.
- ensure that served grains are whole grain.

Monthly menus will be available on our school website and, upon request, the nutritional content of meals will be made available.

It is the policy of the Sacred Heart Catholic School that all foods and beverages sold to students during the school day will meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) school meal and Smart Snacks in School (Smart Snacks) nutrition standards.

### **Free and Reduced-Priced Meals (when applicable)**

Currently, all students (K-8) receive free breakfast and lunch. Sacred Heart Catholic 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. We will utilize electronic identification and payment systems, and promote the availability of school meals to all students.

Applications for free and reduced meals will be made available to all families at the beginning of each school year and our school website.

## **Meals Times and Scheduling**

Sacred Heart Catholic School will:

- provide the opportunity for students to have a healthy breakfast and lunch daily; (if applicable-regardless of whether the student has ordered and paid for the lunch or owes money).
- provide students with at least 15 minutes for breakfast and 25 minutes for lunch.
- schedule meal periods at appropriate times-7:30-8:15 a.m. for breakfast and 11:00-12:15 pm for lunch;
- whenever possible, not schedule tutoring or meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat before or during such activities;
- combine lunch and recess for all students;
- provide access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before student eat meals or snacks;
- discourage consumption of competitive foods (fast food) in place of school meals.
- take reasonable steps to accommodate the dental regimens of students with special oral health needs.

## **Qualifications of School Service Staff**

Qualified nutritional professional will administer the school meal program. Professional development for all nutrition professionals in our school will be provided. All nutritional program directors, managers, and staff will meet hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA Professional Standards for Child Nutritional Professionals. These school nutrition personnel will refer to USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website to search for training that meets their learning needs.

## **Sharing of Foods and Beverages**

Sacred Heart Catholic School will discourage students from sharing their food or beverage with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

## **School Garden**

In support of children's health and nutrition education curriculum, Sacred Heart Catholic School has a school garden. Students in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade will be

responsible for planning, planting, maintaining and harvesting garden produce. Students will be able to take produce home to their family.

### **Celebrations**

It is recommended that school day celebrations involving food (store bought only) be limited to no more than 4-5 per year. We encourage families to bring in healthier choices for these celebrations. Parents may only send in non-food treats for birthdays. When applicable, children will be recognized on their birthdays during morning announcements and be given a birthday sticker/school pencil.

We discourage the use of food/beverages as a reward or punishment. We encourage non-food alternatives for rewards (non-uniform coupons, stickers, pencils, etc) or the use of extra physical activity as a reward when feasible.

## **III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion**

### **Nutrition Education and Promotion**

Sacred Heart Catholic School teaches, encourages, and supports healthy eating by students. We will provide nutrition educational and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- provides 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 at all grade levels (preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade);
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally relevant participatory activities such as promotions, taste testing, etc.
- 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;
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

## **Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting**

We encourage regular daily physical activity for our students through recess and physical education classes. In order for students to fully embrace physical activity as a personal behavior, students also need opportunities beyond physical education class. We support:

- classroom health education complementing physical education by reinforcing the skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle, and reduce time spent on sedentary activities;
- incorporating opportunities for physical activity into other subject lessons, when possible;
- providing student with short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

### **Communication with Parents**

Sacred Heart Catholic School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. Nutrient analyses of school menus will be available, when requested. We encourage parents to pack healthy snacks and lunches.

Sacred Heart Catholic School will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during and after the school day. We will also support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.

### **Staff Wellness**

Sacred Heart Catholic School values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities that support staff efforts to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Our Wellness Committee and school administration will encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff through education, fitness challenges, and other positive staff involvement programs.

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

### **Regular Physical Education**

All students in grades PreK-8, including students with disabilities and special health-care needs, will receive regular physical education throughout the school

year. These classes shall provide students with skills and activities that are needed for lifetime physical fitness. All physical education classes will be taught by our physical education teacher using the school's adopted curriculum and standards for Physical Education. The school's curriculum was written in alignment with the MN State Standards. A copy of the curriculum and standards can be found in the Physical Education office and the Principal's office. The Physical Education teacher will be provided with annual professional development opportunities focused on topics relevant to physical education instruction.

Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (i.e. intramural sports) will not be substituted for this physical education requirement. Physical education classes will meet once a week for 30 minutes for preschool, twice a week and for a minimum of 30 minutes in elementary school and twice a week for 50 minutes in middle school. Students will spend at least 50 percent of the class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity. Physical activity may not be assigned to students as a consequence of poor behavior or punishment for any reason. (example: running laps or jogging around the playground).

### **Daily Recess**

Students will have the following supervised recess time each day:

PreK Minimum of 30 minutes (1 recess)

K-3 Minimum of 35 minutes (2 recesses)

4<sup>th</sup> Minimum of 20 minutes (1 recess)

5-8 Minimum of 15 minutes (1 recess)

When activities make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, students will be given periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active. The administration believes that recess and other opportunities for physical activity are an essential part of the school day. Teachers are encouraged to find alternatives to withholding recess or other physical activities as a punishment.

### **Physical Activity Opportunities After School**

Sacred Heart Catholic School will offer extracurricular physical activity programs. The range of activities will meet the needs, interest, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health care needs. Our 5-8<sup>th</sup> grade students will also be encouraged to participate in our

sports programs. After-school care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants. Communications regarding physical activities programs offered within the larger community will be provided to students.

Sacred Heart Catholic School assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvements using the Wellness School Assessment Tool. As part of that review, reviews of the 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 will be considered. As necessary, the wellness policies will be reviewed and work plans developed, in order to facilitate their implementation. All members of the Wellness Committee-students, staff, and parents-will be involved in the review of the policy.

The Wellness Policy and a summary of the work of the Wellness Committee are available on the school's website under School Nutrition. The triennial progress report with information about the school's wellness related activities will be shared under the "School Nutrition" tab on the school's website.