

Wellness Policy Sacred Heart Catholic School

Sacred Heart Catholic School recognizes the link between health and academic achievement and the importance of creating a healthy school environment. The purpose of this School Wellness Policy is to articulate the actions we are taking to comply with the USDA regulations. This policy will help us meet our school goals to support diet quality, physical fitness, and overall health of our students and staff.

Nutrition Environment and Services

Sacred Heart Catholic School will provide free breakfast and lunch each day through the USDA School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch program. These meal programs are operated in full compliance with USDA's regulations. In accordance with federal regulations, free drinking water will be available to students in the cafeteria during mealtimes. All food and nutrition services staff shall receive annual training consistent with USDA Professional Standards.

Free and reduced-price meals

We work to ensure that families of students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals complete the necessary state application so the students receive these meals. We do this by having the applications available at our Back to School Night, sending the application home, and providing the forms on our school website. Our meals must be pre-ordered using our school website, so all payments are made using electronic payment. This protects the privacy of student who are receiving free or reduced-priced meals.

Note: We ensure that all students have a meal at lunch. If a family has difficulty pre-ordering meals, our school office will order meals for them. We do not want our pre-ordering of meals to be a hinderance for a child not receiving a meal. We will work with the family to help them log in and order until they are able to do so on their own.

Note: Currently our breakfast and lunch meals are free for students in MN, however, we still have families complete the free-reduced-price meal application so we receive funds for other federal programs. Fees are only collected for "milk-only" or "extra entrée" and fees are pre-paid each month.

Unpaid meal debt

We work directly with parents and guardians to resolve unpaid meal debt, including helping them determine if they qualify for free or reduced priced meals. We are careful not to stigmatize or involve the student when there are unpaid meal balances; we do not identify these students at school, and we continue to provide standard reimbursable meals.

Promoting meal participation

We provide nutritious meals provided by our catering company. The caterer follows the following steps:

- a. They survey the administration to see which meals are favorites for the students and which items are not well received. Menus are adjusted based on results.
- b. We provide flavored and unflavored milk for the students.
- c. We schedule at least 20 minutes of seated time for students to eat lunch in the cafeteria and 20 minutes to eat breakfast in the classroom.
- d. We aim to not schedule tutoring or meetings during the lunch period. If there is a lunch meeting, students are given time to first get their school lunch and consume during the meeting.

Farm to School Connections

Sacred Heart Catholic School does not participate in this program.

Food and beverages outside of the federal meal program

Sacred Heart Catholic School recognizes that at times, food and beverages are available for students outside of the federal meal programs. We aim to limit these occasions; however when they do take place, the following policies apply:

a. During the school day.

Sacred Heart Catholic School does not sell any snacks or beverages during the school day.

In the lunchroom, we only serve an extra entrée or milk only. Fundraisers for food to be consumed during the school days are also required to meet Smart Snacks standards. We also prohibit teachers or staff from using food as a reward in classrooms to encourage student achievement or desirable behavior unless required for an IEP. We will maintain water fountains and bottle filling stations in each building so that free water is always available throughout the school day for students and staff.

b. After the school day. We will require all foods and beverages sold to students after school to meet federal nutrition standards.

Commercial food marketing

Sacred Heart Catholic School recognizes that children are targeted with many types of commercial marketing, including for food and beverages. We aim to provide a commercial-free zone in our school buildings. Food and beverage logos and branding are not permitted on any type of equipment or school property, including display racks, scoreboards, or educational materials. The only exception is food and beverage logos and branding that appear on the package of a product that meets USDA meal or Smart Snack standards.

Celebrations

Sacred Heart Catholic School recognizes the importance of celebrations and special events. We do not allow food treats for student birthday celebrations. Students may bring in non-food items for classmates. Student names are announced in the morning over the PA. Each student receives a birthday sticker and a non-food item to celebrate. We limit 4-5 class celebrations per year for holidays such as Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and end of year celebrations. We encourage families to donate healthier choices for these celebrations.

Nutrition Education

Sacred Heart Catholic School recognizes the importance of nutrition education to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead a healthy life. Nutrition education is integrated in classroom instruction at all grade levels and includes developmentally-appropriate activities. We promote fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and health-enhancing nutrition practices.

Our caterer also provides monthly info graphics that has nutritional information that we hang in our cafeteria, activity sheets for the students, and celebrations for the month. This information provides additional nutritional information for students and staff to encourage a healthy life style.

Physical Education

Sacred Heart utilizes a comprehensive, standards-based physical education curriculum that identifies the progression of skill development in grades PreK-8th grade.

The curriculum shall:

- A. Align with MN state physical education standards.
- B. Undergo a formally established periodic review cycle consistent with other academic subjects.
- C. Foster lifelong habits of physical activity for all students.
- D. Provide elementary school students, K-8, two PE classes a week along with two recesses a day for K-3 and one recess a day for grades 4-8.

Physical education for all grade levels shall be taught by teachers who are trained to teach physical education. The school will provide PE teachers with annual professional development opportunities to enhance their daily lessons.

We believe that it is important for all students to participate in the school's comprehensive physical education program. We do not allow exemptions from required physical education class time because of their enrollment in other courses. This does not include exemptions due to disability, religious, or medical reasons.

Physical Activity

Sacred Heart Catholic School is committed to promoting an active lifestyle for students and staff. Specific initiatives to champion physical activity include:

- a. We provide physical activity opportunities after school for students such as our athletic program and karate classes.
- b. We provide 35 minutes of daily recess for K-3 and 20 minutes of daily recess for grades 4-8.
- c. In the elementary classrooms, teachers provide brain breaks to students to allow for physical movement. In the grade 5-8 classrooms, teachers allow for movement between the 50 minute class schedule along within the classroom. An example is that each students turns in homework to the bin to allow for movement and a break from sitting.
- d. We host a fall school marathon as a fundraiser to involve families where participants may walk, jog or ride a bike.

Staff are strongly encouraged to use physical activity as a reward whenever feasible. For example, teachers may offer extra recess time to incentivize good behavior. However, physical activity may not be assigned to student as a consequence of poor behavior or punishment for any reason. For example, students may not be singled out to run extra laps or other physical activities as behavioral consequence.

Employee 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. We 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. Our health insurance provider also offers 6 free sessions to school enrolled benefit employees that focuses on mental health.

Coordination of Wellness Activities

Sacred Heart Catholic School will maintain an active school wellness committee that meets each trimester. The wellness committee will be led by the school principal and will be responsible for ensuring that the wellness policy is clearly communicated to all school personnel, students, parents, and community members. The policy will be posted on our school website and school newsletter.

In the school newsletter, school parents will be invited to join the wellness committee. Parents, staff, and our school advisory committee will be included in the development, implementation, review and update of the wellness policy.

Triennial Assessment

Every three years, the district wellness committee, supervised by the principal, will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the wellness policy and practices in Sacred Heart Catholic School. This process will include the following elements:

- a. The current district policy will be compared to a model wellness policy using the WellSat Policy tool.
- b. The level of compliance with the policy will be assessed by the school-level team, supervised by the principal, using the WellSAT Practice tool.
- c. The committee will write a report that describes the district's progress to date in attaining wellness goals.
- d. This report will be shared with the school community through the school newsletter and places on the school website. This report will also be maintained by the school food authority to share during the state administrative review.
- e. Based on the findings, the school committee will suggest any needed updates to the policy and will create any needed implementation plans to ensure compliance with all elements of this policy.

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