

**Wellness Policy Final Draft**

**1. Nutrition Education**

- a. Definition – Nutrition Education is “any set of learning experiences designed to facilitate the voluntary adoption of eating and other nutrition-related behaviors conducive to health and well-being.” (ADA 1996)
- b. Goal - The primary goal of nutrition education is to influence students’ eating behaviors.
- c. Classroom Teaching:
  - i. Each grade level will develop or articulate one or more specified nutrition related learning outcomes which will focus on students’ building skills for making prudent food choices.
  - ii. Nutrition education will take place in every grade level and may be:
    - 1. formal or informal
    - 2. integrated with another subject area (such as science or P.E.)
  - iii. Nutrition education will:
    - 1. follow the standards and/or curricula of a generally accepted nutrition-educational organization such as the American Dietetic Association, The U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Texas Department of Agriculture, The American Diabetes Association, the Texas Cooperative Extension Service or the Centers for Disease control, or
    - 2. utilize a formal nutrition curriculum such as CATCH, or nutrition education integrated into curricular science or health.
    - 3. be culturally congruent with the student population
- d. Education, marketing and promotions outside classroom:
  - i. The school should utilize opportunities for providing nutrition education outside the classroom such as:

1. Cafeteria-based nutrition education (posters, menus, table art, etc)
  2. Student nutrition-related poster contests, displays, art projects, etc.
  3. Nutrition-based activities (drama, songs, games, etc.)
- e. Teacher training:
- i. Teachers will be encouraged to seek out opportunities for professional preparation and ongoing professional development for teaching nutrition.

## 2. **Physical Activity**

- a. Goal - The primary goal for a school's physical activity component is to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity, and understand the short and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle.
- b. The time, frequency and intensity of physical education classes will be determined by Texas Catholic Conference guidelines for physical education at each grade level.
- c. Physical education student teacher ratio will be no more than **25** students per each physical education staff person per class.
- d. Classroom health education will reinforce 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 video games and computer activities.
- e. Standards for physical education will be based on Diocese of Fort Worth curricular standards and/or Texas Catholic Conference standards.
- f. Physical education staff is required to hold a specialized instructor certificate signed by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.
- g. Planned P.E. activities should be based on the premise that each student should be taking an active part in physical movement and activity during the entire P.E. period.

- h. Participation in the President's Physical Fitness program is recommended for each school.
- i. Recess periods, during the school day, in which physical activity is encouraged, are promoted. The school should provide balls, hula-hoops, jump ropes, etc. during recess periods to encourage physical movement.)

3. **Nutrition Standards for All foods available on School Campus during the School Day.**

- a. Goal - The primary goal for nutrition standards for foods available on the campus during the school day is to influence students' lifelong eating habits through setting and observing standards which address all foods or beverages sold or served to students, including those available outside of school meal programs. Standards should focus on increasing nutrient density, decreasing fat and added sugars, and moderating portion size.
- b. Schools utilizing federal school meal programs must ensure that reimbursable school meals meet the program requirements and nutrition standards set forth under the 7 CFR Part 210 and 220.

c. **The school meal program should:**

- 1. Make nutritional content of meals prepared in the school and of foods sold in the school available to parents and students.
- 2. offer a variety of fruits and vegetables
- 3. serve only low fat (1%) and fat-free milk<sup>1</sup> and nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by the USDA)
- 4. ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain<sup>2</sup>
- 5. ensure that portion sizes are consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* 2005.

- d. **A la carte, vending machines<sup>3</sup>, food concessions and student stores** should provide only items which meet the standards for age defined in the

---

<sup>1</sup> As recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* 2005

<sup>2</sup> A whole grain is one labeled as a "whole" grain or with whole grain listed as the primary grain ingredient in the ingredient statement. Examples include "whole" wheat flour, cracked wheat, brown rice and oatmeal.



*Dietary Guidelines for Americans* 2005, and should be chosen in consultation with the school wellness committee. General guidelines for foods sold individually are:

- i. No more than 35% of calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter)
  - ii. No more than 10% of calories from saturated and trans fat combined
  - iii. No more than 35% of weight from added sugars
  - iv. No more than 230 mg. of sodium per serving of chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods and other snack items
  - v. No more than 480 mg. of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups
  - vi. No more than 600 mg. of sodium for pizza, sandwiches and main dishes
  - vii. A choice of at least two fruits<sup>4</sup> or non-fried vegetables offered for sale at any location where foods are sold.
- e. Foods and beverages offered to students during **after-school programs, field trips, parties, celebrations, meetings or school events** should be congruent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* 2005 and in consultation with the school wellness committee.
- f. **Food rewards** (i.e. "pizza parties", "popcorn parties", etc.) and **food related fundraising**<sup>5</sup> should be restricted to foods and portions recommended in the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* 2005.
- g. Soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sport drinks; iced teas; 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) should not be sold, offered or served to students.
- h. **Food-service staff** will have at least two hours of professional preparation and/or ongoing professional development annually.

---

<sup>3</sup> Schools that have vending machines are encouraged to include refrigerated snack vending machines which can accommodate fruits, vegetables, yogurt and other perishable items.

<sup>4</sup> Such as fresh fruits or vegetables, 100% fruit juice or vegetable juice, fruit-based drinks that are at least 50% fruit juice and do not contain additional caloric sweeteners, cooked, dried or canned fruit.)

<sup>5</sup> Schools should encourage fund-raising activities that promote physical activity.

#### **4. Other School-Based Activities Designed to Promote Student Wellness**

- a. Goal – The goal of school-based wellness activities is to create a school environment that provides consistent wellness messages and is conducive to healthy eating and being physically active.
- b. Students who have special food needs (i.e. diabetics, students with allergies) are able to meet their dietary needs in the school in a non-stigmatizing manner.
- c. Time allotted for student meals is at least 20 minutes after sitting down to eat.
- d. The physical setting in which students eat is clean, pleasant, and comfortable for the size of the student, well lit and has adult supervision.
- e. Students should have access to hand-washing facilities or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
- f. Sustainable food-related practices, including the use of non-disposable tableware, use of locally grown and seasonable foods and school gardens are encouraged.
- g. The school should communicate with parents about health and nutrition-related topics. Parent-teacher presentations and the use of menus, newsletters, and posters containing nutritional information are encouraged.
- h. Staff wellness activities should be promoted in the school, including promoting healthy snacks in the teacher's lounge, encouraging physical activity, nutrition education (guest speakers, a "tip-of-the-week", etc.) and stress management strategies.
- i. Parent/school organizations and school advisory councils should be involved in promoting wellness policies and practices in the school, including funding when appropriate.

## **5. Measurement and Evaluation**

- a. St. Rita Catholic School has adopted the wellness policy set forth by the Diocese of Fort Worth Office of Catholic Schools. This policy is monitored and reviewed annually by the school principal, school health representative, food service representative, teacher, and school advisory members.
- b. The school health representative is responsible for yearly measurement of height and weight of students and recording data on the student's health card. Screening for Acanthosis Nigricans is done according to guidelines set up the Texas Mexico Border Health Office and recorded on the permanent health card, negative/positive findings documented along with the results from referrals to the student's health care provider.

### **Committee Members for Diocesan Wellness Policy:**

Diana Schumacher, Secretary/Parent – St. Mary's Catholic School  
John Metzler, Principal – St. Mary's Catholic School  
Anita Lazo, Secretary/Parent – St. George Catholic School  
Dr. Olga Ferris, Principal – St. George Catholic School  
Ruben J. Lazo, Student – Cassata High School  
Dr. Molly Helmlinger, Associate Superintendent, Office of Catholic Schools  
Nancy Eder, RN, Diocesan Nurse Coordinator, Office of Catholic Schools

This wellness policy was reviewed and approved by the Advisory Council members in May, 2010. The policy will be implemented beginning with the 2010-2011 school year.