

Wellness Policy

Saint Elizabeth Catholic School Health and Wellness Policy

I. PURPOSE

To provide students with an environment that promotes physical and nutritional health by teaching and modeling healthy behavior that fosters academic success. Saint Elizabeth School will encourage students to take responsibility for their own health, to adopt healthy eating habits, and to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives by providing opportunities and instruction that promote a healthy lifestyle.

II. BACKGROUND

Today, 12.5 million children are overweight in the United States—more than 17 percent. Overweight children are at greater risk for many serious health problems. The office of the surgeon general of the United States Public Health Service has developed a Childhood Overweight and Obesity Prevention Initiative entitled,

“Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future”

This initiative promotes the importance of healthy eating and physical activity at a young age to help prevent overweight children and obesity in this country.

To ensure a healthy future for America's children, we must—

- Help Kids Stay Active
- Encourage Healthy Eating Habits
- Promote Healthy Choices

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/obesityprevention/>

Research indicates that many students are inactive and lack healthy eating habits. These factors have led to an increase in childhood obesity and can impact a student's ability to learn, grow, and thrive. Schools and families share the responsibility for guiding students toward healthy choices. Schools can create a healthy learning environment by providing nutrition education, physical education, and physical activity, as well as a variety of healthy food and beverage options. Parents can participate in, support, and encourage wellness activities and instruction.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Nutrition Education: Nutrition education will be part of the science education and physical education curriculum.

1. Nutrition education will be provided in both the science (human body) and physical fitness education programs.

a. In grades kindergarten through 8, it will be integrated into the science and physical education programs.

b. Nutrition education will include a discussion of severe food allergies and the prevention of anaphylaxis.

B. Physical Education

Physical education teachers will teach movement skills and wellness behaviors emphasizing physical activity and good nutrition as cornerstones of living a healthy life.

1. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement.

2. The standards-based physical education curriculum, kindergarten through Grade 8 will include:

a. Moderate to vigorous physical activity

b. Development of knowledge, motor skills, and positive attitudes

c. Promotion of physical activity and sports involvement

3. Physical education instruction will promote understanding of the components of fitness and healthy lifestyles. The curriculum will include:

a. Developmentally appropriate instruction in a variety of motor skills designed to enhance the physical, mental/emotional, and social development of every student.

b. Fitness education and assessment to help students understand, improve, and/or maintain their physical well-being and develop their individual fitness plans.

4. Students will spend 50% of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

C. Physical Activity

Physical activity will be encouraged for students, staff, and community members before and after school, and during the instructional day.

1. Movement activities or tasks will be integrated in all content areas as appropriate.
2. Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge of self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle and to reduce time spent in sedentary activities.
3. Recess will be scheduled for Grades K-8 once daily after lunch. Kindergarten will also have a mid-morning recess.
4. Elementary and middle schools will encourage physical activity programs, such as CYO soccer and basketball programs and county recreation athletic teams and/or sports programs.

D. Food and Nutrition Services

1. School Meals - Meals will meet, at a minimum, the current nutritional standards as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Collaboration between the school meal program, nutrition education, and physical education will support healthy eating and lifestyle choices.
 - a. Students will have access to a variety of appealing, quality, nutritious hot lunch meals that promote growth and development, pleasure in healthy eating, and prevent school-day hunger and its consequent lack of attention to learning.
 - b. Nutritional information pertaining to foods and beverages served at hot lunch is available on the school website.
 - c. There will be coordination between the hot lunch program, nutrition education, classroom instruction and the community to support healthy eating and physical activity.
 - d. The hot lunches will provide a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grain products, and serve only low-fat (1-2%) and fat-free milk. The hot lunch staff will work in conjunction with the school nurse and wellness committee to obtain feedback on the school meal program.
 - e. The lunchroom provides a setting where students can practice the healthy eating skills taught in classroom nutrition education and physical education. Students will have adequate time to eat.
2. Other Foods and Beverages Available at School - Food and beverages available to students outside of the hot lunch program should make a positive contribution to the

student's diet and promote health. Administration supports the nutritional standards for the food and beverages available to students.

a. It is encouraged that food and beverages available to students during school-sponsored activities make a positive contribution to the student's diet and promote health. Staff should avoid using candy or other foods of minimal nutritional value as a classroom reward.

b. Nutritional requirements apply to foods and beverages available to students until the end of the instructional day. Use of good nutritional decision making is required in the planning of classroom parties. Non-food items or foods with nutritional value are suggested for the celebration of birthdays.

E. Communication

Literature regarding nutrition and fitness should be shared with students, parents, and the community, as appropriate.

1. Nutrition education and fitness literature will be provided during units of instruction in health/science classes and physical education.
2. Updates and additional information related to this wellness will be posted in the 'Health News' tab.