

St. Joseph School
Wellness Policy
On Nutrition and Physical Activity

VISION STATEMENT

St. Joseph School is a Catholic educational community that, in partnership with families, works to empower students to practice wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as a part of the total learning environment. St. Paul reminds us that even our most everyday actions have a sacred significance.

Schools play a critical role in promoting student health, preventing childhood obesity, and combating problems associated with poor nutrition and physical inactivity. St. Joseph School follows the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act. These regulations help further the above goals and help us give glory to God.

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, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat healthy diets consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;

Therefore, St. Joseph 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. Our policy will include the following:

- St. Joseph School will engage students, parents, teachers, school nursing staff, food service professionals, and other interested community members in promoting the school wellness policy.
- All students in grades 4K - 5 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Qualified food service director will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition need of students; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- St. Joseph 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 related community services.

TO ACHIEVE THIS VISION

SCHOOL MEALS

Students are highly encouraged to participate in the school meal program. The St. Joseph School Food Service Director shall strictly adhere to the National School Meal Program rules regarding all aspects of the breakfast and lunch programs, including but not limited to their guidelines regarding the nutritional value and serving size amounts of the food served to students.

The following food goals are in place in the school meal programs:

1. Each meal must provide one-third of the child's nutritional intake for the day.
2. Two milk choices are always available. – These two choices shall be different in fat content and should not be more than 2%.
3. Fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains will be served as often as possible, given their availability and affordability.
4. Vegetables will be only *lightly* seasoned with butter and other seasoning. Salt is never added and salt shakers are not put out for students, although pepper and sometimes other flavorings may be available.
5. Use of processed foods will be limited to the extent possible.
6. Foods will be served with consideration toward variety, appeal, taste, safety and packaging to ensure high quality meals.
7. Any given food item for sale prior to the start of the school day and throughout the instructional day will have no more than 30% of its total calories derived from fat and not more than 10% of its total calories derived from saturated fat.
8. Nuts and seeds are exempt from these standards because they are nutrient dense and contain high levels of monounsaturated fat. Foods high in monounsaturated fat help lower “bad” LDL cholesterol and maintain “good” HDL cholesterol.

Parents are partners in the hot lunch program.

1. They are asked to share knowledge of any food allergies with the hot lunch personnel. That information is shared with all school personnel as well.
2. Parents are welcome to share their wishes regarding restricting food amounts and types to individual children for reasons of healthy weight loss or gain, within parameters set by state and federal mandates for school meals programs.
3. Parents are invited to eat breakfast and/or lunch with their children, with the courtesy of an 8:30AM pre-call to the school office before coming for lunch. It is also important to sign in and out at the school office when visiting for lunch.
4. Parents are encouraged to pack a healthy lunch for their children on a day there is something on the hot lunch menu their children will not eat.
5. Menus will be sent home at the beginning of each month.

Cold lunch students are not allowed to have soda with their lunches. They are encouraged to pack healthy food and drinks. Fast food lunches are not permitted.

If children forget their school lunch or lunch payments, they will be served by the school cafeteria, as an empty stomach is not conducive to learning.

Free and Reduced-Price Meals

Families who qualify for free and reduced meals are encouraged to participate. All information is strictly confidential. Participation has a direct benefit in funding to our school. Information and application forms for free or reduced-price meals are available in the school office. Families not on the program who experience a decrease in household income may submit an application at any time during the school year.

Food Allergies and Sharing of Foods/Beverages

St. Joseph School will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meals or snack times, given concerns about allergies, spread of illness, and other restrictions on some children's diets. The school must have a doctor's statement on file for any child who has a food or other allergy that is considered a disability. The school is required to provide alternative food items for children with a doctor's statement of the child's food requirements, and within limitations on price and availability of foods meeting the doctor's orders.

HEALTHY AND NUTRITIOUS SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Meal Times, Scheduling and Lunchroom Climate

St. Joseph School will

1. Strive to provide students with adequate time for meals (the American Food Service Association recommends at least 20 minutes to eat lunch from the time they are seated);
2. Complete any milk break/snack breaks a minimum of two hours before scheduled lunch (to help ensure that the snack does not interfere with the child's meal);
3. Schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities around mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
4. Allow special meals, such as pizza parties, on rare occasions with prior approval of the principal;
5. Provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks;
6. Encourage lunchroom manners: quiet voices, being respectful of others, using "Please/Thank You," etc., walking carefully with trays, keeping hands and food to self, picking up items dropped on the floor, choosing a place to sit and staying there for the entire meal, using a raised hand to clear their tray or receive assistance opening an item.

Furthermore:

7. The sale of all food, beverages, and snacks to students during the school day shall be under the control of the Food Service Director.
8. The distribution of foods sold for fundraising purposes will take place at the end of the instructional day.
9. St. Joseph School reserves the right to limit quantities and exercise portion control of any food/beverage item offered at school, according to directives of state and/or federal law.
10. Snacks served during the school day 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. A list of suggested beverages and snacks is included here.
11. St. Joseph School will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations.

Beverages

- Fruit juice and vegetable juice (100 percent)
- Reduced-fat, low-fat, or fat-free milk: white and flavored
- Bottled water and flavored water

Snacks

- Canned fruit (packed in 100 percent juice/no sugar added)
- Fresh fruit (e.g. apples and oranges)
- Fresh vegetables (e.g. carrots)
- Pretzels
- Whole-grain bread products (e.g bread sticks, rolls, bagels, and pita bread)
- Ready-to-eat, low-sugar cereals (6g sugar or less/100g cereal)
- Granola bars made with unsaturated fat
- Low-fat or non-fat yogurt and yogurt sticks
- Snack mixes of cereal and dried fruit with a small amount of nuts and seeds (low-sugar cereal)
- Raisins and other dried fruit (No sugar added)
- Low-fat crackers
- String cheese
- Popcorn
- Low-fat pudding snacks

Rewards

St. Joseph School will limit use of candy, food, and/or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior. In addition, food or beverages (including food served through school meals) will not be withheld as a punishment.

Celebrations

St. Joseph School will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day. Parties will be scheduled after school lunch. Parents are encouraged to provide healthy snacks and treats for student celebrations and other events.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

Nutrition Education and Promotion

St. Joseph School strives to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students by providing nutrition education and engaging in the promotion of healthy nutrition habits by:

- Offering age-appropriate nutrition education 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 now and in the future (i.e. Healthy Hearts curriculum);
- Not limiting nutrition education only to health education classes, but also including it in classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects as able;
- Promoting fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- Emphasizing caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- Including nutrition education in professional development opportunities for teachers and other staff.
- The school nurse works with the teachers each year, planning and going to the classrooms to provide health education (this includes information on nutrition and germs/hand washing, etc.). In addition, the food service director works with the children in the classroom setting, giving them opportunities to plan meals, ask questions and offer suggestions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ACTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES

Physical Education (P.E.) 4K-5

Physical education 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.

K-5: Instruction is provided at least two times weekly, except that days on which special activities are conducted may be exempt.

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

Students need daily physical activity. 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;
- Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Daily Recess

All elementary school students (K-5) will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which St. Joseph School will encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity through the provision of space and equipment.

Physical Activity and Punishment

St. Joseph School will limit use of physical activity (e.g. running laps, pushups) for punishment.

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAM INFORMATION

Contract Requirements through State/Federal Program

St. Joseph contract is "Offer vs Serve".

Breakfast: We must offer 4 items, of which the child must take at least 3.

Lunch: We must offer 5 items, of which the child must take at least 3.

Serving Times

Breakfast 7:30 – 7:55AM (Exception to this will be made if bus is late)

Lunch 10:50 – 12:35

Serving at breakfast ends by 5 minutes to 8 (7:55AM), so children may be ready to begin the school day by 8:00AM. Exception is made if the school bus is late, as neither the child nor the family have control over that.

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAM INFORMATION continued

Background Information

The length of time recommended for lunch is 20 minutes. Depending on what is being served, most children are finished eating well within that length of time. Those who like to visit instead of eat are reminded about the importance of using their time at the table to eat, but staff is not allowed to go beyond that to try to make a child eat.