

SACRED HEARTS WELLNESS POLICY

On June 30, 2004, Congress passed Section 204 of Public Law 108-265, of the Child Nutrition and SIC Reauthorization Act of 2004. This law requires each local education agency participating in a program, authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42U.S. C. 1751 et seq.) or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq), to establish a local school wellness policy by July 1, 2006.

Sacred Hearts School recognizes and acknowledges that “schools cannot achieve their primary mission of education if students and staff are not physically, mentally and socially healthy.” Sacred Hearts School is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children’s health, well being, and ability to learn by teaching healthy eating and physical activity knowledge, skills, and values that support student achievement. Sacred Hearts School provides ample opportunity for students to practice these skills on a daily basis.

- Sacred Hearts School will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-8 will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U. S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Sacred Hearts School will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of the students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum practical extent, Sacred Hearts School will participate in available federal school meal programs (National School Lunch Program).
- The 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 with related community services.

School Meals:

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program will:

- Be appealing and attractive to students

- Be served in clean and pleasant settings
- Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables and whole grain rich foods.
- Serve only skim or 1% milk

The school will encourage students and parents to try new foods and to make healthy food choices. The school will also share information about the nutritional content of foods on the menu notices. Sacred Hearts School will also encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children so they have a good start for the day.

Free and Reduced-priced meals:

Sacred Hearts 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. The school will utilize electronic identification and payment systems; promote the availability of school meals to all students.

Meal times and scheduling: The school

- Will provide students with at least 20 minutes to eat after sitting down for lunch.
- Will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
- Will not schedule tutoring, club or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.
- Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff:

Qualified food service staff will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing staff development, that should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility. The school will encourage and provide opportunities for students, teachers, and volunteers to practice healthy eating and serve as role models in school dining areas.

Sharing of foods and beverages:

Sacred Heart School will discourage students from sharing their food or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, in an effort to promote food safety, and protect those students with special dietary needs.

Nutrition Standards:

Sacred Hearts School shall offer school meal programs with menus meeting the meal patterns and nutrition standard established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The school shall encourage students to make food choices based on the most current Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Food and beverages that compete with the policy of promoting a healthy school environment shall be discouraged.

Sacred Heart School shall offer and promote the following food and beverages:

- Whole and enriched grain products that are high in fiber, low in added fats and sugars, and served in appropriate portion sizes consistent with the current USDA standards.
- An extensive salad bar with numerous healthy options daily.
- Locally grown foods and locally produced foods.
- Fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruits, and vegetables produced using healthy food preparation techniques.
- Nonfat, low-fat, plain and/or flavored milk and yogurt, nonfat and/or low-fat real cheese, including the following serving sizes: yogurt in 4 or 6 ounce servings, milk in 8oz servings.
- Three ounces or less of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish using healthy food preparation techniques.
- Accompaniments (sauces, dressings, and dips) in one-ounce servings or less.

Fundraising Activities:

The school will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. School fundraising activities should not involve food unless it meets the nutrition and portion size standards set.

Snacks:

Snacks served during the school day should make a positive contribution to student's diet and health, with an emphasis on fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage.

The school should not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior and will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment.

The school should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards. To encourage healthy treats the school will provide a list of healthy party/ birthday ideas to parents and teachers.

Nutrition Education:

The school aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students.

Nutrition education is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standard-based program designed to provide students with knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health. The school should provide not only health education classes but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects. This includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits and school gardens. Education which promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods and health-enhancing nutrition practices which emphasized caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise) will be provided.

For students to receive the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity (at least 60 minutes per day), and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class.

Classroom health education will complement physical education by encouraging the skills necessary to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television and video games. Physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons, and classroom teachers should provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes as appropriate.

Sacred Heart School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and food that do not meet the nutrition standards set. The school will provide parents a list of foods that meet the snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

Staff Wellness:

Sacred Hearts School highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education:

All students in grades K-8, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive daily physical education (or is equivalent of 150 minutes/week for elementary school students and 225 minutes/week for middle and high school students) for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess:

All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferable outdoors, during which the school should verbally encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity, and provision space and equipment.

The school should discourage extended periods (i.e., periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, the school should give periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity Opportunities before and after school:

Sacred Hearts School will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs and when possible, interscholastic sports programs. The school will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs. After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all.

Physical Activity and Punishment.

Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

Safe routes to school

The school district will assess and, if necessary, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. The district will work together with local public safety and police departments to ensure safety of the students. The school will encourage students to use public transportation when available and appropriate for travel to school.

Use of school facilities outside of school hours

School spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

All employees of Sacred Hearts School are encouraged to be a positive role model for students by following these guidelines. Students can learn healthy lifestyle habits by observing the food and physical activity pattern of school personnel and other adults who serve as role models in their lives. In order to send consistent messages to students, all adults in the school environment are encouraged to make healthy food choices and engage in physical activity.