

Wellness Policies on Nutrition and Physical Activity

Adapted from the Diocese of Davenport

Includes Both JFK and ASCS Operating a NSLP for SCCS

Introduction

Catholic Schools “exist in order to educate the whole person; mind, body, and soul”.¹ In educating students about the body, they strive to develop “a profound reverence for the great gift of life, their own lives and the lives of others, along with readiness to spend themselves in serving all that preserves and enhances life.”²

The schools governed by the Diocesan Board of Education strive to maintain a learning and working environment that promotes and protects children’s health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting nutrition, healthy eating, and physical activity. JFK/ASCS is, therefore, guided by the following.

Research shows that two components, good nutrition and physical activity before, during and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. For example, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) School Breakfast Program is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores, lower absenteeism and better performance on cognitive tasks. Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods, including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students. In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education and extracurricular activities – do better academically. Finally, there is evidence that adequate hydration is associated with better cognitive performance.

Record-keeping

The following information will be documented and at least shared on our website:

- The written wellness policy
- The triennial assessment
- The local wellness policy progress report

Wellness Committee, Wellness Policy, and Evaluation

- JFK/ASCS will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing.
- A wellness committee with representation from students, parents, food service staff, board of education, administration, and the community, will be formed. Sub-committees may be formed for specific needs.
- JFK/ASCS will write and maintain a wellness policy in consultation with diocesan policies.

- The wellness policy will provide guidance for nutrition education, standards for USDA school meals, nutrition standards, physical education and physical activity, wellness promotion and marketing, and evaluation.
- The wellness committee will review the policy and its implementation at least every three years. The policy will also be reviewed every three years by the board as part of its regular review of policies.
- The wellness policy and the assessment of it are posted on our website.
- The principal, lunch program director, and other invited individuals will monitor implementation of the policy. To aid in these tasks, tools provided by the USDA and/or Iowa Department of Education may be used.

Nutrition Education

- JFK/ASCS will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity.
- JFK/ASCS will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.
- Students in grades K-8 will specifically be taught about nutrition, agriculture, and food systems with age appropriate content and examples. Content may include the following:
 - Relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention
 - Food guidance from MyPlate
 - Reading and using FDA's nutrition fact labels
 - Eating a variety of foods every day
 - Balancing food intake and physical activity
 - Eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grain products
 - Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain trans fat
 - Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars
 - Eating more calcium-rich foods
 - Preparing healthy meals and snacks
 - Risks of unhealthy weight control practices
 - Accepting body size differences
 - Food safety
 - Importance of water consumption
 - Importance of eating breakfast
 - Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants
 - Eating disorders
 - The Dietary Guidelines for Americans
 - Reducing sodium intake
 - Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers, and culture
 - How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior
 - How to develop a plan and track progress toward achieving a personal goal to eat healthfully
 - Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior
 - Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior
- School meals themselves will serve as hands-on/real examples of nutritious meals.

- Students will be taught how to read food labels and understand the information presented in them.
- JFK/ASCS will provide nutrition education and nutrition promotion that:
 - Is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
 - Is part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;
 - Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products;
 - Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
 - Links with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, and other school foods;
 - Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and
 - Includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

Standards for USDA School Meals

- JFK and ASCS participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). ASCS participates in the school breakfast program.
- NSLP meals meet, at a minimum, the nutrition requirements established by state and federal law: <https://www.educateiowa.gov/school-nutrition-standards-2012>
- Information about the nutritional content of meals will be shared with parents and students.
- Applications for free/reduced priced meals are sent home to all families at the beginning of the school year. The application is also available on the schools' websites.
- The schools 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 meals. For example, the point of sale system is cashless, and no student account information is visible to staff or students.
- Students/families with negative balances are subject to the SCCS meal charge policy.
- Guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to the Child Nutrition Act and National School Hot Lunch Act.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school during the meal time meet or exceed the school nutrition standards and are in compliance with state and federal law.
- Foods are served with consideration toward nutritional integrity, variety, appeal, taste, safety and packaging to ensure high-quality meals.
- Competitive food choices are not sold during mealtimes.
- New food items being considered for future menus are sampled with students, and a sticker system is used to encourage younger students to try new foods.
- JFK and ASCS are “closed campuses” for lunch.
- Free drinking water is available during meals and throughout the day.

- All foods and beverages provided by the school through the lunch program and through childcare will adhere to state and local safety and security guidelines and DHS requirements, where applicable.
- Food Service Staff will meet appropriate certification and training requirements associated with their positions and levels of responsibility as outlined by the USDA Professional Standards for State and Local Nutrition Programs.
- Students will be provided with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students. The religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body will be considered in meal planning.
- The school discourages students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies, other restrictions on some children's diets, and the assumed preferences of parents.
- Students will be provided with a clean, safe, and pleasant setting in which to eat.
- Lunch periods are at least 20 minutes in length, and all attempts are made to have passing time outside of this 20 minutes.
- A lunch recess time is scheduled for students in grades K-5. The scheduling of lunch recess time for grades 6-8 will be dependent upon other academic goals and with the provision that physical activity requirements are met during school hours. The amount of time available for recess and time available for eating lunch have no impact on one another. Students will be provided with access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
- The school will take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk) as worked out with students' parents and staff.

Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Food and Beverages

- All foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day will meet nutrition standards as required by state or federal law. This timeframe does not include athletic events after school hours.
- No competitive foods or beverages may be sold during the school day.
- There are two types of fundraising – regulated and other. Regulated fundraisers are those that offer the sale of foods or beverages on school property and that are targeted primarily to PK-12 students by or through other PK-12 students, student groups, school organizations, or through on-campus school stores. Regulated fundraising activities must comply with the state nutrition guidelines. All other fundraising activities are encouraged, but not required, to comply with the state nutrition guidelines if the activities involve foods and beverages.
- Snacks and beverages served by school representatives during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health. All snacks served in childcare services will meet CACFP and DHS requirements and include the timing of the snacks in relation to meals, nutrition guidelines, etc. Snacks in all preschool programs will follow the same guidelines.

Student provided snacks in kindergarten will be selected from an approved list provided by the school and takes into account the same nutrition guidelines.

- The occasional student provided birthday treat may be regulated. An unregulated treat will not count as an official snack in a childcare or preschool program. Non-food birthday treats will be encouraged.

JFK/ASCS follows the federal government's Smart Snack nutrition guidelines:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>

Physical Education and Physical Activity

- All students in grades PK-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- A comprehensive, standards-based physical education curriculum which identifies the progression of skill development in grades K-12 and has a range of activities that can lead to lifelong physical health will be used. Physical education curriculum revision will follow a formally established periodic review cycle congruent to other academic subjects.

Physical activity topics in physical education and/or health may include the following:

- The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity
 - How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight
 - How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process
 - How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease
 - Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition
 - Differences between physical activity exercise and fitness
 - Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout and cool down
 - Overcoming barriers to physical activity
 - Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
 - Opportunities for physical activity in the community
 - Preventing injury during physical activity
 - Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia and sunburn while being physically active
 - How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time and type of physical activity
 - Developing and individualized physical activity and fitness plan
 - Monitoring progress toward reaching goals in and individualized physical activity plan
 - Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids
 - Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers and culture
 - How to find valid information or services related to physical activity and fitness
 - How to influence, support, or advocate for others to engage in physical activity
 - How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activity
- There is no waiver, exemption, or substitution for PE. Students with 504 plans or IEPs will have accommodations made to the PE activities.

- Physical education instruction is conducted by an appropriately licensed teacher at a student/teacher ratio equivalent to other classes. PE teachers are provided with opportunities for professional development.
- Physical education will be at least 75 minutes per week for grades K-8 at JFK.
- Students in grades K-5 will have recess daily for a minimum of 20 minutes at JFK. Students in grades 6-8 at JFK have recess scheduled throughout the week.
- Teachers are encouraged to find alternatives to the withholding of physical activity or physical education as a negative consequence.
- Through the availability of bike racks and staff to accompany students across a busy intersection, the school promotes walking and biking to/from school.
- The school provides students with physical activity opportunities after school, such as Catholic League sports, and connections to community activities such as Dad's Club, Rising Knights, and Future Lady Knights and promotes these activities through its communication outlets.
- Staff members, school families and community members are provided physical activity opportunities on the school campuses, and the campuses are available for all students and community members to participate in physical activity opportunities.
- All teachers are periodically provided professional development opportunities that are focused on the integration of physical activity into classroom academic content and schedule throughout the school day.

Wellness Promotion and Marketing

- Staff members model healthy behavior; for example, teachers are periodically provided with water bottles and encouraged to drink water in the classroom.
- The staff is provided with duty free lunch breaks.
- Staff members working in childcare are required to model healthy eating, if they eat with the students.
- Staff members are encouraged to model and participate in physical activity breaks during class and to share their personal physical activity lifestyles with their students.
- Non-food items and physical activity will be encouraged as rewards for academic performance or good behavior. Physical activity (such as running laps) will not be used as a negative consequence.
- The withholding of food or beverages will not be used as a punishment.
- The occasional student provided birthday treat may be regulated. An unregulated treat will not count as an official snack in a childcare or preschool program. Non-food birthday treats will be encouraged.
- JFK/ASCS will promote healthy food items including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products. Posters, signage, and a monthly newsletter will be used to help with this promotion.
- Information about summer USDA lunch programs in the community will be communicated to our constituents.
- JFK/ASCS limits food and beverage marketing to the promotion of items that meet the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards, except when/where explicitly approved by the principal. In general, any advertising is limited, if at all.

- JFK/ASCS personnel are aware of the proliferation of brand advertising on websites and educational materials and attempt to avoid students' exposure to such where possible.

Specific Wellness Goals:

Specific wellness goals are updated regularly by the wellness committee. These goals are posted in the Wellness Policy Progress Report.

¹ *National Directory of Catechesis* 61.4.b

² *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*

See also Diocesan BE policy: 710.0 Health Services

Policy Adopted: April 26, 2006

Policy Revised: May 17, 2010; April 5, 2016; August 2, 2016; June 6, 2017; June 4, 2019; June 14, 2022; August 6, 2024