

St. Matthew Catholic School Wellness Policy

Children and adolescents need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive. With childhood obesity increasing across the nation, the role that schools play in promoting sound nutrition and physical exercise is more important than ever.

To help ensure that St. Matthew students have the opportunity to eat well, be active, and learn about healthy choices, the school has adopted a comprehensive wellness policy.

Goals

St. Matthew School is committed to providing intellectually stimulating school environments that promote and protect children's health, social and emotional well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating, physical activity and other behaviors that contribute to student wellness. Good health fosters student attendance and education. Children and adolescents need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive.

To meet this commitment, following policy goals are provided:

1. The health of our students is essential to their academic success. When faced with conflicting priorities or issues of implementation, this policy will be interpreted in a way that favors student health.
2. All students in grades K-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a daily basis.
3. Schools will provide access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; take into consideration the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
4. The school supports a coordinated approach to school health which includes: comprehensive school health education, physical education, school nutrition services, counseling, and healthy school environment.
5. The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide wellness policies.

Physical Activity

1. During the School Day

Physical activity includes regular instructional physical education, and recess. Substituting any one of these components for the others is not appropriate. All students will be expected to participate in regular physical activity and will be provided with appropriate opportunities for participation in physical education. Physical education instruction will be consistent with the Archdiocese of Portland adopted physical education common curriculum goals, content standards and grade level benchmark standards for students. All students will be encouraged to further participate in physical activity through outside activities. The school will encourage the integration of physical activity with the academic curriculum, based on research findings relating physical activity and learning. Recognizing the critical importance of sufficient physical activity for students, schools will withhold recess for disciplinary reasons only on an occasional basis as part of an individual or school-wide behavior plan. Physical education will not be withheld as punishment.

2. Parent and Community Support

Schools will encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.

Nutrition Education

1. Fostering Lifelong Healthy Eating Habits

Students will receive nutrition education that is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt lifelong habits of healthy eating. Students will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms and cafeterias.

2. Nutrition Education Curriculum

School curriculum standards and guidelines will include nutrition education. Nutrition education will be consistent with the Archdiocese of Portland adopted health education common curriculum goals, content standards and grade level benchmarks for students. The aim of the curriculum will be for students to acquire knowledge and skills to understand and make healthful nutrition choices that contribute to growth and vitality and help prevent chronic disease.

3. Community Involvement

Schools will promote family and community involvement in nutrition education, such as developing school gardens and providing students with opportunities to learn about sustainable agriculture and how food is grown in the community.

Other Activities That Support Student Wellness

Nutrition Standards

Decisions regarding the sale of foods in the Lunch Program meals will be based on nutrition goals, not solely revenue.

1. Lunch Programs

The school food service manager will provide nutrient-dense, tasty, food that reflects St. Matthew's cultural diversity, and offers a variety of fruits and vegetables. The school will look for opportunities to integrate local, organic foods into the meals served to students. Recognizing the importance of sufficient time to eat and of a pleasant, relaxed eating environment, schools will adopt a minimum number of minutes that students have to eat lunch and will consider other strategies, such as recess before lunch, that contribute to healthy eating.

2. Competitive Foods

Competitive foods include, fundraising, classroom parties, foods used during classes as part of the learning process. Competitive foods shall meet nutrition and portion size guidelines set by the school. The school will provide "Healthy Snacks" and "Healthy Parties" nutrition guidelines as part of the administrative rules and provide parents and teachers with a list of examples of healthy, affordable food choices for snacks and parties.

A. Sale of Competitive Foods

Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value, as defined by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, shall not be sold to students on school campuses during the school day. The school supports an economically self-sustaining, high quality food services program. To this end, no competitive foods that are not under the school control shall be sold during the lunch service times.

i. Fundraising

The school encourages fundraising activities that promote physical activity and provide healthy food and beverage options. Food sold at school as a fund-raiser during the school day will meet the Healthy Snacks and Healthy Party guidelines

B. Distribution of Competitive Foods

i. Celebrations

Soda water, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, will not be distributed during the school day as part of a celebration or school party. Nutritious foods are encouraged when used as part of a social or cultural event in the schools. During the school day, schools should limit the use of food at celebrations that are not related to the curriculum. Parents and staff are encouraged to provide party foods that are consistent with the Healthy Parties guidelines and to serve such items after the lunch hour whenever possible.

ii. Use of Food as Incentive or Reward

Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, will not be distributed by staff as a reward for academic performance or good behavior. The use of any candy as a reward for academic performance or good behavior is strongly discouraged. Other food as an incentive, or reward, or as part of the curriculum for students should be used judiciously, taking into consideration the nutritional value of the food being served and the frequency of use.

Policy Implementation

The Principal is responsible for implementation of this Wellness Policy.

Key elements of St. Matthew wellness policy include:

All students should have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a daily basis.

- Physical activity is encouraged to be integrated into the academic curriculum.
- Physical education will not be withheld as punishment.
- Recess will be withheld for disciplinary reasons only on an occasional basis as part of an individual or school-wide behavior plan.

Foods served to students should be nutritious and healthy.

- **Foods in the classroom:** Staff should be judicious in any use of food as an incentive or reward, at celebrations, or as part of the curriculum, taking into consideration the nutritional value of the food being served and the frequency of use. Schools should limit the use of food at celebrations that are not related to the curriculum. When food is used as part of a social or cultural event in the schools, staff and parents are encouraged to provide nutritious foods that are consistent with the Healthy Parties Guidelines.

Healthy Snacks Guidelines

These healthy snack guidelines apply to items sold in a school at all times during the regular or extended school day, except for events at which adults are a significant part of the audience such as athletic events, carnivals or performances.

Snack Foods

Each individual food item may not contain any trans fat and will have no more than:

- 35% of its calories from fat (excluding legumes, nuts, seeds, nonfried vegetables, cheese, eggs, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated (excluding nuts, eggs, and cheese)
- 35% of its weight from added sugars (does not apply to fruit and vegetables)
- 350 mg of sodium per serving for bread, sweets and salty snacks; 480 mg for nutrient-dense snacks, such as nuts, seeds, fruits, vegetables, dairy; 530 mg for pre-packaged entrees, such as "hot pockets," soups, burritos; 600 mg for freshly made daily entrees.
- Elementary school (K–5) items may not contain more than 150 total calories.
- Middle school (6–8) items may not contain more than 180 total calories.

Beverages

Kindergarten–5th Grade: Beverages will be limited to water and the following:

- Fruit or vegetable juice, provided the beverage item is not more than 8 ounces, is 100% juice with no added sweeteners and contains no more than 120 calories per 8 ounces.
- Milk or a nutritionally equivalent milk alternative, provided the beverage item is not more than 8 ounces, is fat-free or low-fat and, if flavored, contains no more than 150 calories per 8 ounces.

6th–8th Grade: Beverages will be limited to water and the following:

- Fruit or vegetable juice, provided the beverage item is not more than 10 ounces, is 100% juice with no added sweeteners and contains no more than 150 calories.
- Milk or a nutritionally equivalent milk alternative, provided the beverage item is not more than 10 ounces, is fat-free or low-fat and, if flavored, contains no more than 190 calories.

Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value

As defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture:

1. **Soda Water**—A class of beverages made by absorbing carbon dioxide in potable water. The amount of carbon dioxide used is not less than that which will be absorbed by the beverage at a pressure of one atmosphere and at a temperature of 60 deg. F. It either contains no alcohol or only such alcohol, not in excess of 0.5 percent by weight of the finished beverage, as is contributed by the flavoring ingredient used. No product shall be excluded from this definition because it contains artificial sweeteners or discrete nutrients added to the food such as vitamins, minerals and protein.
2. **Water Ices**—As defined by 21 CFR 135.160 Food and Drug Administration Regulations except that water ices which contain fruit or fruit juices are not included in this definition.
3. **Chewing Gum**—Flavored products from natural or synthetic gums and other ingredients which form an insoluble mass for chewing.
4. **Certain Candies**—Processed foods made predominantly from sweeteners or artificial sweeteners with a variety of minor ingredients which characterize the following types:
 - **Hard Candy**—A product made predominantly from sugar (sucrose) and corn syrup which may be flavored and colored, is characterized by a hard, brittle texture, and includes such items as sour balls, fruit balls, candy sticks, lollipops, starlight mints, after dinner mints, sugar wafers, rock candy, cinnamon candies, breath mints, jaw breakers and cough drops.
 - **Jellies and Gums**—A mixture of carbohydrates which are combined to form a stable gelatinous system of jelly-like character, and are generally flavored and colored, and include gum drops, jelly beans, jellied and fruit-flavored slices.
 - **Marshmallow Candies**—An aerated confection composed as sugar, corn syrup, invert sugar, 20 percent water and gelatin or egg white to which flavors and colors may be added.
 - **Fondant**—A product consisting of microscopic-sized sugar crystals which are separated by thin film of sugar and/or invert sugar in solution such as candy corn, soft mints.

- **Licorice**—A product made predominantly from sugar and corn syrup which is flavored with an extract made from the licorice root.
- **Spun Candy**—A product that is made from sugar that has been boiled at high temperature and spun at a high speed in a special machine.
- **Candy Coated Popcorn**—Popcorn which is coated with a mixture made predominantly from sugar and corn syrup

Suggested Foods

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Dips based on low-fat yogurt or sour cream (be aware of sugar and salt content)
- Canned fruits (preferably packed in natural fruit juices instead of syrups)
- Dried fruits
- Trail mix, chex mix, or popcorn-based snack mix (be aware of products that contain nuts or nut byproducts and sodium content)
- Granola bars (be aware of products that contain nuts or nut byproducts)
- Sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- Yogurt or soy-gurt
- Jerky
- Ritz chips
- Baked chips (be aware that Baked Cheetos and SunChips are higher in fat and sodium than other baked chip varieties)
- Salsa, guacamole, bean dip and fruit salsa
- Pita bread or pita chips and hummus dip
- Whole-grain cereals (be aware of sugar content)
- Whole-grain or multigrain crackers and cheese (cheese made with 2% milk is better)
- 100% frozen fruit juice bars
- Frozen yogurt
- Fruit smoothies (preferably yogurt- or sorbet- based)
- Whole-grain and fruit/vegetable breads and muffins: banana, zucchini, carrot or oatmeal bread, bran muffins, etc.
- Other fruit-based desserts: fruit and yogurt parfaits, strawberry shortcake, mixed berries with whipped cream, baked apples with granola topping
- Fruit or pretzels dipped in a yogurt-based coating: strawberries, raisins, cherries etc.
- Nabisco 100-calorie packs (Wheat Thins, Cheese Nips, Chips Ahoy, Oreo)
- Quaker Multigrain Minis (Honey Graham, Cinnamon Sugar)
- Graham cracker-based items: Honey Maid Squares, Teddy Grahams, Animal Crackers, Goldfish Giant Grahams etc. (individual packets and honey flavored is better)
- Nutrigrain bars
- Pretzels (low salt is better)
- Bagels (whole grain is better)
- Tortilla roll-ups: meat and cheese, cream cheese and salsa, etc. (cut into finger-size pieces)

Portion Sizes

Portion sizes should be reasonable given the age of the student. Appropriate portion sizes for beverages are noted under "Beverages" in the healthy snacks and parties guidelines.