



**St. Catherine's Center for Children
R & E May School's
Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition**

Preamble

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, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;

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

Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores, and snack bars include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies, and snack cakes;

Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

Thus, St. Catherine's Center for Children's R & E May 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. Therefore, it is the policy of St. Catherine's Center for Children's R & E May School District that:

- 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 nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-6 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

[Type here]

- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of no charge, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of 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 extent practicable, all schools in our district will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, Summer Food Service Program, Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program).
- The R & E May 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.

Research has shown that good nutrition and physical activity before, during, and after the school day, go hand and hand 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 with their tasks. Students that don't have adequate food consumption specifically foods including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, go hand in hand with lower grades among students. In addition, students who are physically active throughout the day and participate in extracurricular activities – do better academically.

This policy outlines our approach to environment and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school day. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures:

Students at the R&E May have access to healthy foods throughout the school day, both through prepared school meals and other foods available that meet Federal and state nutrition standards;

Students are being prepared for lifelong healthy eating behaviors;

Students have opportunities to be physically active during, and after school;

Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;

Students and Staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity in and out of school;

This policy applies to all students and staff here at the R&E May School.

The R&E May School will coordinate the wellness policy with other aspects of school management, including the Schools Improvement Plan, when appropriate.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. School Health Councils

The R&E May School will create, strengthen, or work within existing school health councils to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical

[Type here]

activity policies. (A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.)

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Served

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- 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;¹
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk² and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.^{3,3}

Schools should engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods served through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, schools upon request, should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, or on cafeteria menu boards.

Breakfast. To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- Schools will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program.
- Schools will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom.
- Schools that serve breakfast to students will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- Schools will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.
- Residential Students are served Breakfast before school. They may not be given a second breakfast at The R&E May School.
- Breakfast is served between 8:30 -9:15

¹ To the extent possible, schools will offer at least two non-fried vegetable and two fruit options each day and will offer five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of a week. Schools are encouraged to source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practicable.

² As recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*

³ A whole grain is one labeled as a “whole” grain product or with a whole grain listed as the primary grain ingredient in the ingredient statement. Examples include “whole” wheat flour, cracked wheat, brown rice, and oatmeal.

- No Breakfast will be served on 2 hour delays

Free and Reduced-priced Meals. 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 school meals⁴. The R&E May School provides meals at no charge to all children, regardless of income.

Summer Food Service Program. Schools in which more than 50% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals will sponsor the Summer Food Service Program for at least six weeks between the last day of the academic school year and the first day of the following school year, and preferably throughout the entire summer vacation.

Meal Times and Scheduling. The R&E May School:

- will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 15 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- lunch service is scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- classrooms will schedule recess following their periods (in elementary schools);
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks and is the responsibility of the classrooms;

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff. Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in the R&E May School. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages. The R&E May School discourages students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Foods and Beverages served Individually (i.e., foods served outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, classroom activities, etc.)

Elementary Schools. The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage served to students in elementary schools. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools should be served as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages served individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.

Beverages

- **Allowed:** water or seltzer water⁵ without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by USDA);
- **Not allowed:** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

Foods

- A food item served individually:
 - will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
 - will have no more than 35% of its *weight* from added sugars;⁶
 - will contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes.
- One fruit and/or non-fried vegetables, 2 or more ounces Meat/meat alternate, 8 ounces milk, one serving of bread, will be served. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).⁷

Portion Sizes:

- Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages served individually to those listed below:
-

- One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;
- One ounce for cookies;
- Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, bagels, and other bakery items;
- Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream;
- Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;
- Eight fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water; and
- See attached School Lunch Patterns

All Students that are offered “Light Lunches” are permitted only from the Nursing Staff. Light Lunches include chicken noodle soup, applesauce, water/Gatorade and crackers. This is a non-reimbursable meal.

Snacks. Snacks are served at 10am and after 1pm 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 encourage water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children’s nutritional needs, children’s ages, and other considerations.

Rewards. Schools will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic performance or good behavior,⁸ and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations. Schools 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 for foods and beverages served individually (above). The district will distribute a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion. St. Catherine’s R & E May School aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- 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;
- is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;

[Type here]

- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting. For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.*, 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. 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; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communications with Parents. The R & E May School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school, will send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus, upon request. In addition, the school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

There is no Food Marketing at the R&E May School.

Staff Wellness. St. Catherine's Center for Children's R & E May School District highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Each district/school should establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member, school health council member, local hospital representative, dietitian or other health professional, recreation program representative, union representative, and employee benefits specialist. (The staff wellness committee could be a subcommittee of the school health council.) The committee should develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan should be based on input solicited from school staff and should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff. The staff wellness committee should distribute its plan to the school health council annually.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Daily Physical Education (P.E.) K-6. All students in grades K-6, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive daily physical education (or its equivalent of 150 minutes/week for elementary) for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher.

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

Schools 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, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

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 and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school district will explore the availability of federal “safe routes to school” funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements. The school district will encourage students to use public transportation when available and appropriate for travel to school, and will work with the local transit agency to provide transit passes for students.

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.

V. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring. The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school’s compliance to the school district superintendent or designee.

School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent (or if done at the school level, to the school principal). In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. If the district has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past five years, the district will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.

[Type here]

The superintendent or designee will develop a summary report every three years on district-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the district. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, school principals, and school health services personnel in the district.

Policy Review. To help with the initial development of the district's wellness policies, each school in the district will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies.⁹ The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the district level to identify and prioritize needs. Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school district will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The district, and individual schools within the district, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

Wellness Policy Meetings will take place one time per year during the month of October.

Wellness Policy Committee

Angela Tingling, Food Service Director; Nicolas Deming, 6th Grade Student; Alexandria Horne, Cook; Kendall Green, Classroom Aide; Katherine Jordan, School Nurse; Sarah Richmond, Guidance Counselor, Jennifer Elliott, Principal.