

# **ST. ANN SCHOOL**

435 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.

Emmaus, PA 18049

Telephone: 610-965-9220

Fax: 610-967-1099

stann-emmaus.org

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## **School Wellness Policy**

### **Preamble**

### **Policies**

- I. School Health Councils
- II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus
- III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing
- IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education
- V. Monitoring and Policy Review

### **Footnotes**

#### **St. Ann School's Wellness Policy 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, schools 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. Ann School is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being and the ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of St. Ann School that:

- The school will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school-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 Federal Smart Snacks in School requirement.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, 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, our school will participate in available federal school meal programs (National School Lunch Program).
- Schools 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.

**TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:**

**I. School Health Council**

The School Health Council will create, strengthen, or work to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and

physical activity policies. The council also will serve as resources to school sites for implementing those policies. (A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community and will be selected by the administration from qualified interested individuals. The council will consist of members of the school board, school administrators, physical education teacher, teachers, school nurse, health professionals, parents, students and members of the public.)

## **II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus**

### **School Meals**

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program will:

1. Be appealing and attractive to children;
2. Be served in clean and pleasant settings;
3. Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations; as outlined by the Healthy, Hunger-free Kids Act of 2010.

The nutritional value of the meals is reviewed periodically by the state of Pennsylvania. The results of the evaluation are available in the school office.

**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-priced meals<sup>1</sup>. Toward this end, St. Ann School will use a roster system to insure there will be no differentiation between paid, reduced and free lunches. For confidentiality purposes, all monies are collected in the school office on a monthly basis.

**Meal Times and Scheduling.** Schools:

1. Will provide students with at least 20 minutes to eat lunch;

2. Should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.
3. Should not schedule tutoring, club or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.
4. Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).
5. Drinking water shall be available and accessible to students, without restriction and at no cost to the student, at all meal periods and throughout the school day.

**Qualifications of School Food Service Staff.** Nutritional professionals who meet hiring criteria established by the school and in compliance with federal regulations shall administer the school meals program. Professional development and continuing education shall be provided for school nutrition staff, as required by federal regulations.<sup>2</sup>

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages.** Schools should discourage 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 Sold Individually (i.e., foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.)**

All foods and beverages available in the school during the school day shall be offered to students with consideration for promoting student health and reducing obesity.

Foods and beverages provided through the National School Lunch program shall comply with established federal nutrition standards.

Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day, such as athletic events and dances, shall offer healthy alternatives in addition to more traditional fare.

Competitive foods available for sale individually will meet all the requirements of the Smart Snacks in Schools standards.

**Fundraising Activities.** To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities will not involve food or will use only foods that meet the above nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school will review all food choices for acceptable fundraising activities.

**Snacks.** Snacks served during the school day or in after-school enrichment programs 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. 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,<sup>7</sup> and will not withhold foods or beverages (including food served through school meals) as punishment.

**Celebrations.** Schools will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than five per class per year. Each party should include no more than one food and beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), and will include fresh fruits and vegetables; and water, 100 percent juice, 100 percent juice diluted with water, low-fat milk or non-fat milk.

**Marketing.** Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day shall meet or exceed the established federal

nutrition standards (USDA Smart Snacks in School) and comply with established administrative regulations.

**Food Allergies.** The school shall establish policies and administrative regulations to address food allergy management in the school in order to:

1. Reduce and/or eliminate the likelihood of severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reactions.
2. Ensure a rapid and effective response in case of a severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reaction.
3. Protect the rights of students by providing them, through necessary accommodations when required, the opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities.

### **III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion**

**Nutrition Education and Promotion.** St. Ann School aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

1. 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;
2. Is part of classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;
3. Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
4. Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);

**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:

1. 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;
2. 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.

**Nutrition Promotion.** Nutrition promotion and education will positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs.

1. The school shall cooperate with agencies and community organizations to provide opportunities for appropriate student projects related to nutrition.
2. Consistent nutrition messages shall be disseminated and displayed throughout the school, classrooms and cafeteria, and through the school media.
3. Consistent nutrition messages shall be demonstrated by avoiding use of unhealthy food items in classroom lesson plans and by school staff avoiding eating less healthy food items in front of students.

**Communications with Parents.** The school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. In addition, the school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

The school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities, including the annual school-wide walk-a-thon; before, during, and after the school day activities; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, communication envelope, or other take-home materials, or special events.

**Staff Wellness.** St. Ann School 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.

#### **IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

**Physical Education (P.E.) K-8.** All students in grades K-8, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive weekly physical education (or its equivalent of 30 minutes/week for Kindergarten school students, 40 mins/week for 1-5 students, and 42 mins/week for 6-8 students) for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher through a varied and comprehensive curriculum that promotes both team and individual activities and leads to students becoming and remaining physically active for a lifetime. 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 15 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 Opportunities Before and After School.** The school will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as CYO sponsored sports or intramural programs. In addition, 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.

**Annual Events.** Each year St. Ann School, with its focus on health and fitness, will conduct the annual Walk-a-thon; a five-mile walk followed by a nutritious lunch. Water will be provided along the route. Other annual events may include Dental Health Month, Jump Rope and Hoops for Heart activities, the President's Fitness Challenge, ACES (all children exercise simultaneously) event, and an annual Health Fair.

**Physical Activity and Punishment.** Teachers and other school 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 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 school will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school will encourage students to use public school bus transportation when available and appropriate for travel to school, and will work with the local transit agency to provide services for all eligible 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.

## V. Monitoring and Policy Review

**Monitoring.** The Principal will ensure compliance with established school-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 board.

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

The principal will develop a summary report every three years on school-wide compliance with the school's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. This report will be available at all times in the school office.

**Policy Review.** Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess programs, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provisions of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The school will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

The school shall annually inform and update the public and school community about the contents, updates and implementation of this policy via the school website and school electronic communication system. This annual notification shall include information on how to access the School Wellness Policy; information about the most recent triennial assessment; information on how to

participate in the development, implementation and periodic review of the policy; and a means of contacting the Wellness Committee leadership.

**Recordkeeping.** The school shall retain records documenting compliance with the requirements of the School Wellness Policy, which shall include:

1. The written Wellness Policy
2. Documentation demonstrating that the school has informed the public, on an annual basis, about the contents of the policy and any updates to the policy.
3. Documentation of efforts to review and update the School Wellness Policy, including who is involved in the review and methods used by the school to inform the public of their ability to participate in the review.
4. Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the School Wellness Policy and notification of the assessment results to the public.

### **Footnotes**

<sup>1</sup> It is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for free, reduced-price, or “paid” meals.

<sup>2</sup> School nutrition staff development programs are available through the USDA, School Nutrition Association, and National Food Service management Institute.

<sup>3</sup> Unless this practice is allowed by a student’s individual education plan (IEP).