St. Joseph Catholic School Wellness Policy

WELLNESS

Note: All schools that participate in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Act) to have a wellness policy that includes standards and nutrition guidelines for foods and beverages made available to students on campus during the school day, as well as specific goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. The Act requires the involvement of parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the public in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy. The Act also requires a plan for measuring implementation of the policy and reporting wellness policy content and implementation issues to the public, as well as the designation of at least one person charged with responsibility for the implementation and oversight of the wellness policy to ensure the school district is in compliance with the policy.

WELLNESS POLICY

St. Joseph Catholic School
Waconia, Minnesota
Revised Draft – January 2026

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Wellness Policy is to promote student wellness, prevent and reduce childhood obesity, and ensure that all foods and beverages available on campus during the school day support the health, academic success, and spiritual development of students. This policy aligns with federal requirements of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and will be implemented with attention to equity, cultural relevance, and respect for the dignity of every child.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. St. Joseph Catholic School recognizes that nutrition education, nutrition promotion, physical activity, and other evidence-based wellness practices are essential components of the educational process.

B. The school environment shall support and model healthy behaviors and provide opportunities for students to learn and practice lifelong wellness habits.

C. The school will involve parents, students, school food authorities, staff, administrators, school board members, health professionals, and the public in developing, implementing, and reviewing the wellness policy.

D. All students need access to nutritious foods, opportunities for physical activity, and supportive mental, social, and emotional environments to thrive.

E. Students in grades K–8 shall receive opportunities, time, encouragement, and support to be physically active on a regular basis.

F. Qualified food service personnel shall provide affordable, appealing, culturally inclusive meals that meet or exceed USDA nutrition standards and ensure safe, pleasant dining environments with adequate seated time for meals.

G. The school will establish measurable goals for nutrition promotion, nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based wellness activities and will review progress annually.

III. WELLNESS GOALS

A. Nutrition Promotion & Nutrition Education

1. Nutrition education shall be:
    - Sequential and standards-based from grades K–8.
    - Skills-based, focusing on behaviors such as label reading, meal planning, tasting new foods, media literacy, and understanding the food system.
    - Integrated into core academic subjects (math, science, language arts, social studies, and electives) where appropriate.

2. Nutrition promotion strategies shall include:
    - Cafeteria signage promoting healthy choices.
    - Student taste tests and menu feedback opportunities.
    - Marketing of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and water.
    - Use of the school garden or local agriculture resources when possible.

3. School nutrition staff will collaborate with teachers at least twice per year to reinforce nutrition education.

4. Annual measurable goals shall be established and reported (e.g., increase fruit/vegetable consumption, number of taste-test events, student engagement data).

B. Physical Activity

1. Health and physical education programs will teach the knowledge and skills needed for lifelong physical activity.

2. Daily Physical Activity

    - Elementary (K–5): At least 20 minutes of daily recess, held outdoors when possible.
    - K–8 PE:
        - K–5 students will receive at least 150 minutes/week of instructional PE.
        - Grades 6–8 will receive at least 225 minutes/week of instructional PE.
    - All PE instruction will be delivered by licensed or endorsed physical education teachers.

3. Classroom Physical Activity
   Teachers shall provide:

    - At least one 3–5 minute physical activity break for every 60 minutes of instruction.
    - Opportunities for movement integrated into lessons where appropriate.

4. Withholding Physical Activity

    - Physical activity shall not be used as punishment.
    - Physical activity shall not be withheld for disciplinary or academic reasons.

5. Before & After School
   The school will encourage before- and after-school physical activity opportunities such as clubs, open gym, walking programs, and athletics.

6. Community Access
   When feasible, school facilities will be available for community physical activity through shared-use agreements.

C. Communication with Parents

The school will:

1. Provide families with resources that support healthy eating and physical activity (healthy celebrations list, Smart Snacks guide, family activity ideas).

2. Encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and avoid low-nutrient foods.

3. Share PE curriculum information and promote family physical activity outside the school day.

4. Maintain a Wellness page on the school website with policy documents, updates, celebrations lists, and resources.

IV. STANDARDS AND NUTRITION GUIDELINES

A. School Meals

1. School meals will meet or exceed all USDA nutrition standards.
2. Clean, safe, and pleasant dining environments will be provided.
3. Students shall have:
    - At least 10 minutes of seated time to eat breakfast.
    - At least 20 minutes of seated time to eat lunch.
4. Free drinking water shall be available throughout the school day, including during meals.
5. Social stigma for students receiving free or reduced-price meals shall be eliminated.
6. The school will consider opportunities to purchase locally grown foods.
7. Students shall have access to handwashing or sanitizing before meals.

B. School Food Service Personnel

1. The school will designate a Food Service Director to oversee compliance with USDA guidelines, Smart Snacks, menu planning, and food safety.
2. All food service staff will receive annual professional development as required by USDA Professional Standards.

C. Other Foods and Beverages Made Available to Students

1. Smart Snacks Compliance

- All foods and beverages sold during the school day must meet USDA Smart Snacks standards.
- All foods and beverages served to students during the school day must meet Smart Snacks or CACFP standards.

2. Classroom Snacks & Celebrations

    - Only Smart Snack–compliant foods may be served.
    - Non-food celebrations are encouraged.
    - A healthy celebrations list will be provided annually.

3. Fundraisers

    - Any food or beverage fundraisers occurring during the school day must comply with Smart Snacks.
    - Non-food fundraising alternatives will be promoted.

4. Caffeine
    - Caffeinated beverages shall not be sold or served to students.

5. After-School
    - Foods served or sold at after-school programs must meet federal nutrition standards.

D. Food and Beverage Marketing

1. Schools may only permit marketing of foods and beverages that meet USDA Smart Snacks standards.

2. Marketing includes (but is not limited to):

    - Posters, scoreboards, vending machines, cups, coolers, websites, digital screens, textbooks, promotional materials, and spirit wear.

V. EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

1. The school will promote staff wellness through health resources, physical activity opportunities, stress-management supports, and wellness challenges.

2. Staff will be encouraged to model healthy eating and activity behaviors in the presence of students.

3. Wellness initiatives for staff will be communicated annually.

VI. WELLNESS LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A. Wellness Coordinator

1. The School Board shall designate a Wellness Coordinator to oversee implementation of the policy.

2. Each school-level administrator will ensure compliance and report to the Wellness Coordinator annually.

B. Wellness Committee

1. The Wellness Committee shall meet at least twice per year.

2. Required memberships include:
    - Parents
    - Students
    - Food service representatives
    - PE teacher
    - Health professional
    - School board member
    - School administrator
    - Community member

3. Committee membership, meeting agendas, minutes, and policy updates shall be publicly available on the school website.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION, REPORTING & ASSESSMENT

A. Implementation

Upon board approval, this policy shall be implemented school-wide.

B. Annual Public Reporting

The school will annually provide:

1. Wellness policy updates
2. A summary of progress toward measurable goals
3. Any policy changes or initiatives
4. Committee membership and meeting dates

Reports will be published on the school website.

C. Triennial Assessment

At least once every three years, the school will assess:

1. Compliance with the policy
2. Comparison with model wellness policies
3. Progress made in achieving wellness goals

The assessment results will be reported publicly and presented to the School Board.

D. Recordkeeping

The school will retain:

- The written wellness policy
- Documentation of committee involvement and public access
- Triennial assessments
- Records demonstrating compliance with nutrition guidelines and Smart Snacks requirements