

# St. Philip Neri Catholic School

## Wellness Policies

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### **St. Philip Neri School District'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 tripled in children and adolescents over the last three 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, 76% of American children don't get enough daily physical activity. (WHO recommends children do at least 60 minutes daily);

Whereas, children with obesity are already demonstrating cardiovascular risk factors typically not seen until adulthood;

Whereas, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (USDA and HHS);

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, empty calories from added sugars and solid fats contribute to 40% of the total daily calories for 2-18 years olds and half of these calories come from 6 sources: soda, fruit drinks, dairy desserts, grain desserts, pizza, and whole milk;

Whereas, about 90% of Americans eat more sodium than is recommended for a healthy diet;

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. Philip Neri Catholic 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. Philip Neri Catholic School that:**

\*St. Philip Neri Catholic School 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-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 U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

\*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; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

\*To the maximum extent practicable, St. Philip Neri Catholic School will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the National School Lunch Program).

\*St. Philip Neri Catholic 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, and will relate the information to the public using the school website and offering a hard copy in the school office.

## **TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:**

### **I. School Health Councils**

St. Philip Neri Catholic School will create, strengthen, or work within existing policies 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 should include parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, and teachers.)

### **2. Nutrition Education Goal: All students will be educated in good nutrition practices as part of each classroom's science and health curriculum.**

#### **Implementation**

\*Meet in grade level groups (Primary, Intermediate and Middle School) to list meaningful activities that can be integrated into the school's science and or health curriculum.

\*Collect generated listing of activities and develop timeline for implementation

\*Share information with cafeteria staff, specials teachers, parents and students

\*At minimum of one quarter per year, an exploratory class focusing on nutrition will be offered to middle school students

### **3. School Meals**

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program 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; (To the extent possible, schools will offer at least two non-fried vegetables 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.)

\*serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non- dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and

\*ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain, as recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005.

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.

**School meal goal: St. Philip Neri cafeteria staff will intentionally work toward decreasing the amount of frozen and processed foods that are served in school meals, focusing on adding more fresh, whole, nutritionally-dense foods into the lunch menus, thus decreasing the amounts of added sugars, fats and sodium served to the students.**

St. Philip Neri Catholic School will engage students and parents through surveys in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

**Free and Reduced-priced Meals.** St. Philip Neri Catholic School 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 meals. Toward this end, we will promote the availability of school meals to all students.

**Snacks** Saint Philip Neri does not sell snacks and beverages. The only food provided is USDA approved under the Federal USDA requirements.

## **GOALS FOR OTHER SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES:**

St. Philip Neri Catholic School will arrange a lunch schedule that provides adequate time for eating lunches and for clean-up following the meal.

Implementation:

Current lunch schedule will be reviewed to determine if students are provided with adequate time for eating and clean-up following the meal.

Staff will discuss the schedule currently in place and make modifications as needed

If necessary, staff will work collaboratively with cafeteria individuals to ensure sufficient time is allowed for lunch.

Classroom teachers will share information with students about the need to "slow down" to digest food.

Monitoring:

Administration will monitor the revised lunch schedule and discuss the effectiveness of the plan.

Staff will solicit input from students about the effectiveness of the plan. Information gleaned will be reviewed and adjustments made as needed.

Meal Times and Scheduling.

St. Philip Neri School:

will provide students with at least 20 minutes to eat after sitting down for lunch;

will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;

will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;

will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and

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).

### **Qualifications of School Food Service Staff.**

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the St. Philip Neri Catholic School's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. 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. (We will work with the Nebraska Department of Education, Nutrition Services, to ensure that all state and federal guidelines are met.)

School nutrition staff development programs are available through the USDA, School Nutrition Association, and National Food Service Management Institute.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages. St. Philip Neri will 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.)

St. Philip Neri Catholic School's food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food will be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.

Fundraising Activities. To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities that involve food will be engaged on a limited basis. Where practical, only foods that meet nutrition and portion size standards will be provided. St. Philip Neri Catholic School will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity.

Snacks.

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or 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. St. Philip Neri Catholic School 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.

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

Celebrations.

St. Philip Neri Catholic School will limit celebrations that involve unhealthy food during the school day.

## **Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion**

### **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GOALS:**

**1. The school will encourage parents and guardians to support their child's participation in physical activities and will work to offer physical activities in family events.**

Implementation:

Review activities currently in place, both at school and in the community, that are designed to encourage student's participation in family physical activities.

Collect ideas from students about ways their families could be or are involved in physical activities.

**2. The school will encourage students to walk and run regularly to increase their cardiorespiratory endurance and to prevent a sedentary lifestyle.**

Implementation:

Encourage participation in a mileage (walk/run) club that will take place during recess times on Wednesdays. Students in grades 3-8 are participating currently. Expand to grades K-2 in the future by recruiting parent volunteers to help monitor the students during this time.

When the weather is too cold for morning recess, all students will walk laps in the gym when they arrive at school between 7:30-7:45 am.

**3. Staff will be encouraged to increase their movement during the day to prevent a sedentary lifestyle.**

Implementation: Staff will be encouraged to stand and walk around the room more during instruction. Staff will be encouraged to focus on getting more steps by using restrooms on a different floor than their classroom, walking laps in the gym or walking steps during plan times or lunch times, taking a walk outside during lunch times, joining their students during mileage club, etc. Staff will discuss various ideas of how to implement more movement into their days during staff meetings or professional development sessions focusing on wellness promotion. Adding a staff step challenge will be considered.

**4. Social Emotional Learning Goals**

Teachers will receive professional development training in the area of Social Emotional Learning. The school will pilot a curriculum dedicated to social emotional learning for all students.

**Nutrition Education and Promotion**

St. Philip Neri Catholic School aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. St. Philip Neri Catholic School will 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;

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**

St. Philip Neri Catholic School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. St. Philip Neri Catholic School will send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. St. Philip Neri Catholic School will encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages.

St. Philip Neri Catholic School will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; 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, newsletter, or other take- home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

### **Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

#### **Daily Physical Education (P.E.)**

K-8 All students in grades K-8, including students with disabilities, and special health-care needs, will receive physical education for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. 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 vigorous physical activity.



## **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.

St. Philip Neri Catholic School will 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, teachers will give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

## **Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School**

St. Philip Neri Catholic School, through our Athletic Association, offers students the opportunity to participate in Basketball, Soccer, Volleyball, and Track. Sign-ups for these will be announced in handouts sent home from school and in church bulletins.

After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage - verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities - daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

## **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**

St. Philip Neri Catholic School will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk to school. When appropriate, St. Philip Neri Catholic School will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. St. Philip Neri Catholic School will explore the availability of federal "safe routes to school" funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements.

## **Staff Wellness**

St. Philip Neri Catholic 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.

**Staff wellness goal: St. Philip Neri Catholic School will establish and maintain a staff wellness committee. 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.**

## **Monitoring the Policy Review**

### **Monitoring**

The principal will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies

School food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the principal. In addition, St. Philip Neri School will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. If we have not received an SMI review from the state agency within the past five years, we 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 compliance with St. Philip Neri Catholic School'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, St. Philip Neri Catholic School will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies.

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, St. Philip Neri Catholic School 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. St. Philip Neri Catholic School will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

Useful self-assessment and planning tools include the School Health Index from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Changing the Scene from the Team Nutrition Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and Opportunity to Learn Standards for Elementary, Middle, and High School Physical Education from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education.