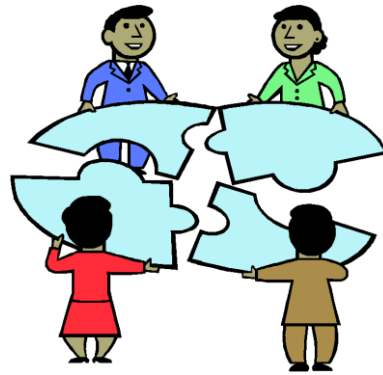


Educating the Whole Child

We're all a piece of the puzzle!



Focus on

Wellness

School Wellness Policy Nutritional Development Services

Wellness Policy Committee Leaders:

Anne H. Ayella, Director
aayella@ndsarch.org

Nutritional Development Services

Erinn Hill, Director
ehill@ndsarch.org

Nutritional Development Services

Jean Falk, RD
jfalk@ndsarch.org

Nutritional Development Services

Nutritional Development Services
222 N 17th Street, 4th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-895-3470

www.nutritionaldevelopmentservices.org

School Wellness Policy

Nutritional Development Services (NDS) recognizes that student wellness, proper nutrition, and regular physical activity are related to a student's physical well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. It also believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, and developmental success we need to create an environment in which students can learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. NDS is committed to providing a safe, health-promoting school environment that promotes these concepts as part of the education of the whole child.

Research shows that two components, good nutrition and physical activity before, during and after the school day, are strongly correlated 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 on cognitive tasks.^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7}

Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.^{8,9,10}

In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education, and extracurricular activities-do better academically.^{11,12,13,14}

In response to the 2004 Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act, Nutritional Development Services (NDS) and the Office of Catholic Education (OCE) partnered to create a School Wellness Policy for Archdiocesan schools and other schools that receive school meals from NDS. A broad group of individuals participated in its development including, among others, students, parents, school food authority representatives, school board members, school administrators, and the general public.

This policy outlines Nutritional Development Services approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day. The policy has goals to ensure that:

- Students have access to healthy foods throughout the school day-both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus-in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards.
- Students receive nutrition education, that helps to develop lifelong healthy eating habits.
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during and after school.
- Students engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness.
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school.
- Establishes nutrient standards for all food available on the school campus with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of wellness in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits.
- NDS establishes and maintains management, oversight, communication about, and monitoring of the policy by measuring and evaluating its established goals.

SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

School Wellness Committee

To be successful, the staff and administration at each school need to support the policy and any subsequent changes. Children really do enjoy eating healthy foods and moving their bodies. It is recommended that schools identify staff and parents that can be “wellness champions,” cheerleaders, or role models to help others in the school community realize this. These role models, along with other interested parties, also are good candidates for a wellness committee should a school choose to form one.

NDS will coordinate the Wellness Policy Committee. The Wellness Policy membership can be comprised of, but not limited to the following: parents/guardian, students, school staff: teachers; school administrators; school board members, community members, health professionals, health-related organizations and agencies.

Record Keeping

NDS will assess wellness progress and update one of four sections of the Wellness policy annually.

One of the requirements of the policy is to measure if changes are taking place. Each school will submit a wellness assessment. At the end of each school year, a short evaluation “checking your success” will be distributed to see how the wellness policy is being implemented at each school.

Schools are encouraged to share successes, best practices in wellness, ex. hosting a Walk/Run to benefit the school or local charity with the students, parents, staff and community members. NDS will highlight successes and share great ideas and resources in newsletters and through social media.

SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Nutrition Education

The primary goal of nutrition education, which may be defined as “any set of learning experiences designed to facilitate the voluntary adoption of eating and other nutrition- related behaviors conducive to health and well-being,” (AND 1996) is to influence students’ eating behaviors.

1. Nutrition education shall extend beyond the school environment by engaging and involving families and the community:
2. Within the school, these learning experiences shall address students’ knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors and provide opportunities for students to have positive food experiences.
3. Curriculum, lessons and other activities shall be age-appropriate and behavior focused.
4. Consistent nutrition messages shall be disseminated throughout the school, classrooms, cafeteria, home, and community.
5. Lifelong lifestyle balance shall be reinforced by linking healthy food choices and physical activity.
6. The staff responsible for providing nutrition education or overseeing physical activities shall be properly trained and shall participate in appropriate professional development.
7. Nutrition education shall be provided and/or integrated into other subject and school-based activities for students:

Nutrition education topics include:

- Food safety, food access, farming and food processing, My Plate, current U.S.Dietary Guidelines, media literacy with emphasis on food marketing, diet-related health problems, food disorders, cooking, shopping, budgeting, meal planning, label reading, balancing calories in and calories burned, nutrition and the life cycle, food trends and diet fads, food and culture, hunger in America and other countries.

Example activities:

- Integrate nutrition themes or content into other subjects, such as math, science, social studies, reading, art, etc.
- Taste tests, Container gardening, Service projects, Contests from organizations like “Got Milk?”
- Create a class cookbook of tasty, healthy family recipes
- Create and maintain personal nutrition goals, use of food diaries to analyze food intake
- Field trip to local farm/ orchard, food access organization, food bank or soup kitchen, supermarket, farmers market, food manufacturer
- Food drive that integrates food access, meal planning, label reading, healthy options within food groups, and prayer
- Create media campaign, for example: bulletin boards, PSAs, traveling skits in the classrooms, table tents, website
- Book challenge or book reports with health/nutrition theme
- Special Guest, such as a parent with related background, nurse, community educator, health organization, degree-related university student.

SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Physical Activity

Current recommendations suggest that children accumulate 60 minutes of physical activity each day. The primary goal for a school's physical activity plan is to assist children in achieving this goal.

1. Students shall participate in structured physical education classes in accordance with curriculum guidelines and shall be moderately-to-vigorously active. Documented medical conditions and disabilities shall be accommodated during class.
2. Schools shall provide a varied and comprehensive curriculum that promotes lifelong physical activity and provides instruction in the skills and knowledge necessary to understand the short-term and long-term benefits of a physically active lifestyle.

The goal of this is for students to develop the knowledge and skills needed to maintain physical fitness and to understand the short- and long-term benefits of a physically active lifestyle.

Education topics include:

- How to use a pedometer, Fitbit or other similar electronic exercise monitoring devices, how to monitor heart rate, meaning of blood pressure figures, the relationship between physical activity and disease prevention, calculating calories burned during different types of physical activities, the physical activity recommendations for appropriate age range, overcoming barriers to physical activity, planning and implementing a workout, reducing sedentary activities, physical injuries/sports injuries, psychological and social benefits of regular exercise, opportunities in the community for physical activity, presentations about the effect of nutrition on physical activity (A discussion about sports nutrition to educate students about the importance of healthy food choices with regard to performance in various sports and activities)

Example activities include:

- Create a media campaign, for example: bulletin board campaign, poster board contest, commercials for physical activity during morning announcements, traveling skits in the classrooms, table tents
- Health fair tables and science experiments
- Special guest speakers
- After-school "wellness group" of students to compose newsletters to be sent to teachers and students throughout the school and home to families
- Letter-writing campaign to encourage local community organizations to participate in and encourage opportunities for physical activity

3. Curriculum, lessons and other activities shall be age-appropriate and activity focused.
4. Lifelong lifestyle balance shall be reinforced by linking healthy food choices and physical activity.
5. Schools shall provide safe and adequate equipment, facilities, and resources for physical education class.
6. Schools shall encourage physical activity at recess, before and after school, during lunch, clubs, intramurals and interscholastic athletics.

SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Physical Activity Continued:

7. Schools shall partner with parents/guardians, and community members to institute programs that support physical activity.

Example activities include:

- Schools can open the school gymnasium to the community in the evenings
- School can encourage recreational centers and gyms in the community to be open for students to use after school and parents to use at times that convenient to their schedules
- Schools can promote “Safe Routes to School”
- Schools can host a “walking school bus” or “Walk to School” day
- Schools can organize a walk/run for your school or charity in the community
- Schools can participate in leagues or intramural sports

8. Schools shall encourage physical activity breaks during classroom hours discouraging student inactivity for 2 hours or more active as much as possible.
9. Physical activity shall not be used as a form of punishment.
10. The staff responsible for providing nutrition education or overseeing physical activities shall be properly trained and shall participate in appropriate professional development.
11. School staff shall serve as role models in the area of physical activity.

School staff, including all teachers, administrators, food service and other staff, will actively demonstrate the importance of physical activity by being role models. This will be unique to each staff person and may lead to sustainable behavioral change in addition to being positive role models.

Example activities:

- School staff can wear pedometers, fitbits or other electronic exercise monitoring devices.
- School staff can form and participate in a walking club.
- School staff can walk to school.
- School staff can participate in student physical activities.
- School staff can share with students the ways they are physically active during their free time. These activities could include formal exercise, such as jogging, organized events like a “Walk for...” or general activities, such as gardening.
- School staff can log or journal their own physical activity and share with students.

SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Nutrient Standards

All foods available to students and the school community on the school campus and through school functions shall support the policy goals of promoting student health and shall be consistent with current U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

1. School staff shall cooperate with agencies and community organizations to provide opportunities for appropriate student projects related to nutrition.
2. Fundraisers shall be subject to administrative approval and shall support the goals of the School Wellness Policy.
3. School food service and nutrition education classes shall cooperate to create a learning laboratory.
4. Foods offered at classroom parties, school-sponsored events and holiday celebrations shall support the goals of the School Wellness Policy.
5. Smart Snacks in School Standards include all food and beverages sold to students outside the school meal programs, on the school campus, and at any time during the school day. This includes items sold a la carte on the cafeteria lines, in vending machines, at school stores, during fundraisers, or at any other venue that sells food or beverages to students during the school day.
 - a. School Campus is defined as all areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day.
 - b. School Day is defined as the period from the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.
6. A la carte foods beverages sold at school shall support the goals of the School Wellness Policy.
7. Food and beverages served to faculty shall support the goals of the School Wellness Policy.
8. Unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day at no cost.
 - a. Drinking water will be available where schools meals are served during mealtime.
 - b. Students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.
9. Food and Beverages served to faculty shall support the goals of the School Wellness Policy.

SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Other School-Based Activities

Schools shall create a total school environment that provides consistent wellness messages and is conducive to healthy eating and being physically active. These include the physical plant, educating parents, professional development and other services to the school community that promote a healthy school environment.

1. Schools shall provide adequate space for eating and serving school meals.
2. Students shall be provided adequate time to eat: ten minutes sit-down time for breakfast; twenty minutes sit-down time for lunch.
3. Schools shall provide students with a clean and safe meal environment.
4. Meal periods shall be scheduled at appropriate hours.
5. Drinking water shall be available at all meal periods and throughout the school day.
6. Access to the food service operation shall be limited to authorized staff.
7. Students shall have access to hand washing or sanitizing before meals and snacks.
8. Appropriate training shall be available to all staff on the components of the School Wellness Policy.
9. Schools shall provide parents and community information about the School Wellness Policy.

Example activities include:

- Home and School meetings
- Flyers
- Information packets
- School and NDS Website

10. School nutrition staff shall participate in professional development.

Schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program:

- School nutrition staff will participate in professional development as scheduled by the sponsoring agency.

Schools that do not participate in the National School Lunch Program:

- School nutrition staff will participate in appropriate professional development. Example topics include: nutrition education, food safety, childhood obesity and food service management.

11. Administrators, teachers, food service personnel, students, parents/guardians, and community members shall be encouraged to serve as positive role models through programs, communications and outreach efforts.

SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Other School Based Activities Continued:

12. Goals of the School Wellness Policy shall be considered in planning all school-based activities.

Activities sponsored by the school, regardless of the time and place they are held, must be consistent with the Wellness Policy. Schools are to take a comprehensive look at wellness within the school environment and make the necessary adjustments to ensure that all school-based activities reinforce the goals of the Wellness Policy. Wellness should be a factor when planning activities involving students, their families and the school community.

Schools are encouraged to incorporate nutrition education and physical activity into school events. This is a valuable opportunity for the school to promote health and wellness in the community.

All before and after school events, such as sport practices and games, scout/troop meetings and events, club meetings, and other extracurricular activities, are included in "school-based activities" and must be consistent with Wellness Policy goals. All events sponsored by the school, such as Home and School Meetings, fundraising events and dinners for parents and/or families, field trips, and holiday activities, are also included in "school-based activities" and must be consistent with Wellness Policy goals.

13. Food and recess shall not be used as a reward or punishment.

14. To the extent possible, the Archdiocese/ schools shall utilize available funding and outside programs to enhance student wellness:

Applying jointly with other schools in the neighborhood or cluster can effect change over a larger area and lay a pathway for community change as well. Schools will find eager partners in the community. Agencies such as local recreation departments, youth organizations, health centers and hospitals offer programs and are often looking for partners.

15. Schools shall have the lunch program application available in languages appropriate to their school population.
16. Nutrition content of school meals shall be available to students and parents/ guardians. Schools shall provide parents with information about the components of the School Wellness Policy.
17. Schools shall support the efforts of parents/guardians to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for children by communicating relevant information through various methods.
18. Students and parents/guardians shall be involved in menu selections for foods provided at school:

Example activities:

- Schools can create a Nutrition Advisory Committee (NAC) or Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) to discuss these issues, direct these activities, organize taste testing or review survey results.
- Families with selected suggestions can be highlighted in the weekly or monthly newsletter.
- Distribution of award certificates or other creative recognition can be presented to those who provide lasting improvements or suggestions.
- Free lunch for the week can be awarded to families with the best or most achievable ideas.
- Opinions can be obtained from families via web-based voting or blog.
- Students can use the voting or other survey data in the classroom as part of a charting or computer lesson.

SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by incorporating current nutrition messages and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourages participation in school meal programs. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff, teachers, parents, students and the community.

1. Promoting foods that meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
2. Schools will support and promote healthy lifestyles through nutrition education in the classroom, school environment, and after school programs.
3. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:
 - a. Is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.
 - b. Include developmentally appropriate activities, such as promotions, and taste-testing.
 - c. Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods.
 - d. Link with school meals programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, other school foods and nutrition related community services.
 - e. Include nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

- ¹ Bradley, B, Green, AC. Do Health and Education Agencies in the United States Share Responsibility for Academic Achievement and Health? A Review of 25 years of Evidence About the Relationship of Adolescents' Academic Achievement and Health Behaviors, *Journal of Adolescent Health*. 2013; 52(5):523-532.
- ² Meyers AF, Sampson AE, Weitzman M, Rogers BL, Kayne H. School breakfast program and school performance. *American Journal of Diseases of Children*. 1989;143(10):1234-1239.
- ³ Murphy JM. Breakfast and learning: an updated review. *Current Nutrition & Food Science*. 2007; 3:3-36.
- ⁴ Murphy JM, Pagano ME, Nachmani J, Sperling P, Kane S, Kleinman RE. The relationship of school breakfast to psychosocial and academic functioning: Cross-sectional and longitudinal observations in an inner-city school sample. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*. 1998;152(9):899-907.
- ⁵ Pollitt E, Mathews R. Breakfast and cognition: an integrative summary. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 1998; 67(4), 804S-813S.
- ⁶ Rampersaud GC, Pereira MA, Girard BL, Adams J, Metz J. Breakfast habits, nutritional status, body weight, and academic performance in children and adolescents. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. 2005;105(5):743-760, quiz 761-762.
- ⁷ Taras, H. Nutrition and student performance at school. *Journal of School Health*. 2005;75(6):199-213.
- ⁸ MacLellan D, Taylor J, Wood K. Food intake and academic performance among adolescents. *Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research*. 2008;69(3):141-144.
- ⁹ Neumark-Sztainer D, Story M, Dixon LB, Resnick MD, Blum RW. Correlates of inadequate consumption of dairy products among adolescents. *Journal of Nutrition Education*. 1997;29(1):12-20.
- ¹⁰ Neumark-Sztainer D, Story M, Resnick MD, Blum RW. Correlates of inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption among adolescents. *Preventive Medicine*. 1996;25(5):497-505.
- ¹¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *The association between school-based physical activity, including physical education, and academic performance*. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, 2010.
- ¹² Singh A, Uijtendewilligne L, Twisk J, van Mechelen W, Chinapaw M. *Physical activity and performance at school: A systematic review of the literature including a methodological quality assessment*. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med*, 2012; 166(1):49-55.
- ¹³ Haapala E, Poikkeus A-M, Kukkonen-Harjula K, Tompuri T, Lintu N, Väistö J, Leppänen P, Laaksonen D, Lindi V, Lakka T. *Association of physical activity and sedentary behavior with academic skills - A follow-up study among primary school children*. *PLoS ONE*, 2014; 9(9): e107031.
- ¹⁴ Hillman C, Pontifex M, Castelli D, Khan N, Raine L, Scudder M, Drollette E, Moore R, Wu C-T, Kamijo K. *Effects of the FITKids randomized control trial on executive control and brain function*. *Pediatrics* 2014; 134(4): e1063-1071.