

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Statistics show that:

- children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;
- good health fosters student attendance and education;
- 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;
- 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;
- only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid (which is now called “My Plate”);
- 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;
- community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies.

Thus, St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School that within a three year period:

- We will engage various and interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades Pre-K – Gr.8 will have the opportunity, 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.
- We 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, St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School will participate in available federal school meal programs: National School Lunch Program, National School Breakfast Program.
- We 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 with related community services.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. School Health Councils

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School will create, strengthen, or work within existing school health councils to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The council will also serve as resource to school sites for implementing those policies. (A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and may include parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, school administrators, teachers, health professionals.)

SCHOOL MEALS

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program and National School Breakfast 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;
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- ensure that St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School, the School Wellness committee, and the Food Service Provider should engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School 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 Price Meals

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns 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.

Meal Times and Scheduling

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School:

- will provide students with at least 20 minutes for lunch;
- will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
- will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School - IRN #059345

- will schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods;
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snack.
- 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 St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School Food Service Staff

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal program. As part of St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will ensure compliance with continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in our 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 Food and Beverages

Our school 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.

The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students. Given limited nutrition skills of children, food will be sold as balanced meals.

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. The school will assess when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. The school will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

Rewards

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School will not use foods or beverages 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. Patrick of Heatherdowns School will 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 sold. St. Pat's will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

II. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School will aim to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. St. Pat's 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 all the updated version of the food pyramid, which is now called "MyPlate";
- 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;
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communications with Parents - St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School will:

- support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
- for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus.
- 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.
- provide parents a list of foods that meet the snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities.
- provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community
- 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 support 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.

Food Marketing In Schools

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold through the School Lunch Program. School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

Examples of marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low-nutrition food products; in-school television; free samples or coupons; and food sales through fundraising activities. Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include: vending machine covers promoting water; pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines; sales of fruit for fundraisers; and coupons for discount gym memberships.

Student Wellness

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School has developed and will begin implementation of a plan for measuring student wellness. Student height, weight, hearing, vision, scoliosis will be measured and recorded as per state guidelines.

- Students with special dietary restrictions will have a special plan.
- The School Nurse will send home informational packets for those students with special medical needs.

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School - IRN #059345

- The School Nurse will send home a plan for those students with severe allergies.
- Diabetic students will work closely with the School Nurse to achieve stable blood sugar readings throughout the school day.

Staff Wellness

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns 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. School Wellness Committee will work with the St. Pat's faculty and staff to develop and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan will be based on input solicited from school staff and will outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff.

III. Physical Education and Physical Activity Opportunities

Physical Education Pre-K – Gr. 8

All students in grades Pre-K - Gr. 8, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will participate to their ability in a physical education class once or twice a week. 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 to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns 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. During 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

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students

After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

Physical Activity and Punishment

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School - IRN #059345

Teachers 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. Patrick of Heatherdowns School will assess the school premises to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school.

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. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times. Note: Usage is subject to the rules set by the parish.

IV. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring

The St. Patrick of Heatherdowns Wellness Policy will be phased in over a three year period, beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.

The Principal will ensure compliance with the St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School Wellness Policy and will report on the school's compliance to the Toledo Diocese and/or State of Ohio Department of Education.

School food service staff at the school will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the Principal. In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes.

St. Patrick of Heatherdowns School is subject to an USDA School Meals Initiative review from the Ohio Department of Education, Division of School Food Service at least once every five years.

July 2013

Wellness Committee:

Debora O'Shea, Laura Cousino, Lori Ameling, Eileen Anning, Pat Galvin, Rose Waslar

