

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER SCHOOL

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION WELLNESS POLICY

We believe:

- children need access to healthy foods and physical activities in order to grow, learn, and thrive;
- good health fosters student attendance and positive education outcomes;
- obesity rates are increasing in children and adolescents, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;
- unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity are major risk factors for heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes;

St. Francis Xavier School is committed to providing a school environment promoting children’s health, well-being, and ability to learn through healthy eating and physical activity.

Therefore, it is the policy of St. Francis Xavier School that:

- we will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, and health professionals in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing our nutrition and physical activity policies.
- all students in grade K-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- food and beverages served at our 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; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning, within our budgetary constraints; and will provide clean, safe and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- we will participate in the available federal school meal programs, the [National School Breakfast Program & National School Lunch Program](#).

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- 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.

I. Wellness Committee

St. Francis Xavier School's Wellness Committee will develop, implement, and monitor our school nutrition and physical activity policies.

The Wellness Committee will consist of individuals representing our school and community, including parents, school food authorities, teachers, students, and health professionals. The Wellness Committee will meet monthly during the school year.

Communications are sent to staff, students, and parents inviting them to join the Wellness Committee annually.

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Served at School

School Meals

Meals served through the [National School Breakfast & Lunch](#) program will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- comply with the [National School Breakfast & Lunch standards](#) for meal patterns, nutrient levels, and calorie requirements for the ages and grades served;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- serve only low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk, and nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA);
- cups for water are available at all breakfasts and lunches; and
- ensure that served grains are whole grain.

St. Francis Xavier School will engage students in new entrée choices by identifying new, healthful, and appealing food choices.

Monthly menus will be available on our school website and, upon request, the nutritional content of meals will be made available.

Free and Reduced-Priced Meals

St. Francis Xavier 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. We will utilize electronic identification (student lunch codes) and payment systems, and promote the availability of school meals to all students. Applications for free and reduced meals will be made available to all families at the beginning of each school year.

St. Francis Xavier School will reach out to families with unpaid lunch balances (preschool only).

In 2023, the State of Minnesota passed legislation for all students Kindergarten – Grade 12 to receive FREE breakfast & lunch. Preschool students do not qualify and are required to pay for breakfast & lunch. This legislation is in effect at the time of this revision.

Meal Times and Scheduling

St. Francis Xavier School will:

- provide the opportunity for students to have a healthy breakfast and lunch daily, regardless of whether the student has money to pay or owes money;
- provide students with at least 20 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch;
- schedule meal periods at appropriate times—currently 7:30 a.m. to 7:55 a.m. for breakfast and 11:00 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. for lunch;
- whenever possible, not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat before or during such activities;
- combine lunch and recess activity for all students;
- provide access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before students eat meals or snacks;
- discourage consumption of competitive foods (fast food) in place of school meals by not allowing competitive foods during mealtimes in the cafeteria.
- take reasonable steps to accommodate the dental regimens of students with special oral health needs.

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff

Qualified nutritional professionals will administer the school meal program. Professional development for all nutrition professionals in our school will be provided. All nutritional program directors, managers, and staff will meet hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA Professional Standards for Child Nutritional

Professionals. These school nutrition personnel will refer to USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website to search for training that meets their learning needs.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

St. Francis Xavier School will discourage students from sharing their food or beverage with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on students "special diet" needs.

Specific Allergy Table is available for students needing separation from foods for their safety.

Drinking Water Stations (2) were installed in 2021 for students needing water bottles to stay hydrated during the school day.

School Garden

In support of children's health and nutrition education curriculum, St. Francis Xavier School has implemented a school garden. Students will be responsible for planning, planting, maintaining, and harvesting garden produce within an outdoor classroom environment. Harvested garden produce will be consumed by the students within the cafeteria setting.

Snacks

Snacks served to our Preschool students during the school day will make a positive contribution to their diet and health. A variety of foods will be offered, following the [nutritional guidelines established by the USDA](#). "Smart Snacks" have been identified through our foodservice vendor and will be used when available. Milk will be the primary beverage, with water offered as well. St. Francis Xavier School will assess if and when to offer snacks based on the timing of school meals, student nutritional needs, and student ages.

All foods and beverages sold to students is limited to those available through the school breakfast & lunch programs. There is no a la carte or vending machines available to students.

Celebrations

It is recommended that school day celebrations involving food be limited 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. Allergy Alert Notices are placed outside of each classroom for parents & staff to keep all students safe when consuming items not prepared by the foodservice department.

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion

Nutrition Education and Promotion

St. Francis Xavier School teaches, encourages, and supports healthy eating by students. We will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- provides 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 at all grade levels (preschool through 8th grade);
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally relevant participatory activities, such as promotions, taste testing, farm visits, etc.
- 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;
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

We encourage regular daily physical activity for our students through recess and physical education classes. In order for students to fully embrace physical activity as a personal behavior, students also need opportunities beyond physical education class. We support:

- classroom health education complementing physical education by reinforcing the skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle, and reduce time spent on sedentary activities;
- incorporating opportunities for physical activity into other subject lessons, when possible;
- providing students with short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communication with Parents

St. Francis Xavier School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. Nutrient analyses of school menus will be available, when requested. We will encourage parents to pack healthy lunches by providing them with the "pack smart" poster provided by USDA annually at the beginning of the school year. This poster is also posted in the cafeteria at the front of the service line. And to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet good nutritional standards.

St. Francis Xavier School will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during and after the school day. We will also

support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.

Parents will be alerted weekly through the electronic student management system/point of sale when student meal fund balances are less than \$20.

Staff Wellness

St. Francis Xavier School values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities that support staff efforts to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Our Wellness Committee and school administration will encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff through education, fitness challenges, and other positive staff involvement programs.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education Classes

Regular Physical Education (P.E.)

K-8 All students in grades K-8, including students with disabilities and special health-care needs, will receive regular physical education throughout the school year. These classes shall provide students with skills and activities that are needed for lifetime physical fitness. All physical education classes will be taught by a certified physical education teacher using the school's adopted curriculum and standards for Physical Education. The school's curriculum was written in alignment with NASPE standards. A copy of this curriculum and standards can be found in the Physical Education Office and the Principal's Office. The Physical Education teacher will be provided with annual professional development opportunities focused on topics relevant to physical education instruction.

Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (i.e. intramural sports) will not be substituted for this physical education requirement. Physical education classes will meet twice a week and will last a minimum of 30 minutes in elementary school and 45 minutes in middle school, and students will spend at least 50 percent of the class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess

All K-8 school students will be given at least 25 minutes per day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors (weather-permitting). St. Francis Xavier School will encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity through the provision of space and equipment. St. Francis Xavier School will discourage extended periods (i.e. periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities (i.e. mandatory schoolwide testing) make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, students will be given periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

St. Francis Xavier School will offer extracurricular physical activity programs. The range of activities will meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs. Our 7th and 8th grade students will also be encouraged to participate in ISD 877 sports programs. After-school childcare and enrichment programs will provide and encourage daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants. Communications regarding physical activities programs offered within the larger community will be provided to students.

Physical Activity and Punishment

Teachers and other school personnel will not use physical activity (i.e. running laps, pushups) as punishment. Students will not miss Physical Education classes to attend other courses or to make up work for these courses.

St. Francis Xavier School believes that recess and other opportunities for physical activities are an important part of the school day. Teachers and staff are encouraged to find alternatives to withholding recess or other physical activities as a consequence for poor behavior.

Safe Routes to School

St. Francis Xavier School will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to bus safely to/from school. When appropriate, St. Francis Xavier School will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The availability of federal "safe routes to school" funds, administered by the state department of transportation, will be explored to finance such improvements. Students will be encouraged to use public transportation when available and appropriate for travel to school.

Marketing of Foods and Beverages

St. Francis Xavier school understand the influence that marketing and media can have on the choices that students and families make. Therefore, all efforts will be made to prominently display health food choices in the cafeteria to encourage healthy choices. Marketing on the school campus will be limited to those products that are allowed to be sold according to the district's standards and Smart Snack guidelines. Advertising for food and beverages that are not available for sale at the school will be restricted on school property. Efforts will be made to select materials for the school and classrooms that are free of branding and logos of unhealthy food choices.

V. Monitoring and Policy Review Monitoring

The Principal will ensure compliance with established 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. The Principal and Wellness Committee will develop a summary report every three years. This report will be available to the SAC (School Advisory Council), Home and School Association, and school health services personnel.

Policy Review

St. Francis Xavier School assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement using the Wellness School Assessment Tool. As part of that review, reviews of the 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 will be considered. As necessary, the wellness policies will be reviewed and work plans developed, in order to facilitate their implementation. All members of the Wellness Committee—students, staff, and parents—will be involved in the review of the policy.

The Wellness Policy and a summary of the work of the Wellness Committee are available on the school's website on the Health page.