

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy

ALLIANCE FOR A HEALTHIER GENERATION MODEL WELLNESS POLICY

The Academy Wellness committee led by the Student Program Coordinator, consisting of parents, students, staff, and community members will develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions, and timelines specific to each campus, and includes information about who will be responsible to make what change, by how much, where, and when, as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campuses, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy uses the Healthy Schools Program online tools to complete a school level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's School Health Index, create an action plan that fosters implementation, and generate an annual progress report.

This wellness policy can be found at: www.sjp2ca.org.

Recordkeeping

The Academy Wellness committee will meet four times a year and maintain meeting minutes including retaining records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy at www.sjp2ca.org. Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

The written wellness policy: Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including (1) Efforts to actively solicit Wellness Committee membership from the required stakeholder groups; and (2) These groups' participation in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy; Documentation of annual policy progress reports for each campus under its jurisdiction, and Documentation of the triennial assessment of the policy for each campus under its' jurisdiction; Documentation demonstrating compliance with public notification requirements, including (1) Methods by which the wellness policy, annual progress reports, and triennial assessments are made available to the public; and (2) Efforts to actively notify families about the availability of wellness policy.

All student data is protected to ensure the privacy of all students eligibility for free/reduced lunch.

Annual Progress Reports

The Academy will compile and publish an annual report to share basic information about the wellness policy and report on the progress of the campuses within the Academy in meeting wellness goals. This annual report will be published around the same time each year and will include information from each **campus in the Academy**. This report will include, but is not limited to:

- The website address for the wellness policy and/or how the public can receive/access a copy of the wellness policy; a description of each campuses' progress in meeting the wellness policy goals; a summary of each campuses' events or activities related to wellness policy implementation; the name, position title, and contact information of the designated Academy policy leader(s) identified in Section 1, and information on how individuals and the public can get involved with the Wellness Committee.
- Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy will actively notify households/families of the availability of the annual report.
- The Academy will track, analyze, and report on any correlations between improvements in health-promoting environments with education outcomes, such as absenteeism, disciplinary referrals, test scores, average grades. Or health measures such as consumption of whole grain, fruits, or vegetables through the school meal programs or BMI, or psycho-social measures such as self-reported "connectedness," or other school climate measures.

The Academy is encouraged to collaborate with local research institutions and universities. The Academy will also track and annually report other related information, such as findings from food safety inspections, aggregate participation in school meal programs, income reported from competitive food sales, fundraising revenues, and other such information, as feasible.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, the Academy will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

- The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the Academy are in compliance with the wellness policy. The extent to which the Academy's wellness policy compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's model wellness policy, and a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the Academy's wellness policy.

The position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is:

Tina Higgins

thiggins@sjp2ca.org

Kathleen Duggan

kduggan@sjp2ca.org

The Wellness Committee, in collaboration with individual schools, will monitor schools' compliance with this wellness policy.

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The Wellness Committee will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual progress reports and triennial assessments, and/or as the Academy priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges, and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.

Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications

The Academy is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the policy. The Academy will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the Wellness Committee and others can participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for that campus.

The Academy will also inform parents of the improvements that have been made to campus meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply, and a description of and compliance with Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. The Academy will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the Academy's website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy.

The Academy will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that the Academy and individual campuses are communicating other important school information with parents.

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy will actively notify the public about the content of, or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum. The Academy will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

Nutrition

School Meals

Our Academy is committed to serving healthy meals to children, by choosing a food vendor who follows the meal patterns for children set by USDA. The meals include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk, moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and zero grams trans-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification), and to meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

All lunch periods are a minimum of 30 minutes, with at least 20 minutes of seated time to ensure students have adequate time to consume meals.

All schools with the Academy participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy also operates additional nutrition-related programs and activities including a snack program. All schools within the Academy are committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP programs and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs that:

- are accessible to all students
- are appealing and attractive to children
- are served in clean and pleasant settings
- meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations.
(The Academy offers reimbursable school meals that meet USDA nutrition standards.)

SJP2CA promotes healthy food and beverage choices using at least ten of the following Smarter Lunchroom techniques:

- Monthly announcements are sent to parents with menu options
Menus are also posted in the cafeteria

Every 3 years SJP2CA issues an RFP (Request for Proposal) for school lunch services providers for consideration. As part of the consideration policy the Wellness Committee and/or a group of its' members, review the meal program for culturally relevant, and minimally processed meal options as well as financial considerations and overall high quality. Consideration is also given to vendors who may provide Farm-to-School programming as part of their service, including local or regional foods into the school meal program.

SJP2CA students participate in field trips to a variety of local farms.

SJP2CA's Wellness Committee and/or a group of its' members, also looks into new opportunities for incorporating Farm-to-School opportunities. In 2026 the SJP2CA completed an application for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program offered by the state of MA.

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

All school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition 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. Cafeteria staff are required to do a minimum of 6 hours of training throughout the course of the year. The nutrition program is managed by Essence of Time who prepare menus and meals for delivery.

All cafeteria staff are also required to be Safe Serve or Always Food Safe trained.

Water

To promote hydration, free potable water, safe, unflavored drinking water is available to all students throughout the school day and throughout every campus. Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy has also made filtered drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes. In addition, students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

All campuses are supported by water from the City of Boston. The water quality is monitored by the City of Boston to ensure that it is safe for consumption. Each campus receives an annual water quality update and are notified if at any time the water is not suitable for consumption.

Competitive Foods and Beverage

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus *during the school day* support healthy eating. Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy doesn't sell food or beverages during the school day that are separate from the vendor provided school breakfast, lunch and snacks.

All foods offered at the Academy will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School Nutrition standards, including through:

- **Snacks:** Parents are asked to send healthy snacks and lunches to school for their children. Soft drinks are not allowed. Due to student food allergies, students are NOT allowed to share food during either snack or lunch in any of the Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy cafeterias and/or classrooms.
- **Parties:** In order to maintain an academic climate, and because of food allergies, parties are not allowed. We celebrate birthdays and holidays in a creative way as a school community. Families are notified of these special celebrations in advance. End of the year celebrations are planned with the permission of the principal at each campus.

Fundraising

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy will promote non-food fundraisers and encourage those promoting physical activity (such as walk-a-thons, jump rope for heart, fun runs, etc).

Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. 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 and teachers, parents, students and the community.

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy's goal is to promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the Academy, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. School lunches and snacks are in accordance with the USDA nutrition standards.

Student and caregiver feedback is regularly collected through observation and email communication. Menu updates are made to include this feedback and make adjustments when necessary and possible.

Nutrition Education

The Academy, in partnership with the program at UMASS Boston, aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is 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 integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects
- Include enjoyable developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visit, and school gardens
- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy product, and healthy food preparation methods
- Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise)
- Link with school programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens. Farm to School programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services • Teach media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing, and include nutrition education training for teachers and other staff

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy does not promote or advertise foods and beverages during the school day other than the vendor provided breakfast and lunch. These meals follow the guidelines set forth by USDA as part of the National School Lunch Program.

If other foods or beverages are to be promoted and advertised the Wellness Committee will meet prior in order to update this policy.

Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should participate in various forms of physical activity every day in school and out of school. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive school-based physical activity program (CSPAP) that includes these components:

- Physical education
- Recess
- Classroom-base physical activity
- Out of school-time activities such as basketball, volleyball and clubs that promote physical activity

The Academy is committed to providing these opportunities. Schools will ensure that these varied opportunities are in addition to and not a substitute for physical education (addressed in "Physical Education" subsection).

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, physical activity breaks, or physical education) will not be withheld as punishment for any reason. The Academy will provide teachers and other school staff with a list of ideas for alternative ways to discipline students.

To the extent practicable, the Academy will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The Academy will conduct necessary inspections.

Physical Education

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy partners with Young World to provide students with physical education using an age appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

All elementary students in each grade will receive physical education every week throughout the school year.

Recess (Elementary)

All elementary schools will offer at least **20 minutes of recess** on all or most days during the school year. If recess is offered before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand sanitizing mechanisms located just inside/outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves will be built into the recess transition period/timeframe before students enter the cafeteria.

Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. In the event that the Academy must conduct indoor recess, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable. Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

Physical Activity Breaks (Elementary and Middle School)

The Academy recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered periodic opportunities to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. The Academy recommends teachers provide short (3-5 minutes) physical activity breaks to student during and between classroom times. The Physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

The Academy will provide resources and links to resources, tools, and technology with ideas for physical activity breaks. Resources and ideas are available through USDA and the Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

Active Academics

Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies, and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.

The Academy will support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing annual professional development opportunities and resource, including information on leading activities, activity options, as well as making available background material on the connections between learning and movement.

Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

The Academy integrates wellness activities across the entire campuses, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues, and physical activity facilities. The Academy will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition, and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development and strong educational outcomes.

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy will encourage and coordinate content across curricular areas that promote student health, such as teaching nutrition concepts in mathematics, with consultation provided by either the school or the Academy’s curriculum experts.

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state, or association recognition for efforts, or grants/fundraising opportunities for healthy school environments will be coordinated with and complimentary of the wellness policy, including but not limited to ensuring the involvement of the Wellness Committee.

All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy. All school-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity opportunities.

All campuses are supported by Family Liaisons, City Connects Coordinators and their administration who regularly communicate information regarding community-based support available for food support and many other options. Family Liaisons and City Connects Coordinators work with community organizations to support student and family social-emotional health and establish connections between families and community organizations.

SJP2CA uses the Responsive Classroom approach accompanied by MTSS (Multi-tiered system of support) in order to observe, identify and provide differentiated support to students based on their individual SEL (social and emotional) learning needs.

Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy is supported by RCAB Wellness Program which all staff can participate in. will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (e.g. increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or incorporating nutrition lessons into math class). Professional learning will help Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy faculty and staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing Academy reform or academic improvement plans/effort.