

## SCHOOL WELLNESS

The St. James Parish School Board is committed to the optimal development of every student. The School Board believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental and social success, the School Board shall strive to ensure positive, safe and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

It is the School Board's desire to ensure environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, the School Board shall establish goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in the St. James Parish public schools 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 quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during and after school;
- Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of the School Board in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- The School Board establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

### SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL (SHAC)

The School Board shall establish a *School Health Advisory Council* (SHAC) to advise the School Board on physical activity for students, physical and health education, nutrition, and overall student health. The council members shall be appointed by the School Board and shall include parents of students and individuals representing the community, as well as school health and food service professionals. The *School Health Advisory Council* shall assist in implementation, periodic review, and updating of the *School Wellness* policy.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be responsible for assuring compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. **In each school, the principal or designee shall oversee compliance with those policies in his/her school and shall report on the school's compliance to the Superintendent or his/her designee.**

School food service staff, at the school or district level, shall assess compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and report on this matter to the Superintendent (or if done at the school level, to the school principal).

### IMPLEMENTATION

The School Board shall develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of the *School Wellness* policy. The plan shall delineate roles, responsibilities, actions and timelines specific to each school; and include information about persons responsible for making changes; as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education and other school-based activities that promote student wellness.

This *School Wellness* policy and any progress reports shall be maintained on the School Board's website.

### TRIENNIAL PROGRESS ASSESSMENTS

At least once every three (3) years, the School Board shall evaluate compliance with the *School Wellness* policy to assess the implementation of the policy and document the assessment for each school under its jurisdiction. The *School Wellness* policy shall be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three (3) years, following the triennial assessment.

### RECORDKEEPING

The School Board shall retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the *School Wellness* policy at the St. James Parish School Board central office. Documentation maintained in this location shall include, but not be limited to:

- The written *School Wellness* policy;
- Documentation demonstrating that the policy has been made available to the public;
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the *School Wellness* policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods the School Board uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the *School Health Advisory Council*;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- **The most recent assessment on the implementation of the *School Wellness* policy;**
- **Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the *School Wellness* policy has been made available to the public.**

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS

The School Board is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the *School Wellness* policy. The School Board shall inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and application procedures, and a description of and compliance with nutrition standards. The School Board shall use electronic mechanisms, such as e-mail or displaying notices on the School Board'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 *School Wellness* policy, as well as how to get involved and support the *School Wellness* policy and activities/initiatives. The School Board shall ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that the School Board and individual schools are communicating important school information with parents.

### Annual Notification of Policy

The School Board shall actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about the *School Wellness* policy, including its content, any updates to the policy and implementation status. The School Board shall make this information available via the School Board's website and/or district-wide communications.

## NUTRITION

### School Meals

The St. James Parish School Board is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and have zero grams *trans*-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meeting the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements.

All public schools within St. James Parish participate in the *United States Department of Agriculture* (USDA) child nutrition programs, including the *National School Lunch Program* (NSLP), the *School Breakfast Program* (SBP). All public schools within St. James Parish shall be 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.

## Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water shall be available to all students throughout the school day and throughout every school campus. The School Board shall make drinking water available where school meals are served during mealtimes.

## Competitive Foods and Beverages

The School Board is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus during the school day support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (e.g., “competitive” foods and beverages) shall meet the nutrition standards as outlined in 7 CFR 210.11. These standards aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits.

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to students on the school campus during the school day shall meet or exceed the USDA nutrition standards. These standards shall apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, à la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores and snack or food carts.

## Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

It is the intent of the School Board to protect and promote student health by restricting advertising and marketing in the schools to only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on campus, consistent with this *School Wellness* policy and its implementation plan.

## Other Food and Beverages Provided, but not Sold, on School Campuses

The School Board has developed the following guidelines for foods and beverages which are provided, but not sold, during the school day:

1. Celebrations and parties. The School Board will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas.
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. The School Board will provide to parents a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

3. Rewards and incentives. The School Board will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of alternative ways to reward children. Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.
- 4.

### 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 shall receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. Nutrition promotion shall also include marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students as well as encouraging participation in school meal programs.

### Nutrition Education

The School Board shall teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. Schools shall 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;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits and school gardens;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Links with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, and other school foods and nutrition-related community services;

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

### Physical Education

The School Board shall 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 shall promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits.

All School Board elementary (K-8) students shall receive physical education for at least 30

minutes per day throughout the school year. High school students are required to have a minimum of 1.5 Carnegie units in physical education to graduate.

The School Board physical education program shall promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments and shall use criterion-based reporting for each student.

### Physical Activity

Students in grades K-8 are required by state law to receive at least thirty (30) minutes of physical activity per day. High school students shall be encouraged to incorporate physical activity into their day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive school physical activity program. Such programs reflect strong coordination and synergy across all of the components: quality physical education as the foundation; physical activity before, during and after school; staff involvement and family and community engagement. Schools shall ensure that varied physical activity opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education.

To the extent practicable, the School Board shall ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active.

### Classroom Physical Activity Breaks (Elementary and Secondary)

The School Board 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 shall be offered periodic opportunities to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. Teachers shall be encouraged to provide short (3-5-minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time at least three (3) days per week. Such physical activity breaks shall complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

The School Board shall provide resources and links to resources, tools, and technology with ideas for classroom physical activity breaks. Resources and ideas are also available through USDA and other organizations which promote health and wellness.

### Active Academics

Teachers shall be encouraged to 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 School Board shall support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and

employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing annual professional development opportunities and resources, including information on leading activities, activity options, as well as making available background material on the connections between learning and movement. Teachers shall serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

#### OTHER ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE STUDENT WELLNESS

The School Board shall integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues and physical activity facilities. The School Board shall 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.

Public schools in St. James Parish shall be encouraged to 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 School Board's curriculum experts.

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state or other organizational recognition for efforts, or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments shall be coordinated with and complementary of the *School Wellness* policy, including but not limited to ensuring the involvement of the *School Health Advisory Council*.

All school-sponsored events shall adhere to the *School Wellness* policy guidelines. All school-sponsored wellness events shall include physical activity and healthy eating opportunities when appropriate.

#### DEFINITIONS

In accordance with 7 CFR 210.11, for purposes of this policy:

*School day* shall be defined as beginning at midnight until thirty (30) minutes after the official school day ends.

*School campus* shall be defined as all areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day.

Revised: February 9, 2010  
Revised: July 22, 2014  
Revised: June 27, 2017

Revised: July 6, 2022  
Revised: July 19, 2023

Ref: PL 108-265 (*Section 204, Child Nutrition and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act of 2004*); 42 USC 1751 et seq. (*Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act*); 42 USC 1771 et seq. (*Child Nutrition Act of 1966*); 7 CFR 210 (*National School Lunch Program*); 7 CFR 220 (*School Breakfast Program*); La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:17.1, 17:197.1; Board minutes, 2-9-10, 7-22-14, 6-27-17.