

St. Tammany Parish Public Schools

Wellness Policy

Purpose

This Wellness Policy establishes a formal system of building a school environment that is safe and healthy, thereby enhancing the potential for academic achievement among students. Students need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow and learn.

The St. Tammany Parish School Board is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity habits. The School Food Service Supervisor will serve as the coordinator of the Wellness Policy.

Members of the School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC), formerly known as the Wellness Policy Committee will include students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.

Nutrition Services

Qualified Child Nutrition Program 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; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

School Meals

St. Tammany Parish Public Schools will:

1. Offer menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the USDA Child Nutrition Program and the Louisiana Department of Education.
2. Encourage students, school staff, and families to participate in school meal programs.
3. Ensure that food safety and sanitation are followed throughout the school, including providing facilities to wash hands before meal service.
4. Ensure that school meals are accessible to all students with a variety of delivery strategies such as grab-and-go meals or alternate eating sites.
5. Ensure that students receive adequate time to eat breakfast and lunch.
6. Provide a cafeteria environment that is conducive to a positive dining experience, with socializing among students and between students and adults and with supervision of eating areas by adults who model proper conduct and voice level.

Foods and Beverages Offered Outside of the Child Nutrition Programs

Foods and beverages sold to students must meet specific nutritional criteria if sold on the grounds at any time during a period beginning one-half hour before the start of the school day and ending one-half hour after the end of the school day. (*Refer to Smart Snacks in Schools*).

Schools should discourage the use of foods and beverages as **rewards** for student accomplishment. Schools are encouraged to provide healthful food and beverage choices at school **parties**. Schools should promote **fundraisers** that sell items other than food and beverages or only foods and beverages that are nutrient dense (low in calories and high in nutrients).

It is suggested that schools have a policy in the student handbook regarding all outside foods brought into the school cafeteria.

Nutrition Education

School-based nutrition education includes traditional classroom lessons. Nutrition is not a stand-alone course. It is taught in health education and science classes and can be integrated into core content area of instruction across the curriculum. A planned, sequential curriculum where the lessons are aligned with standards, benchmarks, and grade-level expectations is essential to impact knowledge, attitude, and behavior. The cafeteria can be used as part of the total educational system for modeling behavior.

Schools will:

1. Implement nutrition education programs that promote lifelong healthful eating practices that are research-based.
2. Use lessons that are age-appropriate, behaviorally focused content that is developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant.
3. Use curriculum and lessons that are sequential and are correlated with standards, benchmarks, and grade level expectations.
4. Provide hands-on activities that are fun and engaging.
5. Promote positive aspects of healthful eating behaviors.
6. Cafeteria will serve as learning laboratories by providing nutrition information.

Physical Education and Activity

Schools will:

1. Implement quality physical education programs that emphasize and promote participation in lifelong physical activities and reaching a health enhancing level of physical fitness among all students.
2. The physical education lessons should be aligned with standards, benchmarks, and grade-level expectations.
3. Provide all students physical education and physical activity that meet or exceed the minimum standards established by the Louisiana Department of Education.
4. Ensure that enough age-appropriate and safe equipment is in place to guarantee that all students are able to be active for physical education and physical activity.

5. Ensure that qualified, certified physical education teachers guide physical activity instruction in all elementary grades as well as in middle and high school physical education classes.
6. Provide staff development on standards implementation for physical education instructors.
7. Provide daily recess for all children in K-8th grade.
8. Encourage physical activity during recess for elementary students, intramurals programs, and clubs, as well as in physical education programs.

Communication

At the beginning of each school year, no later than the end of the first quarter, the SHAC will share a summary of the Wellness Policy with school staff and faculty, students, and parents via the school food services web page. Updates to the Policy may be highlighted and discussed.

Schools are encouraged to provide a link to the Wellness Policy on their web page.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The School Health Advisory Committee will evaluate the policy annually and revise as necessary.

WELLNESS POLICY ACTION PLAN
St. Tammany Parish

Objectives	Meet Requirements	Comments
SHAC has been established	yes	
SHAC provides information to: school administrators teachers cafeteria managers parents students	yes yes yes yes yes	
SHAC recommends revisions to Wellness policy as needed	yes	
School Meals are accessible to all students	yes	
Students eat in a pleasant atmosphere	yes	
Handwashing before eating is available & encouraged	yes	
Smart Snack Guidelines are followed	yes	
Students receive nutrition information in classroom or cafeteria	yes	
Hire certified Physical Education teachers (K – 12)	yes	
Follow LDOE guidelines for Physical Education instruction	yes	

Snack and Party Ideas

Snacks are important to provide nutrients for growing children.

1. Include a wide variety of foods that are rich in nutrients.
2. Have healthful snacks available and easily accessible. Cut up fruits and vegetables for easy eating, especially children with loose teeth or braces.
3. Try low-fat versions of milk, ice cream, crackers, and chips.
4. Avoid using food as a reward or punishment.
5. Be a good role model by eating healthful snacks with your children/students.
6. Choose fruits and vegetables as snacks so children/students can meet the goal of eating at least three or more servings of vegetables and two or more servings of fruits a day.
7. Involve children/students in planning and shopping for foods and beverages for snacks and parties.
8. Involve students in planning a party that provides healthy food choices and activities that do not focus the party on food.
9. Offer food again, even if children/students did not like it the first time, especially fruits and vegetables. Students need repeated exposure to new foods.
10. For more information, call the free American Dietetic Association Hotline at: (800) 366-1655 or visit the website at <http://www.eatright.com>.

Alternatives to Using Food as a Reward

Using food as a reward undermines nutrition education, encourages overconsumption of extra calories, especially foods high in fat and added sugar, and teaches children to eat when they are not hungry. Some alternatives for rewarding children include:

Sit by friends Give a set of flashcards or books Reading time Extra time for art or music Hold class outside Listen to music while working Play a favorite game or puzzle Dance to favorite music	Keep a treasure box filled with non-food items Go for walks Give stickers, pencils, and other school supplies Offer dress down day Offer free time at the end of the week Eat lunch with the principal or teacher
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For more ideas, visit the following web sites:

- Michigan Department of Education Team Nutrition – <http://www.tn.fcs.msue.msu.edu>
- USDA Team Nutrition *Create Healthy, Active Celebrations*
 - <http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardeducators/materials/>

Creative Fundraising Ideas

Healthy fundraising ideas promote consistent messages of practicing healthy eating and physical activity habits in the classroom, throughout the school, and at home. Listed below are some ideas for raising funds without selling food.

1. Sports tournament – Sell tickets to students and family members to attend a student volleyball, tennis, or golf tournament. Include some local celebrities to increase sales throughout the community.
2. Pledge ideas -- Walk-a-thon and fun runs – Hold a walk and or run on the school grounds. Ask for pledges to sponsor.
3. Spring yard work to local community members – Offer to rake yards and spread compost at a bargain rate.
4. Basketball tournament – Charge a team of three players \$40 for entrance and ask local businesses for prize donations. Provide tee shirts for the event and raise the entrance fee.
5. Plant sale – Sell perennials, herbs, or seeds; poinsettias during the holidays, and flowers for Valentine’s Day.
6. Community job fair – Rent booths for a fee to local companies and solicit free advertisements for local radio stations or newspapers. Charge an entrance fee.
7. Crafts fair – Local and regional crafts persons can rent booths for a fee. The school can charge a small entrance fee to the public.
8. School event planners – Sell planners at school registration. Planners include all event dates, such as sports events, national tests, dances, plays, etc. Fifty percent of the sales can be profits.
9. Sell seat cushions at sporting events – Sell advertisements on the cushions to 20 local businesses for \$50 – 100 to make even more money.
10. Administrative fun - Have money jars available for the students to make donations. The school secretary would count the money in the jars on a daily basis and post the total. At set dollar increments, the principal and/or vice-principal would have to do stunts, such as dress as a cheerleader, do cheers, etc.
11. Raffle of gift baskets assembled by students - Choose a theme such as gardening, sports, or arts and crafts. Most items for the baskets can be donated.
12. Sell candles, greeting cards, gift wrap, magazines, buttons, pins, pens, crafts, batteries, Frisbees, pet treats, and calendars.
13. Rent a special parking place.
14. Involve the community – Conduct workshops or classes, a scavenger hunt, a recycling program, a car wash for donations, a garage sale
15. Sell school spirit supplies – megaphones, shakers, plastic cups, T-shirts, school supplies, bumper stickers, cookbooks or books developed by the school
16. Host art, music, and science events such as a read-a-thon, spelling bee, science fair, talent show, art show, plays, and concerts

Adapted from *Twenty Ways to Raise Funds without Candy*, Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program, Illinois Department of Education, Creative Financing and Fun Fundraising for Schools, Sports, and Clubs, California Project LEAN, and WIN Wyoming, Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service

Members of the School Health Advisory Committee

Pat H. Farris, Supervisor of School Food Services, Chair
Larry Favre, Coach and Physical Education Instructor at Slidell High
Melissa Hoover, Secretary for School Food Services and parent
Caitlyn Hoover, Student at Fontainebleau High School
Kay Hursey, Itinerate Programs
Peggy Sharpe, Curriculum and Instruction Supervisor
Kimberly Vanderklis, Principal of Little Oak Elementary School
Aimee Woessner, Supervisor