

St Bernadette School Wellness Policy



2023-2024

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I. Introduction

Wellness and academic success in school are interrelated. The St Bernadette School Wellness Policy was developed in accordance with The Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools Wellness Policy and in consultation with St. Bernadette School administrators, educators, and food service staff. Its goal is to promote student and staff health and fitness by creating a school environment conducive to healthy physical activity, lifestyle, and nutrition choices.

II. Physical Education and Activity

- To learn skills and knowledge needed to establish and sustain an active lifestyle, every student from preschool through 8th grade has the opportunity to participate in quality, comprehensive physical education and activity.
- The Diocesan physical education and health curriculum is comprehensive and identifies progression of skill development. Concepts and skills in health and PE are integrated in a sequential, comprehensive curriculum that is developmentally appropriate. Classroom based health education complements PE. The Fitnessgram pacer “test” has been used for all grades as an instructional tool in PE.
- The Diocese of Arlington Physical Education Curriculum is implemented under the direction of a full time PE teacher educated in physical activity and health. The PE teacher participates in professional development activities as offered in order to effectively deliver the PE program.
- In accordance with the Office of Catholic Schools, PE will not be withheld as a consequence of negative behavior or incomplete course work. Students are required to engage in PE unless excused by a doctor.
- All middle school students shall receive 45 minutes of PE per week.
- Teachers are encouraged to use daily movement activities as brain breaks in the classroom, during the school day and to use non-food alternatives such as extra recess as classroom rewards.

- Community sports and activities are promoted in the weekly school newsletter, the Cardinal Connection. After school sports are offered to all students on school grounds through partnership with community businesses. Parents are also encouraged and welcome to hold sports clinics or walking/running clubs on school grounds after school and during school breaks.
- A minimum 20 minutes daily recess is included in the school schedule. Recess should not replace PE. The importance of 60 minutes of physical activity per day is encouraged via PE and lunch recess. Grades Kindergarten through 3 have an additional morning recess.
- Withholding recess time from students is prohibited and physical activity may not be assigned to students as a consequence of poor behavior or punishment for any reason.
- The Diocese of Arlington school safety policies are implemented to minimize injury and illness related to physical activity. Routine assessments of school grounds, playground, fields, and sports equipment are conducted by the PE teacher, playground monitors, facility manager, and extended day staff.

III. School Nutrition

Nutrition Education

- Nutrition topics are integrated within the comprehensive health education curriculum and taught in grades K-8 through the Diocese of Arlington Health and Science Curriculums. This curriculum provides the knowledge and skills necessary to promote health.
- Nutrition education is integrated into the broader curriculum, where appropriate.
- Healthy eating habits are encouraged through nutrition education, bulletin boards, and activities developed jointly by the nurse and food service supervisor.
- The entire school environment, not just the classroom, is aligned with health school goals to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs, and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity.
- Food service staff participate in professional development activities that address requirements for child nutrition programs, menu planning & preparation, food safety and strategies for promoting healthy eating behaviors.

Lunch Program

- The cafeteria provides nutritious meals in compliance with USDA nutrition standards for school meal patterns, nutrient levels, calorie requirements, as specified in 7 CFR 210.20, Smart Snack Standards, and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010. Drink choices include water, low fat, and fat free milk.
- The cafeteria is cashless: all students, regardless of the type of payment they make for school meals, or the food being purchased (meal or a la carte) are given a code to enter at the point of sale.
- No student will be denied a meal due to an unpaid lunch balance.
- Applications for free/reduced priced meals are available on the school website.
- Eligibility Status of children for free or reduced-price meals will be kept confidential.
- All school nutrition staff meet hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA Professional Standards for Child Nutrition Professionals.
- Fresh fruit and vegetables are sourced locally where practicable.
- The nutrition program is in compliance with federal and state nutrition standards for all foods served to include the USDA Smart Snack requirements that can be found at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-school>.
- No competitive foods or beverages may be sold during the school day.
- Students are not permitted to share food.
- Lunchroom accommodations are made for students with food allergies.
- Twenty minutes is allowed for lunch before or after recess.
- Lunch is scheduled between 11:10 AM – 1:25 PM.
- Students have the opportunity to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before eating lunch.
- Tables are washed with soap and water after each lunch period and sanitized daily.

Water

- Free, safe, unflavored drinking water is available to students throughout the school day. Water is also available in the cafeteria during lunch periods.
- Students may bring water bottles from home to keep with them in the classrooms.

Classroom Snacks

St. Bernadette School strives to build a school environment that encourages students to make healthy choices about nutrition. Research shows that children who eat nutritious meals and snacks can concentrate better in class, have more energy, and fewer behavior issues.

- Parents are encouraged to send healthy snacks and refrain from including foods and beverages that do not meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010.
- Teachers and staff will not withhold snacks as a punishment.
- Teachers and staff should not routinely distribute candy, food or beverages as a reward for academic performance or good behavior.
- Nuts are the most common food allergen, and the most likely to cause a serious reaction, therefore, **ALL CLASSROOMS ARE NUT FREE.**

After School Snacks

Snacks provided by the school and consumed during after school clubs (e.g., choir, drama, band) must also follow Smart Snacks in Schools guidelines healthy, safe snack rules and be nut-free.

Class Parties & Birthday Celebrations

- No food treats or candy other than ice cream purchased through the Cafeteria may be brought in for a child's birthday. "Goody bags" containing candy and/or toys are not permitted in school. In addition, we do not permit any balloons or noisemakers. However, children may bring in prayer cards, stickers or pencils to share
- Parents should consult the classroom teacher and the classroom allergy list before bringing in food. (*see Appendix A*).
- Ice cream (nut and dairy free options for students with allergies) can be purchased through the front office.
- Nuts are the most common food allergen, and the most likely to cause a serious reaction, therefore, **ALL CLASSROOMS ARE NUT FREE.**
- Special occasion, school wide treats, are at the discretion of the principal.

School-Sponsored Fundraisers

- Fundraising during and outside school hours will sell only non-food items or foods and beverages that meet or exceed the Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards.
- Schools are permitted to allow a limited number of school-sponsored fundraisers during the school year to be exempt from Smart Snack Standards. Exempt fundraisers are tracked and monitored by the school principal and records are kept on file in the Main Office.
- Any fundraiser that sells food or beverages may not be conducted during meal service times. This includes from 6:00 a.m. to the end of the breakfast period (if breakfast is provided) and from the beginning of the first lunch period to the end of the last lunch period.
- See Appendix B for more information.

IV. Communication

- Copies of the wellness policy are on the website, in the clinic, and front office.
- The school nurse will meet at least annually with the Wellness Team and any interested parents to review and update the wellness policy as needed.

V. Student & Staff Wellness

- The Wellness Team plans at least one (1) activity to teach students good nutrition and physical activity habits that will promote life-long physical and mental health. In addition, throughout the school year, classroom Social-Emotional lessons are provided to students at all grade levels and are relevant to student's age. Topics include friendship/peer relations, character education, conflict resolution, career awareness, and problem-solving skills. The Wellness Team collaborates with the school counselor, as needed, with these lessons.
- The Wellness Team will encourage all school staff members to improve or maintain their own personal health and wellness. This will be accomplished through nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and spirituality programs and

information offered during the school year. At least one (1) activity is planned for staff wellness each school year.

- The following services are available to staff: blood pressure checks by the school nurse, flu shots through outside Diocesan-approved vaccination providers, and Life Assistance Benefits, through the Diocese of Arlington, which offers 24-hour access to services for work/life issues and crisis support.

VI. Policy Implementation

- The school nurse will coordinate the Wellness Team and ensure compliance with Diocesan wellness policy requirements. Team members will include the PE teacher, guidance counselor, at least one other faculty member, the Nutrition Director, the Assistant Principal, and any interested parent.
- The Team will meet four (4) times each year and more often if indicated.

VII. Evaluation

- The Wellness Team will annually perform a self-evaluation of health and wellness school programs undertaken during the school year. Accomplishments will be identified, as well as items that did not provide intended results. “What worked and why?” and “What did not work and why?” This information will be utilized to help improve programs and determine where effort needs to be placed the next school year.
- The Wellness Team will also complete any school health and wellness evaluations required by the Diocese of Arlington, Office of Catholic Schools Wellness Policy.
- At least once every three years, the Wellness Team will complete the USDA required Triennial Assessment. The following is measured and made available to the public via the school website:
 - ✓ the extent to which the school complies with the Local Wellness Policy (LWP);
 - ✓ the extent to which the LWP compares to model local school wellness policies; and
 - ✓ the progress made in attaining the goals of the LWP.

If you have questions pertaining to the development, review, update, or implementation of this local wellness policy, please contact the school nurse at akoucheravy@stbernschool.org.

Appendix A
FOOD ALLERGY PREVENTION &
MANAGEMENT PLAN

Parent and Student Responsibilities

The student and parent are the first line of safety in preventing an accidental ingestion of questionable or known food allergens. The student with a food allergy needs to be educated by his/her parents on food safety, label reading and not consuming any food if they are not sure of the ingredients.

It is the parent's responsibility to provide Emergency Medications, and an Allergy Action Plan, signed by a physician, ON OR BEFORE the first day of school. Forms must be updated yearly, and medications must be current. Expired medications cannot be relied on in emergencies. Medication policies in the handbook must be followed.

Parents of students with food allergies listed on their emergency or health update form that do not provide an action plan and medication are required to sign a waiver of liability/refusal to provide medication form.

Faculty and Staff Responsibilities

The school nurse will keep the kitchen and classroom lists updated on any new food allergies.

Epi-Pens and a copy of the allergy action plan will be kept in the clinic in for accessibility in an emergency. Instructions on the action plan will be followed.

Teachers will alert substitute teachers to children in the class with food allergies.

Cafeteria

Students are not permitted to share food for lunch.

Peanut butter and nut products are not restricted except for the following: students who eat any type of nut product are not permitted to sit at the nut free table.

A designated "nut free" table is provided in the cafeteria. Lunch room monitors are aware of students with nut allergies.

EXEMPTION – if a student does not want to sit at the designated "nut free" table, the parent or guardian must submit, **IN WRITING**, a letter stating that their child is not required to sit at the designated nut free table.

All lunch tables and benches will be washed with soap and water after each lunch period and sanitized daily.

Classroom

Students are not allowed to share food for lunch or snack.

Nuts are the most common allergen, and the most likely to cause a serious reaction, therefore, **ALL CLASSROOMS ARE NUT FREE.**

Class Parties and Celebrations

The following guidelines should be followed for any food or beverage provided for school parties or celebrations:

- Consult the classroom teacher and check the classroom allergies list before planning any activities that involve food or serving food products.
- Nuts are the most common allergen, and the most likely to cause a serious reaction, therefore, **ALL CLASSROOMS ARE NUT FREE.**
- A list of ingredients **must** be provided to the teacher before any food is brought into the classroom.
- Parents of students with food allergies are encouraged to provide snacks labeled with the child's name to be kept in the clinic.
- If there is any question about a food distributed in the classroom, it should not be consumed, but may be sent home with a list of ingredients for parent review.

Field Trips

- Action Plans and emergency medications will be sent with the class. A teacher or other designated staff member will sign for them after going over instructions on proper procedure to safely administer medication.
- When transportation is by private car, and a parent or guardian of a student with food allergies is not able to attend, the parent must sign a consent allowing a chaperone to carry and dispense medication in an emergency.
- Nut free tables can be provided at the teachers' or chaperones' discretion.

Bullying

Verbal or physical bullying or taunting related to a food allergy or restriction will not be tolerated. If a student with an allergy experiences any type of bullying related to his/her food allergy, he/she needs to bring it to the teacher's attention and it will be followed up

according to the handbook regulations. The school nurse will educate students regarding the severity of food allergies.

Food Safety

Since food allergic children can experience a **life-threatening** reaction through ingestion, inhalation, or inadvertent contact with an allergen, vigilance on the part of all staff, parents and students is necessary. Although it is impossible to guarantee an allergen free environment, we ask that you follow these guidelines when bringing food or beverages to the classrooms to minimize risk of exposure to allergens.

- Consult the classroom teacher and check the classroom allergies list before planning any activities that involve food or serving food products any classroom
- A list of ingredients **must** be provided to the classroom teacher before any food is brought into the classroom.
- Nuts are the most common allergen, and the most likely to cause a serious reaction, therefore, **ALL CLASSROOMS ARE NUT FREE.**

Appendix B Fundraising recommendations

Fund- raising activities at St. Bernadette School should support healthy lifestyles. Classrooms and other groups are encouraged to sell items other than food for fund-raising.

Items to sell other than food:

- Candles
- Gift wrap
- Cookbooks
- T-shirts and sweatshirts
- Calendars
- First aid kits / Emergency kits for cars
- School spirit gear
- Plants, flowers, poinsettias, and seeds
- Coffee cups and mugs
- License plate holders with school logo
- Bumper stickers
- Christmas ornaments

The following website is an outstanding resource for fund-raising:
www.actionforhealthykids.org