

Comprehensive Wellness Policy
April 2006
Reviewed January 8, 2024
St. James School, Gouverneur, New York

(1) PHILOSOPHY

On June 30, 2004, the President of The United States signed Public Law 108-265, the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004. Section 204 of this law requires school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program to develop a local wellness policy that addresses student wellness and the growing problem of childhood obesity, by the School Year following July 2006.

St. James School Wellness Council believes in the Coordinated and Comprehensive approach to staff and student wellness that is sensitive to individual and community needs. To that end, the Council believes that children of all ages who begin each day as healthy individuals can:

- learn more
- learn better
- are more likely to complete their formal education.

The Council also believes that healthy staff can:

- more effectively perform their assigned duties
- model appropriate wellness behaviors for students.

(2) NUTRITION

St. James School believes that a hungry child cannot learn. Academic performance and quality of life issues are affected by the choice and availability of good foods in our schools. Healthy foods support student physical growth, brain development, resistance to disease, emotional stability and ability to learn.

(a) Nutrition guidelines that require the use of products that are high in fiber, low in added fats, sugar and sodium, and served in appropriate portion sizes consistent with USDA standards shall be established for all foods offered by St. James Nutrition Dept. Menu and product selection shall utilize student, parent, staff and community advisory groups whenever possible.

(b) Nutrition services, policies and guidelines for reimbursable meals shall not be more restrictive than federal and state regulations.

Dining Area

(a) St James School students eat in their classrooms with their teacher. This makes for a safe, enjoyable environment for the students.

(b) Drinking fountains shall be made available in school, so that students can get water at meals and throughout the day.

(c) All students shall be encouraged to participate in school meal programs and the identity of students who eat free and reduced price meals shall be protected.

Time to Eat

- (a) St. James School shall ensure an adequate time for students to enjoy eating healthy foods with friends at school.
- (b) St. James School shall schedule lunchtime as near the middle of the school day as possible.

Nutrition Education

- (a) Students in grades K-6 shall receive nutrition education that is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy eating behaviors.
- (b) Students shall receive consistent nutrition messages throughout school, classroom, cafeteria and home.
- (c) Nutrition shall be integrated into the health education or core curricula (e.g., math, science, language arts).
- (d) St. James shall ensure that staff who provide nutrition education have appropriate training.

Food or Physical Activity as a Reward or Punishment

- (a) St. James shall prohibit the use of food as a reward or punishment in school.
- (b) St. James shall not deny student participation in recess or other physical activities as a form of discipline or for classroom make-up time.

Consistent School Activities and Environment

- (a) St. James School shall strive to ensure that schools' fundraising efforts are supportive of healthy eating.
- (b) St. James School shall provide opportunities for on-going professional training and development for food service staff and teachers in the areas of nutrition and physical education.
- (c) The school encourages parents, teachers, administration, students and food service staff to serve as role models in practicing healthy eating and being physically active, both in school and at home.
- (d) The school encourages healthy eating and personnel serve as role models in classrooms.
- (e) The school provides information about the FNS programs.
- (f) The school encourages all students to participate in school meal programs.

All Foods and Beverages Available During the School Day

Students' lifelong eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of foods and beverages available in their daily environment. In addition to ensuring that reimbursable school meals meet program requirements and nutrition standards, St. James believes it must also establish standards or guidelines to address all foods and beverages sold or served to students, including those available outside the school meal programs.

(a) Foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities will strive to offer at least one healthy alternative.

(b) Refreshments served at celebrations and meetings during the school day will strive to meet nutritional standards.

Vending Machines

There are no school vending machines at St. James School

(3) HEALTH EDUCATION

Healthy living skills shall be taught as part of the regular instructional program. The PreK-6 Health Education program shall provide the opportunity for all students to understand and practice concepts and skills related to health promotion and disease prevention.

(a) St. James School shall provide for a standards based, student-centered health education program based upon New York State Standards.

(b) In accordance with NYS Standards, students in St. James School shall receive instruction and practice based on the three Standards: Personal Health and Fitness; A Safe and Healthy Environment; and Resource Management.

(c) In accordance to NYS, students shall receive instruction and practice to acquire and develop skill in self management, relationship management, communication, stress management, goal setting, decision making, and advocacy that enhance personal, family and community health.

(d) In accordance with NYS, students shall receive age-appropriate Functional Knowledge that may include, but not limited to, the following: Physical Activity and Nutrition, Tobacco, Alcohol, and other Drugs; Family Life; Violence Prevention; Disease Prevention; Hygiene, and other required health areas.

(e) In accordance with NYS regulations, the instruction shall be provided as follows: K-6 by regular classroom teachers or special area teachers.

(4) PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ACTIVITY

St. James School believes that Physical Education and physical activity shall be an essential element of the instructional program. The primary goals for schools' physical activity components are: to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for specific physical activities, to maintain students' physical fitness, to ensure students' regular participation in physical activity, and to teach students the short- and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthful lifestyle.

The Physical Education Program

(a) The PE program shall be designed to stress physical fitness and encourage healthy, active lifestyles.

(b) The PE program shall consist of physical activities of at least moderate intensity and for a duration that is sufficient to provide a significant health benefit to students subject to the differing abilities of students.

(c) St. James physical education program is held for a 45 minute period twice a week.

Physical Activity Programs

(a) Students shall be given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through PE classes, daily recess periods, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum.

(b) Students shall be given the opportunity for physical activity through after-school programs. St. James offers basketball for both boys and girls Grades 3-6.

(c) St. James will make efforts to keep school physical activity facilities open for use by students outside school hours. St. James has an excellent playground available to students during and after school .

(d) St. James shall work with the community to create ways for students to walk or bike safely to and from school.

(e) St. James shall encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.

(f) St. James shall provide training to enable teachers, and other school staff to promote enjoyable, lifelong physical activity among students.

(5) SAFE & HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

St. James School believes that a safe and healthy environment supports academic success for all students. safer school communities promote healthier students. Healthier students do better in school and make greater contributions to their community.

(a) St. James School building and grounds shall meet all current health and safety standards; and be kept clean, safe, inviting and in good repair.

(b) St. James School shall maintain an environment that is free of tobacco, alcohol, and prohibited substances.

(c) St. James School shall support personal safety, an environment free from harassment, and an environment free of a threat or act of violence.

(d) St. James School and individual classrooms shall work to create an environment where students and staff are respected, valued, and accepted with high expectations for personal behavior and accomplishments.

(6) COUNSELING, PSYCHOLOGICAL & SOCIAL SERVICES

St. James School is committed to providing programs and service contacts to staff, students and their families that promote social and emotional well being to optimize conditions for teaching and learning.

In so doing, we shall provide a supportive environment that includes contact information for guidance counselors, psychologists and social workers. Such an environment shall encourage students, families and staff to request assistance when needed and shall link them to school and community resources.

(7) HEALTH SERVICES

St. James School believes an effective health care delivery system that promotes academic achievement by providing services from qualified health care providers will improve the mental and physical health of students and staff.

- (a) Primary coordination of health services shall be through a trained school nurse with the support of St. James School. Critical health issues will be addressed through the County Public Health Dept.
- (b) St. James School shall collaborate with community health liaisons and resources to promote health and wellness for students, families, staff and community.
- (c) Coordinated and comprehensive programs of accessible health services shall be provided to students and staff and shall include, but not limited to, nursing, violence prevention, school safety, communicable disease prevention, health screenings, community health referrals, immunizations, parenting skills, first aid, CPR/AD, and other priority health education topics.

(8) STAFF WELLNESS

St. James School believes that a healthy staff can more effectively perform their duties and serve as powerful role models for healthy living. The school shall provide information about wellness resources and services. All personnel involved in the school health program shall possess the necessary training and or experience essential to their duties.

- (a) St. James School shall maintain an environment that is free of tobacco, alcohol, and prohibited substances.
- (b) St. James School shall provide an accessible and productive work environment free from physical dangers or emotional threat that is as safe as possible.
- (c) All personnel involved in the school health program will be provided with the opportunity for ongoing professional development activities that are directly related to their responsibilities. Professional development programs shall: respond to the professional improvement needs of staff and school; be made available to staff at their place of work to the greatest feasible extent through in-service programs; involve any related personnel in planning and implementation.
- (d) St. James School shall support the development and implementation of Staff Wellness activities to ensure that all staff have access to opportunities that enhance their health

