



## **Las Cruces Catholic School Holy Cross & St. Mary's Campus**

### **Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition**

#### **Preamble**

Students in the Las Cruces School District will have access to healthy food throughout the day which will be through reimbursable school meals and/or other foods available throughout the school campus. These foods will meet the food requirements in the USDA Competitive foods rule. Each local educational agency participating in a program authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 shall establish a local school wellness policy.

Las Cruces Catholic Schools recognizes the need to educate our students in the areas of encouraging healthy eating and physical activity. We are striving to have an impact on our students' eating and activity behaviors.

In the classroom our students are taught to eat healthfully and to be active, but they also need the opportunity to practice those behaviors. We hope our wellness policy combines education with practice to create a healthful school environment and to encourage healthy behavior.

#### **TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:**

##### **I. School Health Councils**

The Las Cruces Catholic School and/or individual schools within the campus will create, strengthen, or work within the existing school health council to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The council also will serve as a resource to the school for implementing those policies. (A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.)

## II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

### School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;<sup>1</sup>
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk<sup>2</sup> and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.<sup>3,3</sup>

Schools should engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

**Breakfast.** LCCS does not serve breakfast. To ensure that all children have breakfast, at home in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn; LCCS will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, teacher notes, or other means.

**Free and Reduced-priced Meals.** LCCS will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> To the extent possible, schools will offer at least two non-fried vegetable and two fruit options each day and will offer five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of a week. Schools are encouraged to source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practicable.

<sup>2</sup> As recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005*.

<sup>3</sup> A whole grain is one labeled as a "whole" grain product or with a whole grain listed as the primary grain ingredient in the ingredient statement. Examples include "whole" wheat flour, cracked wheat, brown rice, and oatmeal.

<sup>4</sup> It is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for free, reduced-price, or "paid" meals.

### **Meal Times and Scheduling:** LCCS

- will provide students with at least 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *i.e.*, lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will provide students access to free drinking water during lunch where meals are served; to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (*i.e.*, orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

**Qualifications of School Food Service Staff.** Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the schools responsibility to operate a food service program, continuing professional development shall be provided for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.<sup>5</sup>

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages.** LCCS will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

**Food Allergies.** In consideration of [requirements, governing possible food allergies in schools](#), children with food allergies may qualify for a Section 504 plan through the individualized education program's (IEP) individualized health plan (IHP). (See [Individualized Healthcare Plan memo, March 19, 2015 - PED.](#)) Schools are to follow these guidelines to ensure protection of students against allergic reaction to foods:

- Ensure that a copy of the student's current IHP is attached to the student's current IEP;
- Follow guidance from Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act in regards to persons with disabilities to include substantial limitations for an individual based on his or her food allergies; and
- Adhere to instructions under [6.12.2.9 NMAC, Student's Right to Self Administer Certain Medications](#) in the potential case of anaphylaxis that may affect breathing and/or potentially affect other major life activities of students due to an allergic reaction.

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<sup>5</sup> School nutrition staff development programs are available through the USDA, School Nutrition Association, and National Food Service Management Institute.

## **Foods Sold by the Food Service Department**

- A food item sold individually:
  - will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
  - will have no more than 35% of its *weight* from added sugars;<sup>6</sup>
  - will contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes.
  
- A choice of at least one fruit and/or non-fried vegetable will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold during the school day. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).<sup>7</sup>

### **Portion Sizes:**

- Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually to those listed below:
  - One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;
  - One ounce for cookies;
  - Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items;
  - Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream;
  - Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;
  - Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water; and

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<sup>6</sup> If a food manufacturer fails to provide the *added* sugars content of a food item, use the percentage of weight from *total* sugars (in place of the percentage of weight from *added* sugars), and exempt fruits, vegetables, and dairy

<sup>7</sup> Schools that have vending machines are encouraged to include refrigerated snack vending machines, which can accommodate fruits, vegetables, yogurts, and other perishable items.

- The portion size of a la carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater than the size of comparable portions offered as part of school meals. Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits.

**Fundraising Activities.** To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities will provide a healthy option for students to purchase. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity, such as "Jump for Heart".

**Snacks.** Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. LCCS will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. LCCS will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

- If eligible, schools that provide snacks through after-school programs will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program.

**Celebrations.** LCCS will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per semester. Optional healthy snacks will be provided during all classroom celebrations.

### **III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing**

**Nutrition Education and Promotion.** Las Cruces Catholic School aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. LCCS will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program 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 classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;

- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

**Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting.** For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.*, at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

**Communications with Parents.** The Las Cruces Catholic School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school will send home health and nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school newsletters, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. LCCS will provide parents a list of foods that meet the schools snack standards and optional ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, at any school function (parties, celebrations, feasts, and sporting events, etc.) healthy food options should be made available.

The Las Cruces Catholic School will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

**Food Marketing in Schools.** School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage

marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).<sup>8</sup> School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages<sup>9</sup> is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

**Staff Wellness.** Las Cruces Catholic School highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Las Cruces Catholic School should establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member, school health council member, a health representative, and a recreation program representative. The committee should develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan should be based on input solicited from school staff and should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff. Staff will meet once every semester to ensure that provisions are in place to provide nutrition and physical activity information to families; which include the actual policy as well. SHAC will meet in October and in January; or other times as needed to make changes or provide new information to families. Information will be available on school website.

#### **IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

**Daily Physical Education (P.E.) K-12.** All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive daily physical education (or its equivalent of 60 minutes/week for elementary school students and 250 minutes/week for middle and high school students) for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity

(e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**Daily Recess.** All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

Schools should discourage extended periods (*i.e.*, periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

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<sup>8</sup> Advertising of low-nutrition foods and beverages is permitted in supplementary classroom and library materials, such as newspapers, magazines, the Internet, and similar media, when such materials are used in a class lesson or activity, or as a research tool.

<sup>9</sup> Schools should not permit general brand marketing for food brands under which more than half of the foods or beverages do not meet the nutrition standards for foods sold individually or the meals are not consistent with school meal nutrition standards.

**Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School.** LCCS elementary, middle, and high school will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. LCCS high school, and middle school as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs. Our schools will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage – verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

**Physical Activity and Punishment.** Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

**Safe Routes to School.** At LCCS parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school. High school students require a parent permission form and state license to drive to and from school.

**Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours.** School spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

## **V. Monitoring and Policy Review**

**Monitoring.** The Principal will ensure compliance with established campus-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

School food service staff, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the principal. In addition, the school will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes.

**Policy Review.** To help with the development of the campus wellness policies, the school will conduct surveys of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The result of the school surveys will be compiled at the campus level to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the LCCS will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. LCCS schools will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.