



## SCHOOL WELLNESS PLAN

### WELLNESS POLICY

In order to comply with the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Our Lady of Lourdes has developed a Wellness Policy to address the areas of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Health. This policy was enacted with the foundational belief that guidelines for good nutrition, physical activities and education, and health and nutrition education is essential for our students and staff. Research shows that children who begin each day as healthy individuals are better learners.

Our Lady of Lourdes School is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating habits and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of Our Lady of Lourdes School that:

- The Archdiocese of Omaha and Our Lady of Lourdes School engage 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.
- All students in grades Preschool-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Qualified child nutrition 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.
- To the maximum extent practicable, our school will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program-including after-school snacks).
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

### WELLNESS TEAM

To achieve these policy goals, Our Lady of Lourdes School will create or work within the existing team to develop, implement, monitor, review, and as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The team will also serve as resources for communicating and implementing these policies as well as progress on goals. The wellness team consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community and should include parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, school administrator, teachers, health professionals.

## **MEALS SERVED**

Meals served at Our Lady of Lourdes School 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,
- Serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- Ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

Our Lady of Lourdes will engage students, 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 is made available on monthly menus and/or the school website.

**BREAKFAST:** To ensure that all children have breakfast either at home or school in order to meet their nutritional needs and best prepare them for a day of learning, Our Lady of Lourdes School will:

- Our Lady of Lourdes School will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program
- Our Lady of Lourdes School that serves breakfast to students will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- Our Lady of Lourdes School will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

## **MEAL TIMES AND SCHEDULING**

Our Lady of Lourdes School will:

- Provide students 30 minutes for lunch
- Schedule meal periods at appropriate times, between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.
- Not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes unless students may eat during such activities
- Provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks

## **FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEALS**

Our Lady of Lourdes School will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible and participate in the free and reduced-price school meals.

## **SNACKS**

Snacks served during the school day, after-school care, or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis but not limited to serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. School office will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. The school office and Director of Food Services will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

## **CELEBRATIONS**

School should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually. The school office and Director of Food Services will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

## **SHARING OF FOODS AND BEVERAGES**

Our Lady of Lourdes School discourages students from sharing their food or beverages with one another during meal or snack times because of concerns of allergies and diet restrictions for children's medical plans.

## **NUTRITION EDUCATION AND PROMOTION**

Our Lady of Lourdes School aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students by providing nutrition education 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;
- 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
- Wellness tips will be added to the daily all-school announcements.

## **FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES**

To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities that take place during the school day will not involve food or will only use food that meet the nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. Our Lady of Lourdes will encourage fundraising activities that will promote physical activity.

In 2024, the Home and School had its first annual Walk-a-Thon. This fundraising event raised close to \$30,000 and promoted walking as an important part of physical activity and well being. Furthermore, money was used to fund several recess activities: 4 square painting, hopscotch painting, basketball court lines, new basketball hoops, tetherball and base, a 9 Square structure and balls as well as contributing money to a new playground and fenced in grassy area for our youngest students' recess area.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (P.E.)**

All students in grades K-8 will receive physical education class for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

## **DAILY RECESS**

Our Lady of Lourdes students will have at least 20 minutes of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which staff should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through provision of space and equipment.

## **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AFTER SCHOOL**

In an effort to promote a healthy lifestyle, Our Lady of Lourdes after school Extended Care 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. Staff also create and offer after school clubs that focus on healthy eating and physical activity for students and staff.

### **INTEGRATING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTO THE CLASSROOM SETTING**

For students to receive the nationally recommended amount of 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. Towards that end:

- Classroom health education will compliment 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
- Classroom teachers may provide short physical activity breaks between lesson or classes, as appropriate

**MONITORING-** The Principal or designee will ensure compliance with established Archdiocesan wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. The principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the school district superintendent or designee.

Our Lady of Lourdes School food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the school principal. In addition, the Archdiocese of Omaha will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. If the Our Lady of Lourdes has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past five years, the school will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.

The Our Lady of Lourdes Food Service Director will develop a summary report every three years on Archdiocesan-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the Archdiocese. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, school principals.

**POLICY REVIEW:** To help with the initial development of the Our Lady of Lourdes School wellness policies, each school in the Archdiocese will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the Archdiocesan 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 school will review the 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. The Our Lady of Lourdes School within the Archdiocese of Omaha, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate implementation.