

Holy Cross School Wellness Policy

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Holy Cross School Wellness Policy

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**Please note: there are hyperlinks contained within this document that can be used for further information and ideas.

Holy Cross School Wellness Policy

Preamble

Holy Cross Catholic Elementary School (herein referred to as Holy Cross) is committed to the optimal development of every student. Holy Cross believes that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental, spiritual and social success, we need to create positive, safe, health-promoting, and Christ centered learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the school year.

Research shows that two particular components, good nutrition and physical activity before, during and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. For example, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) School Breakfast Program is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores, lower absenteeism and better performance on cognitive tasks.^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7} Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.^{8,9,10} In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education and

¹ Bradley, B, Green, AC. Do Health and Education Agencies in the United States Share Responsibility for Academic Achievement and Health? A Review of 25 years of Evidence About the Relationship of Adolescents' Academic Achievement and Health Behaviors, *Journal of Adolescent Health*. 2013; 52(5):523-532.

² Meyers AF, Sampson AE, Weitzman M, Rogers BL, Kayne H. School breakfast program and school performance. *American Journal of Diseases of Children*. 1989;143(10):1234-1239.

³ Murphy JM. Breakfast and learning: an updated review. *Current Nutrition & Food Science*. 2007; 3:3-36.

⁴ Murphy JM, Pagano ME, Nachmani J, Sperling P, Kane S, Kleinman RE. The relationship of school breakfast to psychosocial and academic functioning: Cross-sectional and longitudinal observations in an inner-city school sample. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*. 1998;152(9):899-907.

⁵ Pollitt E, Mathews R. Breakfast and cognition: an integrative summary. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 1998; 67(4), 804S-813S.

⁶ Rampersaud GC, Pereira MA, Girard BL, Adams J, Metz J. Breakfast habits, nutritional status, body weight, and academic performance in children and adolescents. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. 2005;105(5):743-760, quiz 761-762.

⁷ Taras, H. Nutrition and student performance at school. *Journal of School Health*. 2005;75(6):199-213.

⁸ MacLellan D, Taylor J, Wood K. Food intake and academic performance among adolescents. *Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research*. 2008;69(3):141-144.

⁹ Neumark-Sztainer D, Story M, Dixon LB, Resnick MD, Blum RW. Correlates of inadequate consumption of dairy products among adolescents. *Journal of Nutrition Education*. 1997;29(1):12-20.

¹⁰ Neumark-Sztainer D, Story M, Resnick MD, Blum RW. Correlates of inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption among adolescents. *Preventive Medicine*. 1996;25(5):497-505.

extracurricular activities – do better academically.^{11,12,13,14} Finally, there is evidence that adequate hydration is associated with better cognitive performance.^{15,16,17}

This policy outlines Holy Cross’s approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students in Holy Cross have access to healthy foods throughout the school day – both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus– in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during and after school;
- Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of Holy Cross in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- Holy Cross establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication, and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

This policy applies to all students, staff and schools in Holy Cross. Specific measurable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.

¹¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *The association between school-based physical activity, including physical education, and academic performance*. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, 2010.

¹² Singh A, Uijtdewillig L, Twisk J, van Mechelen W, Chinapaw M. *Physical activity and performance at school: A systematic review of the literature including a methodological quality assessment*. Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med, 2012; 166(1):49-55.

¹³ Haapala E, Poikkeus A-M, Kukkonen-Harjula K, Tompuri T, Lintu N, Väistö J, Leppänen P, Laaksonen D, Lindi V, Lakka T. *Association of physical activity and sedentary behavior with academic skills – A follow-up study among primary school children*. PLoS ONE, 2014; 9(9): e107031.

¹⁴ Hillman C, Pontifex M, Castelli D, Khan N, Raine L, Scudder M, Drollette E, Moore R, Wu C-T, Kamijo K. *Effects of the FITKids randomized control trial on executive control and brain function*. Pediatrics 2014; 134(4): e1063-1071.

¹⁵ Change Lab Solutions. (2014). *District Policy Restricting the Advertising of Food and Beverages Not Permitted to be Sold on School Grounds*. Retrieved from <http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/district-policy-school-food-ads>

I. School Wellness Team

Team Role and Membership

Holy Cross will convene a representative School Wellness Team (hereto referred to as the SWT) that meets at least four times per year to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation and periodic review and update of this district-level wellness policy (heretofore referred as “wellness policy”).

The SWT membership will represent all school levels and include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; students; representatives of the school nutrition program (e.g., school nutrition director); physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals (e.g., health education teachers) and mental health and social services staff (e.g., psychologists or social workers); school administrators (e.g., principal), school board members; health professionals (e.g., dietitians, doctors, nurses, dentists); and the general public. To the extent possible, the SWT will reflect the diversity of our school community.

Leadership

The School Nutrition Director and School Principal will convene the SWT and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure the school’s compliance with the policy.

The designated officials for oversight are:

Mr. Greg Koerner, Principal

Mrs. Peggy Loftus, School Nutrition Director

Designate Officials & Team Members are listed below:

Name	Title / Relationship to the School or District	Email address	Role on Committee
Mr. Greg Koerner	Principal	gkoerner@holycrosselem.org	Assists in the evaluation & implementation of the wellness policy
Mrs. Peggy Loftus	School Nutrition Director	ploftus@holycrosselem.org	Coordinator of SWT & Policies

Mrs. Judy Crull	Middle School Teacher; Health Teacher	jcrull@holycrosselem.org	Assists in the evaluation & implementation of the wellness policy
Ms. Meghan Burgess	5th grade Teacher; Health Teacher	mhenwood@holycrosselem.org	Assists in the evaluation & implementation of the wellness policy
Mr. Tim Weaver	PE Teacher	tweaver@holycrosselem.org	Assists in the evaluation & implementation of the wellness policy
Mrs. Justine Karduck	Parent Member, Asst. Prof. Food Science & Human Nutrition	karduck@illinois.edu	Assists in the evaluation & implementation of the wellness policy
TBD	Student Members 8th Grade		Feedback & assistance with wellness policy & goals
TBD	Student Members 7th Grade		Feedback & assistance with wellness policy & goals

Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement

Implementation Plan

Holy Cross will develop and maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions, and timelines specific to Holy Cross; and includes information about who will be responsible to make what change, by how much, where and when; as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, food and beverage marketing, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, physical education and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. It is recommended that the school use the [Healthy Schools Program online tools](#) to complete a school-level assessment based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's School Health Index, create an action plan that fosters implementation and generate an annual progress report.

This wellness policy and the progress reports can be found at: <http://www.holycrosselem.org>.

Recordkeeping

Holy Cross will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy in the School Office and/or on the School Nutrition Director's computer files.

Documentation maintained in this location will include but will not be limited to:

- The written wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating that the policy has been made available to the public;
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the Local Schools Wellness Policy; including an indication of who is involved in the update and methods Holy Cross uses to make stakeholders aware of their ability to participate on the SWT;
- Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the annual public notification requirements;
- The most recent assessment on the implementation of the local school wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the Local School Wellness Policy has been made available to the public.

Annual Notification of Policy

Holy Cross will actively inform families and the public each year of basic information about this policy, including its content, any updates to the policy and implementation status. Holy Cross will make this information available via the school website and/or school-wide communications. Holy Cross will provide as much information as possible about the school nutrition environment. This will include a summary of Holy Cross's events or activities related to wellness policy implementation. Annually, Holy Cross will also publicize the name and contact information of Holy Cross/school officials leading and coordinating the committee, as well as information on how the public can get involved with the SWT.

Triennial Progress Assessments

At least once every three years, Holy Cross will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

- The extent to which the schools is in compliance with the wellness policy;
- The extent to which Holy Cross's wellness policy compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation model wellness policy; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of Holy Cross's wellness policy.

The position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is the School Nutrition Director.

The SWT will monitor compliance with this wellness policy.

Holy Cross will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

The SWT will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual School Health Index and triennial assessments and/or as District priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. **The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.**

Community Involvement, Outreach and Communications

Holy Cross is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. Holy Cross will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the SWT and others can participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for our school. Holy Cross will also inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply, and a description of and compliance with Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Holy Cross will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on Holy Cross's website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy. Holy Cross will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that Holy Cross and individual schools are communicating important school information with parents.

Holy Cross will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum. Holy Cross will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

II. Nutrition

School Meals

Our school district is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and have zero grams *trans* fat per serving (per nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meeting the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

Our school does participate in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). In the future, Holy Cross may also operate additional nutrition-related programs and activities including the National School Breakfast Program or Special Milk Program. Our school is committed to offering school meals through the NSLP and SBP (School Breakfast Program) programs, and other applicable Federal child nutrition programs, that:

- Are accessible to all students;
- Are appealing and attractive to children;
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by local, state, and Federal statutes and regulations. (Holy Cross offers reimbursable school meals that meet [USDA nutrition standards](#).)
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices using at least ten of the following [Smarter Lunchroom techniques](#):
 - Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing dishes or hotel pans).
 - Sliced or cut fruit is available daily.
 - Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight.
 - All available vegetable options have been given creative or descriptive names.
 - Daily vegetable options are bundled into all grab-and-go meals available to students.
 - All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable or fruit options with their meal.
 - White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers.
 - Alternative entrée options (e.g., salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas.
 - A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (e.g., salad bars, snack rooms, etc.).
 - Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development, dining space decor, and promotional ideas.
 - Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas.
 - Daily announcements are used to promote and market menu options.
 - Menus will be posted on the school website, and will include nutrient content and ingredients.
 - Menus will be created/reviewed by a certified nutrition professional.
 - School meals are administered by a team of child nutrition professionals.
 - Holy Cross child nutrition program will accommodate students with special dietary needs.
 - Students are served lunch at a reasonable and appropriate time of day.

- Participation in Federal child nutrition programs will be promoted among students and families to help ensure that families know what programs are available in their children's school.
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- In the future, Holy Cross will strive to meet the following goals:
 - Students will be allowed at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they have received their meal and are seated (meets Healthy Schools Program Gold-level criteria).
 - Holy Cross will implement at least four of the following five Farm to School activities (meets Healthy Schools Program Gold-level criteria; mark/circle the four activities Holy Cross plans to do):
 - Local and/or regional products are incorporated into the school meal program;
 - Messages about agriculture and nutrition are reinforced throughout the learning environment;
 - School hosts a school garden;
 - School hosts field trips to local farms; and
 - School utilizes promotions or special events, such as tastings, that highlight the local/ regional products.

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the [USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals](#). These school nutrition personnel will refer to [USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website](#) to search for training that meets their learning needs.

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the school day* and throughout every school campus* ("school campus" and "school day" are defined in the glossary). Holy Cross will make drinking water available where school meals are served during meal times.

Water cups/jugs will be available in the cafeteria if a drinking fountain is not present.

All water sources and containers will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene and health safety standards. Such sources and containers may include drinking fountains, water jugs, hydration stations, water jets and other methods for delivering drinking water.

Students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day or kept in their locker.

Competitive Foods and Beverages

Holy Cross is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students on the school campus* during the school day* support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (e.g., "competitive" foods and beverages) will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the school day and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits. A

summary of the standards and information, as well as a Guide to Smart Snacks in Schools are available at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>. The Alliance for a Healthier Generation provides a set of tools to assist with implementation of Smart Snacks available at www.foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org.

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards. These standards will apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, à la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, snack or food carts and fundraisers.

Celebrations and Rewards

All foods offered on the school campus will be encouraged to meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards including through:

1. Celebrations and parties. Holy Cross will provide a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers, including non-food celebration ideas. Healthy party ideas are available from the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#) and from the [USDA](#).
2. Classroom snacks brought by parents. Holy Cross will provide to parents a [list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks](#) nutrition standards.
3. Rewards and incentives. Holy Cross will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a [list of alternative ways to reward children](#). Foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as for performance or behavior.

Fundraising

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus* during the school day*. Holy Cross will make available to parents and teachers a list of healthy fundraising ideas from the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#) and the [USDA](#).

Schools will actively support and promote non-food fundraisers, and encourage those promoting physical activity (such as walk-a-thons, Jump Rope for Heart, fun runs, etc.).

Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs. Students and staff will receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. Nutrition promotion also includes marketing and advertising nutritious foods and beverages to students and is most effective when implemented consistently through a comprehensive and multi-channel approach by school staff, teachers, parents, students and the community.

Holy Cross will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs. This promotion will occur through at least:

- Implementing at least ten or more evidence-based healthy food promotion techniques through the school meal programs using [Smarter Lunchroom techniques](#); and
- Ensuring 100% of foods and beverages promoted to students meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Additional promotion techniques that Holy Cross and individual schools may use are available at <http://www.foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/>.

Nutrition Education

Holy Cross will teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by all students. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is 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 integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits and school gardens;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Links with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services;
- Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and
- Includes nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education

Holy Cross will include in the health education curriculum a minimum of 12 of the following essential topics on healthy eating:

- Relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention
- Food guidance from [MyPlate](#)
- Reading and using FDA's nutrition fact labels
- Eating a variety of foods every day
- Balancing food intake and physical activity
- Eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grain products
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain *trans* fat
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars
- Eating more calcium-rich foods
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices
- Accepting body size differences
- Food safety
- Importance of water consumption

- Importance of eating breakfast
- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants
- Eating disorders
- [The Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#)
- Reducing sodium intake
- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior
- How to develop a plan and track progress toward achieving a personal goal to eat healthfully
- Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior
- Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior

Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools

Holy Cross is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Holy Cross strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health and physical activity. These efforts will be weakened if students are subjected to advertising on District property that contains messages inconsistent with the health information Holy Cross is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. It is the intent of Holy Cross to protect and promote student's health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus, consistent with Holy Cross's wellness policy.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus* during the school day* will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards such that only those foods that comply with or exceed those nutrition standards are permitted to be marketed or promoted to students.

Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing often includes oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product.¹⁵ This term includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Brand names, trademarks, logos or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or its container.
- Displays, such as on vending machine exteriors
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on school equipment, such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards or backboards (Note: immediate replacement of these items are not required; however, districts will replace or update scoreboards or other durable equipment when existing contracts are up for renewal or to the extent that is in financially possible over time so that items are in compliance with the marketing policy.)
- Corporate brand, logo, name or trademark on cups used for beverage dispensing, menu boards, coolers, trash cans and other food service equipment; as well as on posters, book

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covers, pupil assignment books or school supplies displayed, distributed, offered or sold by Holy Cross.

- Advertisements in school publications or school mailings.
- Free product samples, taste tests or coupons of a product, or free samples displaying advertising of a product.

As Holy Cross/School Nutrition Services/Athletics/PTC reviews existing contracts and considers new contracts, equipment and product purchasing (and replacement) decisions should reflect the applicable marketing guidelines established by Holy Cross wellness policy.

III. Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a comprehensive school physical activity program (CSPAP). A CSPAP reflects strong coordination and synergy across all of the components: quality physical education as the foundation; physical activity before, during and after school; staff involvement and family and community engagement and Holy Cross is committed to providing these opportunities. Schools will ensure that these varied physical activity opportunities are in addition to, and not as a substitute for, physical education (addressed in "Physical Education" subsection).

Physical activity during the school day (including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks or physical education) **will not be withheld** as punishment for any reason. This does not include participation on sports teams that have specific academic requirements. Holy Cross will provide teachers and other school staff with a [list of ideas](#) for alternative ways to discipline students.

To the extent practicable, Holy Cross will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. Holy Cross will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

Physical Education

Holy Cross will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts (discussed in the "*Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education*" subsection). The curriculum will support the essential components of physical education.

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. Holy Cross will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

All District **elementary students** (Kindergarten through 8th) in each grade will receive physical education for at least 60-100 minutes per week throughout the school year.

Holy Cross physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments (via the [Presidential Youth Fitness Program](#) or other appropriate assessment tool) and will use criterion-based reporting for each student.

Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education

Health education will be required in all elementary grades and Holy Cross will require middle school students to take and pass at least one health education course. Holy Cross will include in the health education curriculum a minimum of 12 the following essential topics on physical activity:

- The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity
- How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight
- How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process
- How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease
- Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition
- Differences between physical activity, exercise and fitness
- Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout, and cool down
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity
- Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community
- Preventing injury during physical activity
- Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia, and sunburn while being physically active
- How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time and type of physical activity
- Developing an individualized physical activity and fitness plan
- Monitoring progress toward reaching goals in an individualized physical activity plan
- Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids
- Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to physical activity and fitness
- How to influence, support, or advocate for others to engage in physical activity
- How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activity.

Recess (Elementary)

Holy Cross will offer at least **20 minutes of recess** on all days during the school year. This policy may be waived on early dismissal or late arrival days. If recess is offered before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms located just inside/outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built in to the recess transition period/time frame before students enter the cafeteria.

Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. Students will be allowed outside for recess except when outdoor temperature is above/below District-set temperature, inclusive of wind chill factors, during storms with lightning or thunder, or at the discretion of the building administrator based on his/her best judgment of safety conditions.

In the event that the school or district must conduct **indoor recess**, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable.

Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

Classroom Physical Activity Breaks (Elementary and Secondary)

Holy Cross recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Thus, students will be offered **periodic opportunities** to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week. Holy Cross recommends teachers provide short (3-5-minute) physical activity breaks to students during and between classroom time at least three days per week. These physical activity breaks will complement, not substitute, for physical education class, recess, and class transition periods.

Holy Cross will provide resources and links to resources, tools, and technology with ideas for classroom physical activity breaks. Resources and ideas are available through [USDA](#) and the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#).

Active Academics

Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.

Holy Cross will support classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects by providing annual professional development opportunities and resources, including information on leading activities, activity options, as well as making available background material on the connections between learning and movement.

Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

Before and After School Activities

Holy Cross offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after the school day (or both) through a variety of methods. Holy Cross will encourage students to be physically active before and after school by: creation and promotion of physical activity clubs, physical activity in aftercare, intramurals or interscholastic sports, and will remain open to other possible programming.

Active Transport

Holy Cross will support active transport to and from school, such as walking or biking. Holy Cross will encourage this behavior by engaging in *six or more* of the activities below; including but not limited to:

- Designate safe or preferred routes to school
- Promote activities such as participation in International Walk to School Week, National Walk and Bike to School Week
- Secure storage facilities for bicycles and helmets (e.g., shed, cage, fenced area)
- Instruction on walking/bicycling safety provided to students
- Promote safe routes program to students, staff, and parents via newsletters, websites, local newspaper
- Use crossing guards
- Use crosswalks on streets leading to schools
- Document the number of children walking and or biking to and from school
- Create and distribute maps of school environment (e.g., sidewalks, crosswalks, roads, pathways, bike racks, etc.)

IV. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

Holy Cross will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria, other food and beverage venues and physical activity facilities. Holy Cross will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development and strong educational outcomes.

Holy Cross will encourage coordination of content across curricular areas that promote student health, such as teaching nutrition concepts in mathematics, with consultation provided by either the school or Holy Cross’s curriculum experts.

All efforts related to obtaining federal, state or association recognition for efforts, or grants/funding opportunities for healthy school environments will be coordinated with and complementary of the wellness policy, including but not limited to ensuring the involvement of the SWT.

All school-sponsored events will adhere to the wellness policy guidelines. All school-sponsored wellness events will include physical activity and healthy eating opportunities when appropriate.

Community Partnerships

Holy Cross will seek out and continue relationships with community partners (e.g., hospitals, universities/colleges, local businesses, SNAP-Ed providers and coordinators, etc.) in support of this wellness policy implementation. Existing and new community partnerships and sponsorships will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with the wellness policy and its goals.

Community Health Promotion and Family Engagement

Holy Cross will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school year. Families will be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities and will receive information about health promotion efforts.

As described in the “Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications” subsection, Holy Cross will use electronic mechanisms (e.g., email or displaying notices on Holy Cross’s website), as well as non-electronic mechanisms, (e.g., newsletters, presentations to parents or sending

information home to parents), to ensure that all families are actively notified of opportunities to participate in school-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

In the future, the SWT will strive to have a staff wellness subcommittee that focuses on staff wellness issues, identifies and disseminates wellness resources and performs other functions that support staff wellness in coordination with human resources staff.

Holy Cross will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. Holy Cross promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost.

Professional Learning

When feasible, Holy Cross will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (e.g., increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or incorporating nutrition lessons into math class). Professional learning will help District staff understand the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing district reform or academic improvement plans/efforts.

Glossary:

Extended School Day – the time during, before and after school that includes activities such as clubs, intramural sports, band and choir practice, drama rehearsals and more.

School Campus - areas that are owned or leased by the school and used at any time for school-related activities, including on the outside of the school building, school buses or other vehicles used to transport students, athletic fields and stadiums (e.g., on scoreboards, coolers, cups, and water bottles), or parking lots.

School Day – the time between midnight the night before to 30 minutes after the end of the instructional day.

SWT - School Wellness Team

Triennial – recurring every three years.