

# The Martin De Porres School

## Wellness Policies: Nutrition and Physical Activity

### Preamble

**Whereas**, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;

**Whereas**, good health fosters student attendance and education;

**Whereas**, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;

**Whereas**, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;

**Whereas**, 33% of high school students do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and 72% of high school students do not attend daily physical education classes;

**Whereas**, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;

**Whereas**, historically on a national level, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores, and snack bars include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies, and snack cakes;

**Whereas**, school around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints; and

Thus, the Martin De Porres 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 and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Martin De Porres School that:

- MDP will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All MDP students will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- MDP will provide students with access to a variety of 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, MDP will participate in available federal school meal programs
- MDP 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.

**TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:**

**Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Served on Campus**

**School Meals**

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs 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>

MDP 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, or placards,

**Breakfast.** To ensure that all children have breakfast, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- MDP operates the School Breakfast Program.
- MDP will serve breakfast to all students thru the School Breakfast Program.

**Free and Reduced-priced Meals.** MDP 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>.

**Meal Times and Scheduling.** MDP:

- Will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks;

**Qualifications of School Food Service Staff.** Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the MDP's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for

child nutrition directors, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.<sup>5</sup>

**Sharing of Foods and Beverages.** Schools should 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.

### **Beverages**

- **Allowed:** water <sup>6</sup> without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by USDA);
- **Not allowed:** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

### **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

- 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.

**Snacks.** Snacks served during the school day 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.

Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations.

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

**Nutrition Education and Promotion.** The Martin De Porres School aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. MDP should 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);
- 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

**Communications with Parents.** The district/school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. MDP should send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus.

MDP will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities during 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.

**Staff Wellness.** The Martin De Porres School highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and student and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff and students to maintain a healthy lifestyle. MDP will establish and maintain a wellness committee composed of at least one staff members from different professions as well as human resources. The committee should develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff and student health and wellness. The plan should be based on input solicited from school staff and students. It should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff and students.

### **Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education**

**Daily Physical Education (P.E.).** All students will receive physical education as required by state standards and by the Individual education plan as written by the

## Committee on Special Education

**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.

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

**Monitoring.** The Executive Director or designee will ensure compliance with established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each school, 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.

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

Regular review of policy by the executive director to insure compliance will be monitored by the executive director