



ST. FRANCIS JUNIOR HIGH

St. Francis Jr. High School Nutrition Policy

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

St. Francis Jr. High believes that the promotion of wellness and healthy living should be a goal for all students, staff and our extended school community. It is our belief that students and staff who are supported in a healthy environment are better able to achieve their own personal goals, in addition to the goals of the school and division.

An increasing amount of research is drawing connections between student health and potential for learning as well as student health and the positive impacts on attendance and academic achievement. Moreover, research is also suggesting that habits often established in childhood, such as unhealthy eating and physical inactivity, are major risk factors for heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes. Therefore, St. Francis is wanting to create a supportive school environment for good nutrition and lifelong well-being by encouraging healthy eating for all students and staff. School environments are unique and in the best position to determine what activities are effective in encouraging healthy eating behaviours in the lives of schools.

This school policy is intended to set guidelines to implement a comprehensive food and nutrition program that encourages all students and staff to develop good eating habits by promoting the consumption of nutritious and dentally acceptable foods.

The primary reference for the provision, promotion, sale and distribution of food in schools shall be the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth from which St. Francis will include foods from the Choose Often and Choose Sometimes categories, and reduce (limit) foods from the Choose Least Often category. Food and beverages that will be sold at school will support healthy eating choices that fall within the school policy.

DEFINITIONS

Healthy Eating

Definition: Understanding and making nutritious food and beverage choices to sustain the body's physical, emotional and intellectual processes and development.

Rationale: Nutrition plays a role in student growth, development, disease resistance, and physical and mental health, which all contribute to optimal learning. Students who make healthy nutritional choices reduce the risk of obesity and health issues. A successful school wide approach includes the entire school community and encourage students to establish healthy eating habits.

"Alberta Nutritional Guidelines" means the "Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth" released by Alberta Health and Wellness in June 2008 and amendments;

"Choose Most Often" as defined in the Alberta Nutritional Guidelines, means moderate nutrient foods and beverages. These foods and beverages should be consumed daily, in appropriate amounts and portion sizes, based on age category. These foods and beverages are recommended as healthy choices in "Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide";

"Choose Sometimes", as defined in the Alberta Nutritional Guidelines, means moderate nutrient foods and beverages. While these foods and beverages may still provide beneficial nutrients, they tend to be higher in added sugar, unhealthy fat and sodium;

"Choose Least Often", as defined in the Alberta Nutritional Guidelines, means low nutrient foods and beverages. Foods and beverages from this category are very low in nutrients and higher in calories, fat, sugar and salt.

PROCEDURES

St Francis Jr. High supports a healthy eating within the school community to promote student success, and a safe, and caring school environment by:

- 1) Providing students with the skills, opportunities and encouragement they need to adopt healthy eating behaviours.
- 2) Establishing nutritional procedures that make healthy choices the easy choice.
- 3) Ensuring that good nutrition is promoted both in theory and in practice.
- 4) Considering the use of healthy, locally grown foods if possible.
- 5) Accessing professional expertise in the community through partnerships, programs, and referrals.
- 6) Replacing the sale of soft drinks with healthy beverage choices like milk, 100% fruit juices and water as available.
- 7) Encouraging students to consume healthy beverages in the classroom during instructional time, which include water or other healthy choices as outlined in the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines For Children and Youth.
- 8) Providing education on healthy snacks/lunches to students, staff and families as per the guidelines, but not regulating any food brought to school for personal consumption. Creating an environment where healthy foods are available within the school, are affordable and are promoted as the best choice.
- 9) Reviewing options with food suppliers regularly to maximize the nutritional value and affordability of the items sold in the school canteen and vending machines , and using the [Healthy Food Checker](#) when needed to determine nutritional value of foods sold.

The operation of the St. Francis school canteen is committed to serving food items from the “Choose Most Often” category and may offer foods from the “Choose Sometimes”category. Sale of foods from the “Choose Least Often” category shall be limited to a maximum to one item per week. This allows us the flexibility to have lunch specials, fundraisers, and student-led initiatives that do not fall within the “Choose Most Often” and “Choose Sometimes” categories. Suggested food items from each of the three categories are listed below.

CHOOSE MOST OFTEN

These foods should be the main focus in a healthy diet, with special emphasis on Whole Grain Products and Vegetables /Fruits. Foods on this list tend to be rich in essential nutrients. Most of these foods are good sources of one or more of the nutrients iron, calcium, Vitamin A, C, or D and are generally low in fat, sugar and salt.

Grain Products

- Whole wheat or whole grain bread, rolls, bagels, pita bread, English muffins, waffles, pitas, pancakes, tortillas, pasta, pizza dough, cereals
- Low fat, high fibre muffins with vegetables or fruit
- Rice cakes, bannock, brown rice, corn bread, low fat crackers
- Unsweetened or low sugar breakfast cereals

Vegetables and Fruit

- Fresh fruit and vegetables or frozen without added sugar or salt
- Canned fruit prepared in its own juice
- 100% vegetable or fruit juice
- Applesauce or applesauce blend products
- Low sodium vegetable soup
- Salads with low-fat dressing, fruit or vegetable salads

Milk Products

- 2%, 1% and skim white or chocolate milk or equivalent non-dairy alternatives
- Yogurt (2% Milk fat or less) or equivalent non-dairy alternatives
- Cheese
- Milk-based soups

Meat and Alternatives

- Chicken or turkey
- Fish, seafood, canned fish
- Lean or extra lean beef or pork
- Beans, lentils, dried peas (e.g. baked beans or chili)
- Eggs, Peanut Butter, soya beverages, tofu, nuts and seeds, cottage cheese

CHOOSE SOMETIMES

Most of these foods are good sources of one or more of the nutrients iron, calcium, Vitamins A, C, or D but are also higher in calories, sugar, fat, or salt. If serving these foods, aim to combine them with foods from the choose most often list.

Grain Products

- White bread, rolls, bagels, English Muffins, waffles, pancakes, pita bread, tortillas, pasta, rice
- Fruit or vegetable loaves
- Sweetened cereal made with oats or whole grains (e.g.Honey Nut Cheerios)
- Low fat, granola and cereal bars
- Cookies (made with oatmeal, peanut butter, or dried fruit), digestive cookies
- Biscuits, scones, pretzels, Rice Krispie squares, light popcorn
- Non-whole grain crackers such as: Goldfish, animal shaped crackers, rice crackers, rice cakes
- Cheese Pizza
- Bagel or pita chips

Vegetables and Fruit

- Canned fruit in light syrup
- Dried fruit, raisin boxes,
- Frozen fruit bars (100% Fruit Juice)
- Fruit bars or leathers
- Fruit crisps, date squares
- Baked potato (with low fat toppings), oven-baked potato wedges, baked potato chips
- Baked chips or Veggie Straws

Milk Products

- Whole milk, hot chocolate made with milk
- Frozen Yogurt (2% milk fat or less)
- Processed cheese products (spreads, slices), cheese Strings
- Yogurt drinks, milk-based puddings, flavored milk drinks, custards
- Ice Milk (single portion Dixie cups)

Meat and Alternatives

- Lean cold cuts, lower fat hot dogs, baked ham
- Nuts and seeds (salted)

CHOOSE LEAST OFTEN

These foods and beverages offer minimal nutritional value, are very high in sugar, fat, salt, caffeine, sweeteners and/or processing and/or tend to replace nutritious foods when available as meals and snacks. These items are not suitable to serve or sell as part of cafeteria, canteen, vending, breakfast, lunch or snack menus.

Mixed Foods

- Hot dogs, corn dogs, Battered/breaded and fried items (e.g. French fries, fish sticks, onion rings, chicken nuggets)
- Processed, previously deep fried and oven –heated commercial products (e.g. Tater Tots, chicken fingers, Taquitos)
- Donairs, egg rolls, poutine, sausage rolls, chicken wings
- Dried instant noodles and single serve dried soup mixes
- Microwave dinners

Baked Goods

- Donuts, pastries, croissants, cakes, cupcakes, tarts, pie, cookies with sweet filling, icing and/or chocolate

Processed or Snack Foods

- Granola bars dipped in chocolate or yogurt, or with chocolate chips or marshmallows
- Candy, chips, chocolate bars, licorice, corn nuts, sesame snaps, banana chips, cheesies, artificial fruit snacks, fruit roll-ups, Jell-O
- Meal replacement bars, protein bars or energy bars based on Healthy Food Checker

Frozen Novelties

- Popsicles and freezies
- Ice cream, sherbet and frozen novelties (e.g. drumsticks)
- Milkshakes, egnogs

Beverages

- Pop, sport and energy drinks, slushies, vitamin waters?
- Hot chocolate made with water
- Meal replacement shakes or beverages,
- Sweetened fruit beverages, iced tea, lemonades

REFERENCES

Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth, 2008

<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/1c291796-4eb0-4073-be8e-bce2d331f9ce/resource/3319786c-1df1-43ca-8693-067f733682dc/download/Nutrition-Guidelines-AB-Children-Youth.pdf>

Healthy Food Checker

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/Page13977.aspx>

Healthy Eating for Children and Youth in Schools

<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/healthy-eating-for-children-and-youth-in-schools>

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/canada-food-guide/get-your-copy.html>

Steps to Creating a School Nutrition Policy.

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-school-nutrition-policy.pdf>