



Zarephath Academy Wellness Policy

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Our Mission

Zarephath Academy is dedicated to fostering a nurturing environment that empowers students to reach their full potential—physically, emotionally, and academically—through meaningful mentoring and hands-on resources.

Our Philosophy

The Zarephath Academy Board of Directors believes that students who start each day healthy are more effective learners and more likely to complete their education. We recognize that healthy staff can better model wellness behaviors for students. This policy promotes a holistic approach to wellness, addressing individual and community needs.

Preamble

Zarephath Academy understands that proper nutrition and regular physical activity significantly impact the health and well-being of all students. Research indicates a strong connection between a student's health and their learning capabilities. Schools play a vital role in helping students develop healthy habits by providing nutritious meals and promoting increased physical activity both in and out of the classroom. We are committed to creating an environment that fosters the overall well-being of students and staff, implementing guidelines that reflect a comprehensive wellness approach.

1. Wellness Policy Compliance

Zarephath Academy will establish a Healthy School Team that meets bi-annually to ensure compliance with our wellness policy. The team will include stakeholders such as parents, students, school food service representatives, administrators, health professionals, physical education teachers, and community representatives. Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations regarding food and beverages sold on campus.
- Maintaining a calendar of exempted competitive food fundraisers.
- Reporting compliance to the Principal.

Stakeholders are invited to contribute to the development, implementation, and periodic review of the wellness policy, with feedback collected during the second semester.

2. Nutrition Promotion

To encourage healthy eating habits, Zarephath Academy will create an environment that promotes nutritious choices and participation in meal programs. Key initiatives include:

- Providing consistent messaging about healthy eating in classrooms and dining areas.
- Sharing nutrition information through posters, brochures, and workshops for parents.
- Organizing health fairs and screenings, as well as assisting families in enrolling in health programs.

3. Nutrition Education

Nutrition education will be integrated into the curriculum, emphasizing the importance of healthy foods for academic performance and overall well-being. Initiatives include:

- Teaching nutrition benchmarks as part of physical education and other subjects.
- Providing hands-on experiences, such as cooking activities and visits to local farms.
- Equipping staff with professional development in nutrition education to ensure effective program delivery.

Information will also be shared with families to promote healthy eating at home.

4. Physical Education and Activity

The physical education program will emphasize fitness and active lifestyles, with all students required to engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity three times a week. This includes:

- Structured physical education for kindergarten through grade 5 and varied offerings for middle and high school students.
- Encouraging community involvement in fitness programs and promoting staff participation in physical activities.

5. Other School-Based Activities

Zarephath Academy will integrate wellness initiatives throughout the school, including:

- Planning all school activities with wellness goals in mind.
- Promoting healthy snacks and physical activities in afterschool programs.
- Ensuring compliance with drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free policies.

Key practices include providing adequate meal times, convenient access to hygiene facilities, and promoting recycling efforts.

6. Food and Beverage Guidelines

Zarephath Academy will adhere to USDA’s National School Lunch Program standards and state regulations regarding all foods and beverages available during the school day. Key points include:

- All reimbursable meals will meet USDA nutrition standards.
- Competitive foods sold on campus must comply with established nutrition requirements.
- Accessible potable water will be provided during meal services.

By following these guidelines, Zarephath Academy is committed to promoting student and staff wellness through effective nutrition and physical activity initiatives.

Nutrient Standards For Competitive Foods:

Nutrient Standards	Snack Items and Side Dishes <i>(including any added accompaniments)</i>	Entrée Items <i>(including any added accompaniments)</i>
Calories	200 calories or less	350 calories or less
Sodium Limits	200 mg or less	480 mg or less
Total Fat Limits	35% or less of total calories	35% or less of total calories
Saturated fat	Less than 10% of total calories	Less than 10% of total calories
Trans fat	0 g of trans fat as served (less than or equal to 0.5 g per portion)	0 g of trans fat as served (less than or equal to 0.5 g per portion)
Sugar	35% of weight from total sugar as served or less	35% of weight from total sugar as served or less

Exemptions

Certain items are exempt from competitive food standards, including:

- Any entrée item offered as part of the breakfast or lunch program if it is served as a competitive food on the day of service or the day after.
- Fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients, except water.
- Canned fruits with no added ingredients except water, which are packed in 100 percent juice, extra light syrup, or light syrup.
- Low sodium/no salt added canned vegetables with no added fats.

- Reduced fat cheese, nuts, seeds, nut/seed butters, seafood, and whole eggs with no added fat are exempt from total fat and saturated fat standards.

Refer to 7 CFR 210.11 competitive food service standards for additional exemptions.

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Nutrition standards for beverages:

Portion sizes listed are the maximum that can be offered.

Beverages	Elementary	Middle	High
Plain water	unlimited	unlimited	unlimited
Unflavored low-fat milk	8 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.
Unflavored or flavored fat-free milk	8 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.
100% fruit or vegetable juice	8 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.
100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water but no added sweeteners	8 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.
Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are labeled to contain 5 calories or less per 8 fl. oz., or 10 calories or less per 20 fl. oz.	Not allowed	Not allowed	20 fl. oz.
Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are labeled to contain 40 calorie or less per 8 fl. oz. or 60 calories or less per 12 fl. oz.)	Not allowed	Not allowed	12 fl. oz.

For elementary and middle school students, all foods and beverages must be caffeine-free, except for trace amounts found in naturally occurring substances. High school students may have access to caffeinated options.

Standards for Non-Sold Foods and Beverages

- The school will provide parents and teachers with a list of ideas for healthy celebrations, parties, rewards, and fundraising activities.
- Class parties or celebrations must occur after the lunch period, and only foods that meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards may be served.

- Celebrations involving food during the school day will be limited to one party per class per month.

Fundraising

- Fundraising activities will promote healthy eating by adhering to all relevant regulations and nutrition standards for competitive foods, while prioritizing the sale of non-food items.
- Food-related fundraisers may not take place until thirty (30) minutes after the last designated meal service period.
- The school board may grant a special exemption from the competitive food standards for infrequent school-sponsored fundraisers, with a maximum limit on the number of days allowed per school year for each campus.

School Type	Maximum Number of School Days to Conduct Exempted Fundraisers
Elementary Schools	5 days
Middle School/Junior High Schools	10 days
Senior High Schools	15 days
Combination Schools	10 days

Healthy School Team Responsibilities

Each school's Healthy School Team will maintain a calendar that outlines the dates for exempt competitive food fundraisers in accordance with FAC 5P-1.003.

7. Policy for Food and Beverage Marketing

School-based marketing will align with our nutrition education and health promotion policies. The following guidelines apply:

- **Permissible Marketing:** Zarephath Academy will only market and advertise foods and beverages that meet or exceed USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- **Promoting Healthful Behaviors:** We encourage marketing activities that support healthy choices, such as vending machine graphics promoting water, pricing strategies that favor healthy options, fruit sales for fundraisers, and coupons for discounted gym memberships.
- **Nutrition Department Practices:** The nutrition department's purchasing and replacement decisions will adhere to the marketing guidelines outlined above.

8. Evaluation and Measurement of Wellness Policy Implementation

The Zarephath Academy wellness committee will periodically review and revise the wellness policy based on annual assessments, triennial evaluations, changing community needs, progress toward wellness goals, emerging health information, and updates to federal or state standards. The wellness policy will be evaluated at least every three years following the triennial assessment.

- **Triennial Progress Assessments:** Zarephath Academy will conduct an assessment every three years to evaluate compliance with the local wellness policy. This assessment will include:
 - The level of compliance with the wellness policy.
 - A comparison of the policy against model local wellness policies.
 - An overview of progress toward achieving the policy's goals.

9. Informing the Public

Zarephath Academy will ensure that the wellness policy and the latest triennial assessment results are readily available to the public. We will actively inform households annually about updates to the wellness policy and the availability of assessment results, as well as provide information on the school nutrition environment.

- The most current version of the wellness policy and triennial assessments will be accessible on the school website.
- Updates to the wellness policy will be presented at meetings with the Parent Teacher Association/Organization, school board, district superintendent, health and wellness committee, and other stakeholders.
- Wellness updates will be communicated to students, parents, and staff via handouts, the Zarephath Academy website, articles, and school newsletters, ensuring community awareness and encouraging public input.
- Each parent will receive a complete copy of the local school wellness policy at the start of the school year.

10. Community Involvement

Zarephath Academy values community input and strives to raise awareness of the wellness policy. We will actively communicate opportunities for parents, students, school food authority representatives, physical education teachers, health professionals, school board members, administrators, and the general public to participate in developing, implementing, and reviewing the local wellness policy annually through various methods:

- **Student Input:** We will consider student needs when planning a healthy nutrition environment, soliciting feedback through surveys and addressing their comments.
- **Communication Channels:** Zarephath Academy will utilize both electronic methods (e.g., email, website notifications) and non-electronic methods (e.g., newsletters, parent presentations) to ensure all families are informed of wellness policy updates and ways to get involved.

11. Record Keeping

Records documenting compliance with the local school wellness policy will include, but are not limited to:

- The written local school wellness policy.
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including the availability of the wellness policy and triennial assessments to the public.
- Records of the triennial assessment of the local school wellness policy.