

Diocese of Fort Wayne – South Bend

School Administration

Diocesan Schools Wellness Policy

All schools of the Diocese of Fort Wayne – South Bend shall be committed to providing a learning environment that supports and promotes wellness, good nutrition, and an active lifestyle, recognizing the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity, and the capacity of students to develop and learn. The entire school environment shall be aligned with individual school health goals to positively influence students' health and wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity. In addition, school staff shall be encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life. It is the policy of the Diocese of Fort Wayne – South Bend that:

1. Each school shall incorporate into the curriculum nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity and reduce childhood obesity.
2. All students will have opportunities, support and encouragement to participate in physical activities on a regular basis.
3. Qualified food service providers will provide students with access to a variety of affordable and appealing foods that meet the health, nutrition needs, and accommodate the religious requirements of students. Each school shall provide a clean, safe, and pleasant setting and adequate time for the students to eat. It is recommended that students have at least 20 minutes to actually eat their meals.
4. To the extent practical, the schools will participate in available federal school meal programs.
5. Foods and beverages sold and/or served as part of the school meal programs must meet the nutrition recommendations of the Indiana Code of the United States Department of Agriculture.
6. Each school shall engage students, parents, teachers, food service providers, health professionals, and interested community members in monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the School Wellness Plan.

Diocesan School Wellness Plan Guidelines and Goals

The purpose of these goals is to ensure a total school environment that promotes and supports student health and wellness, helps reduce childhood obesity, and meets the requirements of Public Law 108 - 265, the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004.

1. Nutrition Education Goals

The primary goal of nutrition education is to influence students' eating behaviors.

- Grades pre K - 12 shall receive nutrition education that is interactive and teaches the skills needed to adopt healthy eating behaviors.
- Nutrition education shall be provided in the school dining room as well as in the classroom, with coordination between the foodservice staff and teachers.
- Students shall receive consistent nutrition messages throughout the school, classroom, and cafeteria.
- All schools will use the Indiana Academic Standards for Health Education.
- Nutrition is integrated into the health education curricula or core curriculum (e.g., math, science, language arts).
- Staff who provide nutrition education shall have appropriate nutrition based training.

2. Physical Activity Goals

The primary goal for a school's physical activity component is to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity, and understand the short and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthful lifestyle.

- Students shall participate in regularly scheduled formal and informal physical activity programs. Special emphasis should be placed on promoting an active lifestyle in early childhood through the primary grades as healthy habits are established at a young age. Reasonable accommodation shall be made for students with disabilities and/or other limitations.
- Each school shall follow the Indiana Academic Standards for Physical Education Classes including time allocations for class attendance.
- In grades K - 5, students shall have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

- Students shall be given opportunities for physical activity through a range of after-school programs including intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.

3. Nutrition Standards for All the Foods Served at the School

Students' lifelong eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of foods and beverages available to them. These goals are meant to help guide schools when choosing what foods are served during the school day.

- Food providers shall offer a variety of age-appropriate, appealing food and beverage choices and employ food preparation, purchasing, and meal planning practices consistent with current Nutritional Standards based on Indiana Code (e.g. provide a variety of fruits and vegetable choices; serve low-fat and fat-free dairy products; ensure that whole grain products are served).
- All foods and beverages sold individually (apart from the reimbursable school meal) shall be consistent with the nutritional goals of the school wellness plan.

This includes:

- a. a la cart offerings in the food service program;
- b. food and beverage choices in vending machines, snack bars, school stores;
- c. food and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities.
- Every effort shall be made to provide nutritious and appealing foods and beverages, such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods and whole grain products, wherever and whenever food is sold or otherwise offered at school.
- School meals served shall be consistent with the recommendations established by Indiana Code.
- School meals shall meet, at a minimum, the nutrition requirements and regulations for the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program.

4. Other Student Activities Related to Wellness

- Schools will provide a clean, safe, enjoyable meal environment for students.
- Schools should provide at least 20 minutes for students to eat their meals and should be scheduled as near the middle of the school day as possible.
- Schools will discourage use of food as a reward or punishment.
- Schools will provide enough space and serving areas to ensure student access to school meals with a minimum of wait time, and provide at least 20 minutes for students to actually eat their lunch.

- Schools should prohibit the denial of student participation in recess or other physical activity as a form of discipline, or cancellation of recess or other physical activity time for instructional make-up time.
- Schools should encourage fundraising efforts that are supportive of healthy eating.
- Schools will provide on-going professional training and development for foodservice staff and teachers in the areas of nutrition and physical education.
- Schools are encouraged, when possible, to provide student access to physical activity facilities outside of school hours.
- When possible, schools should schedule recess before lunch so that children will come to lunch less distracted and ready to eat.
- Schools should strive to discover strategies for parents, teachers and school administrators, student foodservice professionals, and community members to serve as role models in practicing healthy eating and being physically active, both in school and at home.

5. Goals for Measurement and Evaluation

- The Superintendent will create and distribute an assessment tool to be used by the schools in their evaluation of school wellness goals. See Individual School Wellness Plan Checklist.
- The principal of each school shall be responsible for implementation of the school wellness plans.
- Individual schools shall involve parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, school administrators, and the public to implement and continue development of the school wellness plan.
- The diocesan superintendent, based upon feedback from individual schools, may recommend revising the student wellness plan as appropriate.

EXAMPLE OF MODEL NUTRITION STANDARDS BASED ON INDIANA CODE

Rationale:

The Diocese of Fort Wayne – South Bend strongly encourages the sale or distribution of nutrient dense foods for all school functions and activities. Nutrient dense foods are those foods that provide calories rich in the nutrient content needed to be healthy. To this end, the diocese has adopted the following nutrition standards governing the sale of food, beverages, and candy on school grounds. The standards are based on the USDA Child Nutrition Programs and the new guidelines from the Indiana State Legislature.

General Information:

The guidelines below do not include a food or beverage that is part of a school breakfast or lunch program, sold in an area not accessible to students, sold after normal school hours or is part of a school fundraiser where students would not consume the food or beverage during school hours.

The guidelines below apply to a food or beverage that is sold in the a la cart line of the school cafeteria but is not part of the federal school breakfast or lunch program.

Food:

- Encourage the consumption of nutrient dense foods, i.e. whole grains, fresh fruits, vegetables, and dairy products.
- Elementary school students may not have access to food or beverage from a vending machine.
- At least 50% of food items available for sale at school or on school grounds must qualify as better choice foods. The following are State guidelines for what qualifies as a “better choice food.”
 1. Not more than 30% of their total calories are from fat.
 2. Not more than 10% of their total calories are from saturated fat and trans fat.
 3. Not more than 35% of their weight is from sugars that do not occur naturally in fruits, vegetables, or dairy products.
 4. The following are portion limits for foods that are available for sale at school or on school grounds and have more than 210 calories.
 - Potato Chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mixes, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, and jerky: 1.75 ounces.
 - Cookies and cereal bars: 2 ounces.
 - Bakery items including pastries, muffins, and donuts: 3 ounces.
 - Frozen desserts, including ice cream: 3 fluid ounces.

- Non-frozen yogurt: 8 ounces.
- Entrée items and side dish items, including French fries and onion rings cannot be larger than what is served in a school lunch program.

Beverage:

- At least 50% of the beverage items available for sale at school or on school grounds must qualify as better choice beverages. The following are State guidelines for "better choice beverages."
 1. Fruit and vegetable based drinks must contain at least 50% real fruit or vegetable juice and cannot contain additional caloric sweeteners.
 2. Water and seltzer water that does not contain additional caloric sweeteners.
 3. Low fat and fat-free milk, including chocolate milk, soymilk, rice milk, and other similar dairy and nondairy calcium fortified milks.
 4. Isotonic beverages.
- The Indiana guidelines include the following as NOT better choice beverages:
 1. Soft drinks, punch, iced tea, and coffee.
 2. Fruit and vegetable based drinks containing less than 50% real fruit or vegetable juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners.
 3. Drinks that contain caffeine EXCEPT low fat and fat free chocolate milk.
 4. A beverage item available for sale at school or on school grounds cannot be more than 20 ounces.

Vending Machines:

- Cannot be available to any student during school hours.
- Can be available to high school students after school and at sporting events.
- Must contain at least 50% food items and beverages that qualify as "better choice" as described above.

Candy:

- Candy is defined as any processed food item that has:
 1. Sugar (including brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, fructose, glucose, high fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose, maltose, molasses, raw sugar, table sugar, syrup) is listed as one of the FIRST TWO ingredients.

2. Sugar is more than 25% of the item by weight.
- Vending sales of candy will not be permitted on school grounds.
 - Non-vending sales of candy will be permitted only at the conclusion of the instructional school day.

Examples of School-Level Nutrition Standards:

At any school function (parties, celebrations, receptions, festivals, sporting events, etc.) healthy food choice options should be made available to students. Also, because of the increase in the number of students in the schools who have food allergies, consideration should also be made for this. The most common food allergies are: peanuts, tree nuts, eggs, milk (dairy products), fish, shell fish, soy, and wheat.

Labels should be viewed for evidence of any of the above allergens. As of January 2006 labels must clearly state whether the food contains a "major food allergen." The law also identifies as a major food allergen any ingredient that contains protein derived from any of these eight foods. This also applies to flavorings, colorings, and incidental additives that are or contain a major food allergen.

An example would be where a product contains "casein." It must now have "(milk)" next to it so that the reader knows this is a protein derived from milk.

Unfortunately, the law doesn't include information about possible cross contamination during processing. Some labels do say, for example, "processed in a peanut free environment" or something to the effect that there is a possibility of cross contamination. At this point in time it is voluntary on the part of the company, however, this may change in the future.

Organizations operating concessions at school functions should include at least 50% "better choice" foods and beverages. It is recommended that these groups market the healthier choices at a lower profit margin to encourage selection by students.

Some suggested foods:

- Raw vegetables with low fat or fat free dressing or yogurt dip.
- Fresh fruit and 100% fruit juices.
- Frozen fruit juice pops.
- Dried fruits (raisins, banana chips, etc.)
- Trail Mix (dried fruits and nuts).
- Dry roasted peanuts, tree nuts, and soy nuts (no coconut or palm nuts).
- Low-fat meats and cheese sandwiches (low fat dressing such as mayo in tuna and chicken salads).
- Party Mix (variety of cereals, nuts, pretzels, etc.)
- Low sodium crackers.
- Baked corn chips, potato chips (or fat free), with salsa and low fat dips.
- Low fat muffins, granola bars, and cookies.

- Angel food and sponge cake.
- Low fat/fat free popcorn.
- Flavored yogurt and fruit parfaits.
- Jell-O and low fat pudding cups.
- Low fat ice cream, frozen yogurt, and sherbets.
- Low fat and skim milk products.
- Cold water.

Foods to avoid --- consume occasionally (no more than once a month):

- Carbonated and caffeinated beverages.
- High sugar content candies and desserts.
- High fat foods (fried foods like French Fries, fatty meats, most cheeses, and buttery popcorn).
- High sodium (salt) foods (luncheon meats, cheeses, chips, salty popcorn, pickles, etc.)

See *Individual School Wellness Plan Checklist* following this policy and in the Diocesan Forms Section of the School Administrative Handbook.