



St. John the Baptist WELLNESS POLICY 2024-2025

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Evansville are committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn, by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Evansville that:

- The schools will engage students, parents, teachers, food service staff, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades Preschool-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *US. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Staff will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students, and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- Schools 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.

St. John the Baptist will continue to implement and annually update this policy for health and wellness of all students.

The Health and Wellness Policy includes the following elements, each addressed with specific goals:

I. Wellness Committee

- St. John the Baptist will form a Wellness Committee to serve as a resource to develop, implement, monitor, review, and revise school nutrition and physical activity policies.
- The Wellness Committee will meet at minimum twice annually with an agenda and minutes to be kept at the school.
- The Wellness Committee will consist of individuals from the following areas:
 - School Administrator
 - PE Teacher and interested faculty and staff members
 - Student(s)
 - Parent(s) or School Board Member
 - Cafeteria or Child Nutrition Manager
 - Health Care/Nutritionist/Certified Dietician professional
 - Interested individuals from the general public who have a vested interest in our schools

II. USDA Requirements for School Meals

- The school breakfast and lunch programs in St. John the Baptist will:
 - Meet, at minimum, nutrition requirements established by USDA for federally funded programs, as found on the USDA website at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards-school-meals>
 - Provide access to and emphasis on high quality foods and beverages, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and water.
 - Be appealing and attractive to students,
 - Be served in clean and pleasant surroundings,
 - Provide students with adequate time to eat (**the School Nutrition Association recommends at least twenty minutes for lunch**),
 - Promote school meal participation with taste tests, contests, etc., and make available a nutritional analysis of menu items.
- Parents will be provided information regarding eligibility and application for participation in the free/reduced price meals.

III. Nutritional Guidelines for All Food and Beverages Sold

- Food and beverages sold outside of the Child Nutrition Program, including a' la carte and vending machine items, will be approved by either the school's Food Service Director or the School Wellness Committee, and will meet the following guidelines:
 - Beverages
 - Plain water (carbonated or non-carbonated);
 - Unflavored low-fat milk;
 - Flavored and unflavored non-fat milk (and milk alternatives);
 - Low-fat unflavored or fat-free flavored fluid milk,
 - 100 percent fruit and vegetable juices, and full-strength juice diluted with water, carbonated or non-carbonated, with no added sweeteners.
 - For older students, calorie-free beverages, in up to 20-ounce portions
 - For older students, lower-calorie beverages with up to 40 calories per 8 ounces or 60 calories per 12 ounces, in up to 12 ounce portions
 - Foods
 - Individual food items must meet USDA Smart Snack Standards, which can be accessed at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>
 - Elementary and Middle Schools (Grades Preschool-8)
 - Vending machines dispensing either food or beverages are not accessible to students in grades Preschool-8.
 - Sale of foods and/or beverages containing caffeine or non-nutritive sweeteners is prohibited during the school day.

- High Schools (Grades 9-12)
 - All foods and beverages sold outside the reimbursable school meal programs during the school day will meet the nutritional guidelines above.
 - Sale of foods and/or beverages containing non-nutritive sweeteners is prohibited during the school day.
 - Vending machines dispensing either food or beverages are not accessible to students in grades 9-12.
- Fundraising
 - No more than one fundraiser will involve the selling of food.
 - Two exemptions, each exemption lasting one day in duration only, are allowed during the school year if approved by the School Wellness Committee.
- School-Sponsored Events (Such as, but not limited to, Athletic Events, Dances, or Performances)
 - It is recommended that an effort be made to offer or sell only those foods and beverages that meet the above nutritional guidelines.

IV. Nutritional Guidelines for Non-Sold Foods and Beverages

- Preschool Programs, After-School Care and/or Extra-Curricular Programs
 - Snacks served will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, and
 - Will emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and the importance of water as a beverage.
- Celebrations
 - St. John the Baptist will only allow fresh fruit and vegetables, and water during classroom celebrations with the exception of one exemption holiday celebration.
 - Students may not bring in food or beverages to celebrate their birthday.
- Rewards
 - St. John's teachers and staff will be limited to (4) days where food is allowed in the classroom to enhance curriculum.
 - School-wide rewards that involve food must be approved by the principal and wellness coordinator.

V. Food and Beverage Marketing

- St. John will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition guidelines for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually.
- Promotional materials (Fall festival, give back nights, steak nights, fish fries, etc) that are distributed during the school day will not contain images or wording for food or beverage items that do not meet the nutritional guidelines for food or beverages sold individually.
- As contracts expire, promotional materials, such as, but not limited to, scoreboards, vending machines, etc. that currently advertise non-compliant foods or beverages will be changed to market water or only the company and not the product.

VI. Nutrition Education

- St. John will follow health education curriculum standards and guidelines as stated by the Indiana Department of Education.

- Nutrition education will be taught by a licensed teacher in grades K-12. In self-contained classrooms, teachers holding an appropriate license may teach their own health and nutrition education, as well as other required subjects as their license allows.
- Nutrition education will be taught throughout grades K-12 including, but not limited to:
 - Nutrition Knowledge
 - Benefits of healthy eating
 - Essential nutrients
 - Nutritional deficiencies
 - Use and misuse of dietary supplements
 - Safe food preparations
 - Handling and storage
 - Caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure
 - Nutrition Related Skills
 - Planning healthy meals
 - Understanding and using food labels
 - Critical evaluation of nutrition information
 - Commercial food advertising
 - Assessing Personal Eating Habits and Setting Achievable Goals
- Teachers are encouraged to integrate nutrition education into core curriculum in areas such as math, science, social studies, and language arts.
- Professional development opportunities will be shared with teachers and staff throughout the year.
- Cafeteria staff will participate in annual trainings as part of the professional standards.
- The cafeteria will provide taste testing opportunities for third grade students of a vegetable prepared in several different ways. In addition, the third grade classes will be taught a Super Food HEROES lesson that corresponds with the vegetable.

VII. Nutrition Promotion

- Cafeteria staff will introduce students to new food choices once per semester. Consistent encouragement will be given to students to try new foods and make positive comments about foods.
- The cafeteria can be used to display nutrition education posters and food facts to encourage interest in healthy foods.
- The School Wellness Committee will explore and identify at least two of the Smarter Lunchroom techniques as listed at <https://www.healthyeating.org/docs/default-source/3.0-our-cause/slm-pages/smarter-lunchrooms-scorecard.pdf> to implement in order to promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students.
- St. John shall schedule mealtimes so there is minimum disruption by bus schedules,

recess, and other special programs or events, thereby allowing sufficient time for students to eat (**the School Nutrition Association recommends at least twenty minutes for lunch**).

- All elementary and middle schools will provide the *Nutrition Nuggets* newsletter, via the school website, take home folders, or by email, in an effort to communicate, promote, and educate parents and guardians regarding nutrition and wellness.
- St. John after-school care children and third grade classes will collaborate with community groups to maintain our school garden and greenhouse.

VIII. Physical Activity

- Classroom Setting
 - Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle.
 - Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks, ie. Brain breaks, between lessons or classes as appropriate.
 - Teachers should discourage extended periods of inactivity (periods of two or more hours). When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain sedentary for long periods of time, students should be provided with periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.
- Physical Education Class
 - All students will receive regular physical education.
 - Student involvement in other physical activities will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement in grades K-8.
 - High school students must earn two credits in physical education.
 - Students will spend at least 50% of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
 - The student to teacher ratio for physical education classes will be no larger than other classes (~~30 to 1~~).
 - Professional development will be available to PE teachers, especially at the Diocesan Teacher Share Meetings.
 - A licensed PE teacher in grades that are departmentalized will teach physical education. In self-contained classrooms, teachers holding an appropriate license may teach their own physical education, as well as other required subjects as their license allows.
 - Students' physical activity will occasionally be monitored using pedometers during physical education classes.
- Recess
 - All elementary school students (K-5) will have at least 20 minutes per 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 will stay indoors if the "feels-like" temperature is over 98 degrees or below 32 degrees.
- Physical Activity and Punishment
 - Teachers and other school and community personnel will not arbitrarily use physical activity (running laps, push-ups) or withhold opportunities for physical

activity (recess, physical education) as consequence to behavioral and academic infractions.

- Students may be kept in from recess to complete tests/quizzes, and projects that cannot be completed outside of the classroom.

IX. Additional School-Based Activities

- Faculty and Staff will have the opportunity to be involved in wellness programs and/or efforts to build effective school health initiatives.
- Teachers and staff will fill out a Distribution of Food Notification form and place it in the wellness coordinators mailbox any time food is distributed by the teacher in the classroom.
- Beverages other than water, will be placed in a tumbler or solid cup.
- Faculty and Staff should encourage healthy eating behaviors by being role models to students during school hours when in the presence of students.
 - Faculty will consume special snacks in the workroom or in classrooms not in the presence of students.
- Cafeteria staff will be hired with the understanding that they are responsible to adhere to the policies the school has in place.
- St. John will assess and, if necessary, and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. Crossing guards, school safety patrol, and bike racks will be available at each K-8 school.
- Nutrition education and wellness will be offered to students, parents, and staff through any of the following methods:
 - Health fairs,
 - Healthy eating and wellness seminars,
 - Newsletters,
 - Handouts,
 - Internet information consistent with USDA *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*,
 - Team Nutrition information.
- St. John will participate in National Walk to School Day in October.

X. Evaluation

- The school administrator, along with the School Wellness Committee, will complete the Diocesan Wellness Policy Checklist on school-wide compliance with the established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies on an annual basis. The completed checklist will be submitted to the Catholic Schools Office by June 1.
- Every three years, the school administrator, along with the School Wellness Committee, will complete one of the following School Health Environment Assessment Tools and submit to the Catholic Schools Office by June 1:
 - Upgrade Needs Assessment or
 - USDA's WellSAT 2.0

XI. Person Responsible

- The school administrator along with the wellness coordinator will ensure compliance with the established Wellness Policy.
- The preschool director will ensure compliance with the established Wellness Policy in the Early Learning setting.
- The school food service staff ensures compliance with the nutrition policies for the

school meal program and all food and beverages sold through the cafeteria.

XII. Communication

- Progress reports should be shared annually with the public using any of the following channels of communication :
 - The Message,
 - School newsletter,
 - Website,
 - School Messenger, and
 - Other forms of communication.
- Progress reports ensure transparency by including:
 - Web address of the wellness policy,
 - Description of each school's activities and goals and current level of progress,
 - Contact details for School Wellness Committee, and
 - Information on how to join the School Wellness Committee.

XIII. Environment

- St. John the Baptist expects that all classrooms, offices and spaces used by the staff and their students remain free of scented products including candle warmers and plug-ins.

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