

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

St. Ambrose School Commission has adopted this Wellness Policy which addresses health education, nutrition, and physical activity, in relation to the current laws and research. St. Ambrose Catholic School will actively engage our school community in following steps that will enable school-wide wellness. The St. Ambrose School Commission will spearhead efforts to implement, monitor, review, and revise school nutrition and physical activity programs.

Rules

I. Health and Nutrition Education

- Health education is offered through grade seven as part of the State of Indiana standards-based curriculum, designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.
- Teachers will receive continuing education about nutrition.
- Health education will encourage fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices.
- Emphasis will be placed on caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise).
- Health education will include the study of food advertising, including marketing goals versus nutrition truth.
- The school will support parental efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children by communication with the home, and sharing the growing knowledge regarding health and nutrition.
- The school lunch room will serve as a focus to support the integration of nutrition education with healthy lifestyle choices. The school will display the nutritional value of food, as well as promotional materials to reinforce good health. Nutritional standards for all food items are set and regulated by the state regarding size of serving sugar and fat content.
- Training and other educational information will be offered to teachers and parents in order that they become more aware, and informed concerning wellness topics

II. School Nutrition

The school will participate in a federal school meal and milk program. The school will integrate nutrition education into curriculum area. Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the current nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

- School meals will:
 - (1) Be appealing and attractive to children.

- (2) Be served in clean and pleasant settings.
- (3) Serve only low fat milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives, i.e. natural fruit juice.
- (4) Offer a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables as often as possible.
- (5) Introduce whole grain bread, brown rice, oatmeal, etc. whenever possible.
- The school will provide students with at least 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch.
- The principal will schedule meal periods at appropriate times, i.e. lunch will be scheduled between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
- The school will refrain from scheduling tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during meal times, unless students may eat school lunch during such activities.
- According to state law, at least 50% of the food and beverage items available for sale at a school, or on school grounds, must qualify as “better choice” foods, or beverages. Food items and beverage items should meet all of the qualifying standards which are considered better food and beverage choices.
- In order to support children’s health and school nutrition educational efforts, every attempt will be made to replace school fundraising activities which involve food, with alternative choices.
- A positive contribution to children’s diet and health is made by serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks with water as the primary beverage.
- School food service personnel will participate in training, provided by the state, county, or local educational agency, on a regular basis.
- Every effort will be made to educate parents and students concerning healthy choices for lunches brought from home:
 - (1) Parents and students will be encouraged to include fresh fruits and other healthy items, rather than packaged chips, etc.
 - (2) Soft drinks may not be brought to school or purchased from a vending machine from 8 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
- No “fast food” meals are to be brought in to the school for lunch. The foods chosen for children’s lunch boxes or sack lunches must be low in fat, sugar, and sodium. Whole grain products should be chosen when available.
- In light of the information available regarding childhood nutrition, the school will limit the practice of using candy, soft drinks, or food snacks as rewards for academic performance, or good behavior.
- Food or beverages, including food served through the school meals, will never be withheld from students as a disciplinary measure.
- The school will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day and encourage healthy food choices and other means of celebrating, (i.e. games).

III. Physical Activity

In order for students to meet the St. Ambrose Catholic School recommended amount of daily physical activity of 60 minutes. St. Ambrose Catholic School will aim to provide at least 30 minutes per day, including but not limited to, classroom movement activities, physical education class, recess and extracurricular activities.

All students in grades Pre-K- 8 will have opportunities and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

- Students will have physical education class every Friday during first semester and every Thursday and Friday during second semester; taught by a physical education teacher.
- Classroom education will complement physical education classes by reinforcing the knowledge and skills needed to maintain an active lifestyle and to reduce time spent in sedentary activities.
- Classroom teachers will make adaptations which will allow students to experience an increased healthy physical environment by examining the school day for opportunities for increased physical movement; i.e. during class transition times and other previously unrecognized chances to implement beneficial activities.
- The development and implementation of interscholastic, extracurricular and intramural programs will be undertaken to the advantage of students.
- Walking or biking to school in order to promote physical activity will be encouraged if it is safe.
- Volunteers involved in any type of physical activity with students will be trained in order to provide optimum safety.
- Those in charge will monitor recess activities each day for all elementary school students; (i.e., games, and/or equipment for student use such as jump ropes, balls, etc.)
- Students will not be kept from participation in physical education classes for academic or disciplinary reasons. Students may be given the punishment of walking the perimeter of the playground.
- No child may miss more than half the recess period.

Conclusion

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for St. Ambrose to address a growing national concern—the health and future well being of children—since a school represents one of the venues that can provide positive changes in a child's environment and knowledge base. The school will increase students' and parents' knowledge of the effects of diet and exercise on health. (Actions to be focused upon are decreasing the intake of sugar/fat, increasing the consumption of fruits and vegetables, whole grains and increasing daily opportunities for physical activity.) The ideal is to incorporate the spirit of this policy into the fabric of the school community by reflecting on how to be a part of the solution for the health challenge faced by our young people today. The school will provide ongoing information and research on health, nutrition and physical activity which will be made available on the Archdiocesan website for the use of all schools.

St. Ambrose School Commission will evaluate the goals set:

- (1) Diminish obesity
- (2) Children more active when not physically impaired
- (3) Absentee rate will decrease when adhering to policy