



St. John's Lutheran School

The Lutheran Schools of Indiana

LOCAL SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

School#C150 District#9230

Introduction

The Law Requires

Congress recognizes that schools play a critical role in promoting student health, preventing childhood obesity, and combating problems associated with poor nutrition and physical inactivity. To formalize and encourage this role, Congress passed a law (P.L. 108 - 265). Each local educational agency participating in a program authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, "shall establish a local school wellness policy by School Year 2006." As of July 2014, schools participating in the National School Lunch Program, are required by the USDA to have a School Wellness Policy that is implemented, evaluated, and monitored.

In 2014, representatives of the Indiana District attended a Wellness Training event at Lawrence Township Schools to review the current district wellness resource and give direction to school personnel about the new USDA Wellness Policy requirements. The Indiana District then provided a Wellness resource for Lutheran schools of Corporation 9230.

The current legislation places the responsibility of developing a wellness policy at the local level so that the individual needs of each school can be addressed. According to the requirements for the Local Wellness Policy, St. John's Lutheran school established a Wellness Committee in 2015, which revised the 2009 Wellness Policy to set goals for nutrition education, nutrition standards, physical education and activity, and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness. St. John's is committed to involving a broad group of individuals in the development and review of the Wellness Policy, as well as its implementation. In 2019, the Wellness Committee revised the Wellness Policy to this current version.

Research indicates a definite correlation between children's health, nutrition, and physical activity and their ability to be successful learners. St. John's Lutheran School teachers and staff help shape the process by which students establish their health and nutrition habits by providing nutritious meals and encouraging healthy snacks, by instruction of healthy eating habits, and the overall promotion of increased physical activity here in the school during the school day and extracurricular activities and through the support of community athletic and overall wellness actions.

The School Board of Education sets the following goals to enable students to establish good mental, physical, nutritional, and spiritual fitness habits:

The Gospel Motivates

As a Lutheran school, we believe that God created us and gives us all things, including our health. Therefore, we thank God for the gift of life and health He has given us – imperfect as it may be with problems of illness and diseases as a result of sin. But knowing what God has done for us through Jesus Christ – forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation – our response is to care for the body that is on loan to us as a way of thanking and praising God. If we view our bodies as His temple, we can begin to see the importance of daily maintenance to keep it usable for his service. By keeping our bodies well-maintained and filled with the right kinds of fuel (foods) needed to sustain us, we will be ready at a moment's notice for the demands and tasks He is calling us to do.

(Adapted from "Fill'er Up-With Good Food," by Steve Grunewald, writer/editor of Better Health, a quarterly wellness letter published by Concordia Plan Services of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and published in Shaping the Future, a publication of the Lutheran Education Association, Winter, 2005.)

I. Wellness Committee

St. John's Lutheran School allows stakeholders to participate in the school's Wellness Committee, which is maintained to oversee the development, implementation, evaluation, and revision of the school's wellness policy.

A. Following Indiana Code 20-26-9-18 and the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA), the school will maintain a Wellness Committee that may include the following:

- Parents/Guardians
- Food Service Directors and Staff
- Students
- School Health Professionals (school nurse)/Registered Dietitians
- Physical Education Teachers
- School Board Members
- School Administrators
- Any Interested Members of the School Community

B. The Wellness Committee shall meet regularly to review nutrition and physical activity policies and to develop an action plan for the coming year. The committee shall meet as needed during the school year to discuss implementation activities and address barriers and challenges.

C. The Wellness Committee shall report annually to the School Board on the implementation of the wellness policy and include any recommended changes or revisions. The School Board will adopt or revise nutrition and physical activity policies based on recommendations made by the committee.

D. The School Wellness Policy shall be communicated to essential stakeholders.

GOAL: St. John's Lutheran School will seek to hold regular meetings of the Wellness Committee, with reports and suggestions made to the School Board of Education at least biennially.

II. Nutrition

2A. Nutrition Education and Promotion

Nutrition topics shall be integrated within the comprehensive health education curriculum and taught at every grade level according to standards of the Indiana Department of Education. St. John's will link nutrition education and promotion activities with existing coordinated school health programs and Biblical principles of the Christian life.

A. Nutrition education and promotion will be provided as part of a Comprehensive Health Education Program.

1. Health education will be taught by a licensed education instructor and supported with community programs such as Lil' Fish and American Red Cross' Basic Aid Training.
2. The school will provide nutrition education training opportunities to teachers and staff for all grade levels.
3. Nutrition education may include lessons that cover topics such as how to read and use food labels, choosing healthy options, and portion control.
4. Nutrition education resources will be provided to parents/guardians.

5. Healthy items, such as salads and fruits, will be displayed prominently in cafeterias to make healthier choices more appealing.
6. Foods of minimal nutritional value, including brands and illustrations, shall not be advertised or marketed in educational materials.

GOAL: St. John's will seek to educate staff and families on healthy snacks and share educational materials to encourage healthy snacks for classroom snacks and classroom events and parties.

2B. Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals

St. John's will provide and promote the National School Lunch Program to ensure that all students have access to healthy foods to support healthier choices and promote optimal learning.

A. School Meal Content

1. Meals served through the National School Lunch Program will:
 - Be appealing and appetizing to children;
 - Meet, at a minimum, the nutrition requirements established by the USDA for federally funded programs;
 - Contain 0 percent trans fats;
 - Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
 - 100% of the grains offered are whole grain-rich.
2. All cooked foods will be baked or steamed. Proper procurement procedures and preparation methods will be used to decrease excess fat, calorie and sodium levels in food.
3. Students will have the opportunity to provide input on local, cultural and ethnic favorites.
4. The foodservice department provides periodic food promotions that will allow for taste testing of new healthier foods being introduced on the menu, i.e. "Try-It Tuesdays."
5. Special dietary needs of students will be considered when planning meals, according to the document Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs in the School Nutrition Programs.
6. The food services department will provide information about the nutritional content of meals upon request.

GOAL: St. Johns will seek to purchase or obtain fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practical.

B. School Meal Participation

1. St. John's Lutheran School will participate in the USDA National School Lunch Program, providing free and reduced lunches to all eligible students.
2. St. John's will inform families of the availability and location of Summer Food Service Program meals, per the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

C. Mealtimes and Scheduling

1. Adequate time will be provided to students to eat lunch (at least 20 minutes after being served).
2. Elementary classes will schedule one recess before lunch.
3. School meals will be served in clean and pleasant settings.
2. Students will have convenient access to hand washing and sanitizing stations.
3. Potable (drinking) water must be readily available at all mealtimes.
4. Appropriate supervision will be provided in the cafeteria and rules for safe behavior shall be consistently enforced.

D. Professional Development

1. Professional development and training will be provided at least annually to foodservice managers and staff on proper food handling techniques and healthy cooking practices.

2C. Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages

St. John's Lutheran School will provide and allow foods and beverages that support proper nutrition and promote healthy choices in concession stands, school fundraisers, and classroom celebrations.

A. Approved Nutrition Standards, based on the nutrition standards of the Institute of Medicine (2007) and the standards of the USDA Smart Snacks.

1. Any activity on school premises that provides food or snacks to our students shall be provided with a copy of this policy and encouraged to provide varied and nutritious foods instead of foods of minimal nutritional value.
2. The school shall provide parents and guardians with suggestions for varied and nutritious foods that are appropriate for morning snacks and treats.
3. St. John's Lutheran School does not have any vending machines or outside vendors on campus.
4. Foods outside of school meals shall be limited to:
 - No more than 30 percent of total calories from fat,
 - Less than 10 percent of total calories from saturated fats,
 - 0 percent trans fats,
 - No more than 35 percent of calories from total sugars,
 - No more than 200 milligrams of sodium per portion as packaged,
 - No more than 200 calories per package, and
 - 100 percent of the grains offered are whole grain-rich.
5. Beverages outside of school meals shall be limited to:
 - Water without flavoring, additives, or carbonation,
 - Low-fat and nonfat milk (in 8- to 12-ounce portions),
 - 100% fruit juice in 4-ounce portions as packaged for elementary/middle school and 8 ounces (2 portions) for high school, and
 - All beverages other than water, white milk or juice shall be no larger than 12 ounces.

B. Water Availability

1. Students and staff will have free, potable (drinking) water for consumption available in water fountains throughout the school building.

C. Concession Stands

1. The concession items sold at school-sponsored events to participants, fans, and visitors are encouraged to include at least 50 percent healthy beverages and foods, according to the approved nutrition standards.

D. Classroom Celebrations

1. Classroom celebrations are encouraged to focus on activities (e.g., giving free time, extra recess, music and reading time) rather than on food.
2. Classroom celebrations that include food will be limited to one per month. Food items served in the celebration must meet the approved nutrition standards.
3. St. John's will inform parents/guardians of the classroom celebration guidelines.

E. Food as a Reward or Punishment

1. Teachers and staff will not use food as a reward. For example, the use of sugar-sweetened beverages or candy as a classroom reward at any school is not appropriate.
2. School staff will not withhold food or drink at mealtimes as punishment.

F. Fundraisers

1. Fundraising activities will consider supporting healthy eating and wellness. Schools will consider promoting the sale of non-food items for school-sponsored fundraising. Foods sold as fundraisers will not be for in-school consumption

GOAL: St. John's teachers will discuss the impact and implementation of supportive "healthy eating" classroom parties with the teachers, parent/teacher association, and parent volunteers.

III. Physical Activity

St. John's Lutheran School supports the health and well-being of students by promoting physical activity through physical education, recess, and other physical activity breaks; before- and after-school activities; and walking and bicycling to school. Additionally, St. John's supports physical activity among elementary students by providing them with at least 30 of the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day.

A. Physical Education

1. A sequential, comprehensive physical education program shall be provided for students in K-8 following the standards and benchmarks established by the State. The physical education curriculum shall provide sequential instruction related to the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to participate in lifelong, health-enhancing physical activities.
2. Two scheduled physical education periods per class per week with grades 5-8 receiving 2 hours of physical education time per week in the school will be mandated.
3. The 4-8 programs shall include instruction in physical education and stress the importance of remaining physically active for life and will include instruction in life-long activities like jogging, golf, badminton, and tennis.
4. The physical education program shall be provided adequate space and equipment to ensure quality physical education classes for students.
5. Physical education will be taught by a licensed instructor.

B. Daily Recess and Physical Activity Breaks

1. The school shall provide daily physical activity under Indiana Code 20-30-5-7.5.
2. All elementary school students will have active recess each day, totaling at least 20 minutes, as recommended by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE). This recess period will be outdoors when possible. If an outdoor recess is not possible due to inclement weather, teachers will provide an indoor physical activity break in the classroom or gymnasium.
3. All teachers are encouraged to use physical activity breaks during classroom time as often as possible.
4. The school will discourage extended periods of inactivity (2 or more hours). During events such as mandatory school-wide testing, teachers will give students periodic breaks for moderate physical activity.

C. Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

1. St. John's encourages intramurals, clubs, interscholastic sports, and voluntary activities to increase opportunities for physical activity before and/or after school, taking into account student interest and supervisor availability.
2. After-school enrichment providers will include physical activity in their programs, to the extent space and equipment allow.

D. Physical Activity and Remedial Activities/Punishment

1. Students will not be removed or excused from physical education to receive instruction in other content areas.
2. School staff will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

E. Walking and Bicycling to School

1. Where appropriate and safe, the school will allow walking and bicycling to school.
2. To the extent possible, the school will make accommodations for students walking and bicycling to school, providing crossing guards and bicycle racks for student use.

E. Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

1. School spaces and facilities may be made available to school families, staff and community members before and after the school day; on weekends; and during school vacations through the Church Office. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

GOAL: St. Johns shall consider ways to provide additional physical education and health instruction time to elementary-aged students, exploring options such as Girls on the Run or other physical activity programs.

IV. Staff Wellness

St. John's Lutheran School supports the health and well-being of our staff by creating and promoting policy and environmental supports to provide physical activity and healthy eating opportunities.

A. Nutrition and Physical Activity

1. St. John's will partner with Concordia to provide programs that increase knowledge about physical activity and healthy eating for faculty and staff.
2. St. John's will allow staff to use school facilities outside of school hours for activities such as group fitness classes, walking programs, and individual use.
3. St. John's will offer competitively priced, healthy adult lunch options for all staff members with guidelines that meet the National School Lunch Program.

GOAL: St. John's teachers will work with the LaPorte YMCA and/or other local fitness programs to offer reduced membership fees when sufficient staff interest is present.

V. Evaluation

St. John's Lutheran School is committed to enforcing the policies and guidelines included in this document. Through the implementation of the school's Wellness Policy, St. John's will create an environment that supports physical activity and healthy eating behaviors. To ensure continuing progress, the school will evaluate implementation efforts and their impact on students and staff.

A. Implementation and Data Collection

1. St. John's Principal shall ensure that the school is in compliance with the school's Wellness Policy by assessing wellness implementation strategies and progress made in attaining the goals of the policy and then report to the school's Wellness Committee.
2. The evaluation of the Wellness Policy and its implementation will be directed by the Wellness Committee, under the approval of the School Board of Education.
3. Policy language will be assessed each year and revised as needed to reflect current best practices and ensure the local wellness policy compares to model school wellness policies.