

## **St Michael School Wellness Policy**

St Michael Catholic School Greenfield in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn, by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of St Michael Catholic School that:

- St Michael 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 PreK-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or offered at school will meet the nutrition recommendation of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans. St Michael will meet the guidelines set forth by the USDA for all foods sold at school.
- St Michael will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutritional needs of students, and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- St Michael will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish links between health education and school meal programs.

In June 2004, the Child Nutrition and WIC Authorization Act was signed into law. This made it MANDATORY for schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to have a written School Wellness Policy by July 1, 2006. The Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 further strengthened School Wellness Policies with expanded requirements and increased transparency.

The areas of Wellness Policy include:

- I. NUTRITION EDUCATION
- II. STANDARDS FOR USDA CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS AND SCHOOL MEALS
- III. NUTRITION STANDARDS FOR OTHER FOODS AND BEVERAGES SOLD OR OFFERED DURING SCHOOL HOURS
- IV. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & PHYSICAL EDUCATION
- V. FOOD AND BEVERAGE MARKETING
- VI. STAFF WELLNESS
- VII. IMPLEMENTATION, EVALUATION, & COMMUNICATION

## **I. NUTRITION EDUCATION**

St Michael will follow health education curriculum standards and guidelines as stated by the Indiana Department of Education. The goal is to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for healthy eating and a lifetime of good health to both student and care-giving adults.

### **A. CLASSROOM NUTRITION EDUCATION**

Nutrition education will be taught in grades PreK-8 as part of a comprehensive health curriculum designed to provide students with the necessary knowledge and skills to promote and protect health. Nutrition education will be designed to help students learn:

- Nutrition knowledge, including but not limited to, the benefits of healthy eating, essential nutrients, nutritional deficiencies, the use and misuse of dietary supplements, safe food preparations, handling, and storage, caloric balance between food intake and expenditure and foods important for good health: fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy, healthy fats and oils and a variety of protein sources.
- Nutrition related skills, including but not limited to, planning a healthy meal, understanding and using food labels, critically evaluating nutrition information, misinformation, and food advertising.
- How to assess one's personal eating habits, and how to set and achieve goals for improvement.

Teachers are encouraged to integrate nutrition education into core curriculum in areas such as math, science, social studies, and language arts. Tools will be available through health curriculum resources and suggestions through professional development. The staff responsible for nutrition education will participate in professional development if needed so they can be adequately prepared to deliver current education topics specific to their grade level.

### **B. Nutrition Promotion and Wellness Activities**

Food service staff will participate in nutrition promotion. Students will be educated through new food experiences and exposed to a wide variety of food choices. Encouragement should be given to children to try new foods.

The cafeteria will serve as a learning lab for healthy eating and be used to display nutrition promotion posters and food facts, and provide education opportunities to encourage interest in healthy foods.

Nutrition promotion and wellness education will be offered to students, parents, and staff through activities such as newsletters, handouts, links to websites, and other information consistent with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

## **II. STANDARDS FOR USDA CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS AND SCHOOL MEALS**

Nutritional integrity should be used as a basis for establishing the nutrition guidelines for foods offered at St Michael. The School Nutrition Association defines nutritional integrity as a level of performance that assures all foods and beverages available in schools are consistent with the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for America. Therefore, St Michael should provide all students access to high quality foods and beverages such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy and whole grains, and a variety of protein source wherever and whenever food is sold or otherwise offered at St Michael during the school day. Meals

served through the NSLP will meet, at minimum the nutrition requirements established by the USDA for federally funded programs.

A. School lunch programs will

- serve as a model for healthy eating.
- emphasize a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy foods and a variety of protein sources.
- be appealing and attractive to students.
- be served in a clean and pleasant space.
- provide students with adequate time to eat. The School Nutrition Association recommends twenty minutes for lunch from the time a student is seated.
- promote school meal participation with taste tests, themed lunches, engaging signage, etc.

B. School foodservice personnel

- are responsible for adhering to the wellness policies that St Michael has in place.
- will be provided continuing staff development that includes training programs for child nutrition and appropriate training on any nutrition updates or revisions to the policy.
- will have access to annual professional development and training on proper food handling techniques and healthy cooking practices.

### **III. NUTRITION STANDARDS FOR OTHER FOODS AND BEVERAGES SOLD OR OFFERED DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

Foods and beverages sold outside the Child Nutrition Program such as a la carte items will meet the guidelines set forth in the [A Guide to Smart Snacks for Schools](#) publication. The USDA published practical, science-based nutrition standards for snack foods and beverages sold to children at school during the school day. *\*For this policy, a school day is defined as 12AM to thirty minutes after school ends.* The standards, required by the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, will allow schools offer healthier snack foods to children, while limiting junk food.

[A Guide to Smart Snacks for Schools](#) also supports efforts by school food service staff, school administrators, teachers, parents, and the school community to instill healthy eating habits in students.

A. Nutrition Standards for Snack and A la Carte Foods

According to the USDA's [A Guide to Smart Snacks for Schools](#), any food SOLD at St. Michael must

- be a "whole grain-rich" grain product; or
- have as the first ingredient a fruit, vegetable, a dairy product, or protein food; or
- be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup of fruit or vegetables

Foods must also meet several nutritional requirements. The USDA's Smart Snacks Calculator can be used to determine if the food meets these requirements.

B. Nutrition Standards for Beverages

According to the USDA's [A Guide to Smart Snacks for Schools](#), beverages SOLD at St. Michael may include

- Plain water(with or without carbonation)
- Unflavored low fat milk

- Unflavored or flavored fat free milk and milk alternative by NSLP
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice and
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation), and no added sweeteners

Portion size is up to 8 ounces. There is no portion size limit for water.

#### C. Fundraising Activities

- The standards in the USDA's A Guide to Smart Snacks for Schools do NOT apply during non-school hours, on weekends, or at off-campus fundraising events.
- The standards provide a special exemption for infrequent fundraisers that do NOT meet the nutrition standards. State agencies may determine the frequency with which fundraising activities take place that allow the sale of food and beverage items that do not meet the nutrition standards. Indiana allows two exemptions per school per school year for fundraisers occurring during the school day involving the sale of food and/or beverages not meeting the A Guide to Smart Snacks for Schools guidelines.

#### D. Food as a Reward or Punishment

- It is strongly recommended that schools not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards, as rewards for academic performance or good behavior.
- Food or drink at mealtimes will not be withheld as punishment.

#### E. Classroom Celebrations

- It is strongly recommended that healthy options be offered for classroom or school-wide celebrations.
- Classroom celebrations will focus on activities (e.g. giving free time, extra recess, music and reading time) rather than food.

F. School sponsored events outside of school hours such as, but not limited to, athletic events. Dances, performances

- It is recommended that an effort be made to offer or sell foods and beverages that meet healthy nutrition guidelines as set forth in this policy.

### **IV. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

#### A. Physical activity

St Michael is encouraged to develop and implement a comprehensive school physical activity program that provides physical activity throughout the school day and addresses the needs of students, staff, and the school community.

- Staff should be provided with opportunities for professional development about physical activity.
- Integrating physical activity into the classroom setting: For students to receive the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity (at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class.
- All teachers will be encouraged to use physical activity breaks during classroom time as often as possible.

## B. Physical education

All students in grades PreK-8 will participate in physical education to meet the physical education standards.

- The physical education program shall be provided adequate space and equipment to ensure quality physical classes for the students.
- All staff involved in physical education will be provided opportunities for professional development focusing on physical activity, fitness, health, and wellness.
- All students in grades PreK-8, including students with disabilities and special health-care needs will receive regular physical education.
- Student involvement in other physical activities (e.g. CYO sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirements. Students will spend at least 50% of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Students will not be removed or excused from physical education to receive instruction in other content areas.

## C. Daily recess

All elementary school students (PreK-5) will have at least twenty minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which moderate to vigorous physical activity is encouraged.

## D. Physical activity opportunities before and after school

St Michael is encouraged to offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or CYO.

## E. After school programs

After school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage, verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities, daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

## F. Physical activity and punishment

Teachers and other school personnel will NOT arbitrarily use physical activity as punishment (e.g. running laps, push-ups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g. recess, physical education) as punishment.

## V. FOOD AND BEVERAGE MARKETING

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition and health promotion. As such, St Michael will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals and foods and beverages sold individually.

- The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy are encouraged.
- Marketing unhealthy foods is prohibited.

## VI. STAFF WELLNESS

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis Catholic Schools values the health and well-being of every staff member, and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

As part of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis health insurance program, health advocates will provide wellness information to St Michael staff.

## **VII. IMPLEMENTATION, EVALUATION, AND COMMUNICATION**

### **A. School Wellness Committee**

St Michael will form a School Wellness Committee to develop, implement, monitor, review, and as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. This committee will consist of a group of individuals representing the school and community and may include:

- Parents/guardians and students
- Food service staff and the physical education teacher
- One or more teachers and administrators
- One or more health professionals such as a registered dietician, nurse, etc.
- General public

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

### **B. Monitoring**

- St Michael will identify at least one person responsible for monitoring the Wellness Policy and reporting compliance matters to the principal.
- The Principal is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Wellness Policy

### **C. Wellness Policy implementation and evaluation**

At least every three years, St Michael will use the Indiana Department of Education Wellness Policy Evaluation Checklist (attached) to review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. St Michael will, as necessary, revise the Wellness Policy and develop work plans to facilitate their implantation.

### **D. Communication**

St Michael will communicate annually to parents, students, staff, and the community the content and implementation of the Wellness Policy. This should be published through the school handbook and website

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