



Diocese of Covington Local Wellness Policy for Schools

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The Federal Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2010 requires that all schools participating in the National School Lunch Program implement a Local Wellness Policy. The new law mandates that Local Wellness Policies include:

1. Goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other School-based activities.
2. Designation of a responsible person(s) for ensuring the Wellness Policy Guidelines are met.

Diocese of Covington Wellness Policies on Nutrition and Physical Activity for Schools

Preamble

The Diocese of Covington is committed to providing nutritious meals in our schools. Healthy, well-fed students learn better, are more attentive and are less of a discipline problem. While we policy that schools cannot be expected to shoulder the burden of reversing the trend in childhood obesity on their own, we must do our part to provide a policy and environmental changes to support healthier choices for both students and staff. Schools are, after all, the place where youth spend a substantial portion of their time. And, given the opportunity, school staff can model healthier lifestyle choices to the students. Wellness Policies make sense, not only for now but for the future of our children.

Because children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active to grow, learn and thrive and because good health fosters student attendance, the Diocese of Covington School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, wellbeing, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. In support of this commitment, the Diocese of Covington has developed the following local wellness goals:

GOAL 1 - Nutrition Education, Physical Activity, and School Based Activities

Schools are to include nutrition education in science, health, and physical education classes. Students, parents, food service professionals, health professionals and other interested community members should be called upon to assist the teacher. If a formal breakfast program is not possible, healthy pick-up breakfast items could be available in the morning for those students who come to school with no breakfast. In addition to nutrition education, students should be discouraged from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Physical activity needs to occur on a regular basis. Where possible, certified PE instructors should teach all PE classes, utilizing a K-12 curriculum. Recess may not be used as a form of punishment at any time. It cannot be taken away or used as a form of punishment. For example, a student may not be singled out to run additional laps or perform other physical activities that the entire class is also not engaged in, as behavioral consequences. Recess may be utilized as a reward mechanism for all grade levels. Recess, extra time at lunch and/or breakfast, and scheduled PE classes are encouraged. Teachers and school administrators need to work on scheduling so adequate time is allowed for these activities. In the event the above cannot be implemented, another form of activity should be in place at the school. Additionally, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education classes. In order for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, they need to be encouraged to maintain a physically active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television.

School based activities such as fundraisers, rewards and celebrations should not involve food or beverages, or should use only foods and beverages that meet the acceptable nutrition guidelines. Schools should conduct fundraising activities that promote physical activities. Rewards for academic performance or good behavior need not be centered around food; non-food items should be used in place of food. Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month, and healthy food choices should be made for these celebrations. A summary of the standards and information, as well as a Guide to Smart Snacks in Schools are available at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-school>. The alliance for a healthier Generation provides a set of tools to assist with implementation of Smart Snacks available at: <https://www.healthiergeneration.org/our-work/business-sector-engagement/improving-access-to-address-health-equity/smart-food-plnner>.

GOAL 2 - Nutrition Guidelines for Foods

- Menu planning in the Diocese of Covington needs to be in accordance with the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program Guidelines. Meeting the nutrition

standards recommended in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (the new Food Guide Pyramid).

- Students should be encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast since children who come to school hungry may find it difficult to stay alert and learn.
- Every effort needs to be made to include fresh fruits and vegetables in the school menus. Salad, fruit, and potato bars are encouraged if it is within the school's financial ability to offer such.
- To encourage students to try eating healthier foods that may not be familiar, taste tests should be done when a new product is offered.

Goal 3- Competitive Foods and Beverages

All foods and beverages available to students on the campus during the instructional day, defined by USDA as midnight to thirty minutes after the last bell, support healthy eating. The foods and beverages sold and served outside of the school meal programs (e.g., "competitive" foods and beverages) will meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, at a minimum. Smart Snacks aim to improve student health and well-being, increase consumption of healthful foods during the instructional day and create an environment that reinforces the development of healthy eating habits.

To support healthy food choices and improve student health and well-being, all foods and beverages outside the reimbursable school meal programs that are sold to students on the Sponsor's campus during the instructional day (and ideally, the extended instructional day) will meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks and/or State nutrition standards. These standards will apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold, which may include, but are not limited to, à la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores and snack or food carts.

Fundraising items that are food/beverage are also subject to these standards unless the items being sold are not intended for on-campus consumption. There are no exemptions to this rule.

Beverage options during the school day. All schools are allowed to sell:

- Plain water (carbonated or uncarbonated)
- Unflavored low-fat milk
- Flavored or unflavored no-fat milk (and milk alternatives)
- 100 percent fruit and vegetable juices, and full-strength juice diluted with water, carbonated or non-carbonated, with no added sweeteners.

Portion sizes based on age.

- Elementary schools may sell up to 8-ounce portions of allowable milk and juice beverages, while middle and high schools may sell up to 12-ounce portions. In high school, the standards limit the maximum container size to 12-ounces for lower calories beverages and 20-ounces for calorie-free beverages.

Additional options for older students.

- The new standards provide additional beverage options to high school students, recognizing their increased independence, relative to younger students, and the wide range of beverages available to high school students in the broader marketplace. Beyond water, milk and juice, smart Snacks in school provides additional calorie-free and lower-calorie beverage options for high school students.
- Calorie-free beverages, in up to 20-ounce portions.
- Lower-calorie beverages with up to 40 calories per 8-ounces or 60 calories per 12-ounces. These may be sold in up to 12-ounce portions.

Caffeinated beverages remain an option for high school students.

- The new nutrition standards do not restrict the sale of caffeinated beverages to high school students. USDA encourages school districts to exercise caution when selecting items for sale to their students. USDA will continue to monitor the Food and drug Administration's (FDA) work on caffeine and will consider revising the nutrition standards in the future as appropriate.

Goal 4 - A Plan for Measuring Implementation of the Local Wellness Policy

To ensure compliance with the Local Wellness Policy, the Diocese of Covington Food Service Director will conduct a review of each school's program and will attach a copy of that review.

If a school needs assistance with implementing the Local Wellness Policy, the Food Service Director will be available on an ongoing basis.

Schools are encouraged to purchase a computer program that will enable them to provide a nutrient analysis of their menus. Since the Diocese does not have a standard menu for all schools, each school will be responsible for providing the information to parents and all interested parties. Schools with web sites should publish menus on the site and provide nutrition information for each meal.

Goal 5 – Designation of Food Service Director to Ensure Implementation of Wellness Policy on Local Schools

The Director for Catholic Education designates the Diocesan Food Service Director to be responsible for ensuring the Wellness Policy goals are being implemented at the local level.

Goal 6 – Public Involvement in Development of Wellness Policy for Schools

The involvement of students, parents and the community are already a valuable component of the National School Lunch Program; however, with the implementation of the Local Wellness Policy, it becomes critical to invite further involvement. School administrators and others in the school community should work with the food service staff at each school to implement the diocesan policy and to develop a Local Wellness Policy appropriate to each school. The policy should be included in student and parent handbooks so the information is available to all concerned; it should also be included on the school and/or parish website.

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