

# St. Malachy School



## Local Wellness Policy

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# Preface

In accordance with 7 CFR 210.31(c), a Local Education Agency that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) must establish a Local School Wellness Policy for all schools under its jurisdiction. As of June 30, 2017, Local Wellness Policies must meet the minimum requirements set forth in the Final Rule: Local School Wellness Policy Implementation Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

Local Wellness Policies are a valuable tool in the promotion of student health and wellness through the NSLP and SBP. Schools play an essential role in preparing students for successful futures, and proper nutrition and physical activity are key to creating constructive learning environments. Local Wellness Policies provide guidance to further support schools efforts to provide students with a successful and healthy future.

# Wellness Policy Committee

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# Wellness Policy Committee Responsibilities

## **Introduction**

All elementary and secondary schools of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria shall be committed to providing a learning environment that supports and promotes wellness, good nutrition, and an active lifestyle and recognizes the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity, and the capacity of students to develop and learn. The entire school environment shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence students' beliefs and habits and promote health and wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity. In addition, school staff shall be encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life. It is the policy of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria that:

1. Each school will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity and reduce childhood obesity.
2. All students in early childhood programs and grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to participate in physical activities on a regular basis.
3. Qualified food service providers will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of the students; will accommodate the religious requirements of the students; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for the students to eat.
4. To the extent practical, the schools in the Diocese will participate in available federal school meal programs.
5. Food and beverages sold and/or served as part of the school meal programs will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
6. Each school will engage students, parents, teachers, staff, food service providers, health professionals, and interested community members in monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the Diocesan Student Wellness Plan.

## **Public Involvement**

The Local Education Agency permits and encourages public involvement in Local Wellness Policy development, implementation, updates, and reviews. Therefore, the LEA shall invite a variety of stakeholders within the general public to participate in Local Wellness Policy processes. The following methods of communication will be utilized to notify the general public of the opportunity to participate in these processes:

- Parent Handbook, updated June 5, 2024
- Parents Club Meeting

## **Assessments**

Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, assessments of the Local Wellness Policy must occur no less than every three years. St. Malachy Catholic School shall conduct assessments of the Local Wellness Policy every year beginning in 2023 and occurring every year thereafter. These assessments will:

- Ensure the wellness policy is in compliance with USDA, State, and Local rules and regulations
- Compare the LEA's wellness policy to model wellness policies
- Measure the progress made in achieving the goals as outlined in the LEA's wellness policy

## Updates & Reporting

The Wellness Policy Committee must update the Local Wellness Policy as appropriate in order to fit the needs and goals of the Local Education Agency. The LEA shall make the following available to the public:

- The Local Wellness Policy, including any updates to the policy, on a yearly basis
- The triennial assessment, including progress toward meeting the goals outlined in the wellness policy

Through the following channels:

- Parent Handbook, updated June 5, 2024
- Parents Club Meeting

## Records

The Local Education Agency shall maintain record of the Local Wellness Policy. This includes keeping a copy of the current wellness policy on file and maintaining documentation of the following actions:

- The most recent assessment of the policy
- Availability of the wellness policy and assessments to the public
- Reviews and revisions of the policy, including the individuals involved and the efforts made to notify stakeholders of their ability to participate in the process

## Nutrition

The Local Education Agency recognizes the important role nutrition plays in academic performance as well as overall quality of life. The National Education Association references numerous articles supporting the effects of nutrition on the classroom, for example, hunger often has a negative impact on students' success, attendance, and behavior.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 18.5 percent of the nation's youth was considered obese in 2015-16. This percentage increased 1.3 percent when

compared to the previous year. Conversely, 15.7 percent of American families experienced food hardship in 2017. Through participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s School Nutrition Programs, the LEA commits to serving nutritious meals to students in order to prevent both overconsumption of nutrient-poor foods and food insecurity to give students the best chance to succeed inside and outside the classroom.

## Goals for Nutrition

1. Consistent School Activities and Environment - Healthy Eating
  - a. All food service personnel shall have adequate pre-service training and participate in activities or programs that provide strategies for providing tasty, appealing, and healthy school meals; nutrition education strategies including coordination of classroom and cafeteria activities; and effective promotional techniques to encourage healthy eating habits.
  - b. Schools shall take efforts to promote nutritious food and beverage choices consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and Food Guidance System (My Pyramid) such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods and whole grain products.
  - c. It is recommended that food providers share information about the nutritional content of school meals and/or individually sold foods with students, family, and school staff.
  - d. School meals shall be served in clean, safe, and pleasant settings with adequate time provided for students to eat.
  - e. All foods and beverages provided by the school shall comply with federal, state, and local food safety and sanitation regulations.
  - f. Students, parents, school staff, and community members bringing foods and beverages to school for parties/celebrations/meetings shall be encouraged to provide healthful options.
  - g. Access to any area involved in storage, preparation, or service of food on the school campus shall be limited to authorized personnel.

## Nutrition Standards

### Meals

All reimbursable meals served for the purposes of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) must meet or exceed USDA nutrition standards and regulations. This includes meeting standards for each of the meal pattern components (i.e. Grains, Meat/Meat Alternates, Fruits, Vegetables, and Milk) as well as meeting or exceeding the limitations set for calories, sodium, saturated fat, and trans fat.

### Competitive Food

St. Malachy School does not have competitive foods and beverages.

## Other Foods and Beverages

- A.** The following policy refers to all foods and beverages provided, but not sold to students. The Local Education Agency will prohibit the use of food as a reward or as part of a celebration. Providing alternatives to food as a reward promotes healthier habits by reducing exposure to less nutritious food items and, therefore, the amount of calorie-dense food items consumed (e.g. cakes, cookies, candy, etc.). This helps children develop improved food preferences and hunger cues to carry them throughout life. Instead, schools will implement the following methods for rewards and celebrations:
- Extended recesses
  - Dance party
  - Class game
- B.** The following policy refers to all foods and beverages provided, but not sold to students. The Local Education Agency will prohibit food and beverage items that do not meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards for reward and celebration purposes. More than 25 percent of children’s daily calories may come from snacks, therefore, providing Smart Snacks allows for a more nutrient-dense calorie intake.

## Unused Food Sharing Plan

St. Malachy School uses “share tables” where children may return whole food or beverage items that they choose not to eat, if it is in compliance with local and state health and food safety codes. These food and beverage items are then available to other children who may want additional servings at no cost.

## Fundraisers

- A.** All fundraisers promoting food and/or beverage items that are held on school campus (i.e. locations on the school campus that are accessible to students) during the school day (i.e. the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day) must meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards.
- The school shall also utilize non-food fundraisers to promote healthy habits and well-being. The school will implement the following non-food fundraising ideas:
- Luck of the Draw Raffle
  - Heaven’s Sent Script
  - Car Party Live & Silent Auction
- B.** Fundraisers promoting food and/or beverage items that are held on school campus (i.e. locations on the school campus that are accessible to students) during the school day (i.e. the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day) must meet Smart Snacks



nutrition standards. However, the LEA may participate in infrequent exempted fundraising days, in which food and beverage items do not meet Smart Snacks standards, as the LEA sees fit. These exempted fundraising days shall not exceed nine days within one year. The LEA shall comply with the following procedures when managing exempted fundraising days:

- Principal provides final approval of all food and/or beverage items on campus

## **Goals for Nutrition Education**

1. Students in early childhood programs and grades Kindergarten through grade 12 shall receive sequential and interdisciplinary nutrition education. The program shall be designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to adopt healthy eating behaviors. Special emphasis should be placed on nutrition education in early childhood through the primary grades as eating habits are established at a young age.
2. The nutrition education program shall include enjoyable interactive activities such as contests, promotions, taste testing, field trips, school gardens, or other like activities.
3. Schools shall work with parents to assist in providing a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children, which may include information to help them incorporate healthy eating and physical activity.

## **Nutrition Education**

In accordance with the Illinois Learning Standards, the Local Education Agency shall meet all Illinois requirements and standards for Health Education. The Local Education Agency shall include nutrition education within the health education curriculum and integrate nutrition education into other core subjects, as appropriate. Various grade levels and curriculums shall use nutrition education information, research, and materials from the following resources:

- Dietary Guidelines for Americans

The Local Education Agency shall incorporate nutrition education into the following curriculums for the following grade levels:

- Nutrition Unit in Science grades K-6

## **Goals for Nutrition Promotion**

1. District shall implement nutrition promotion techniques through multiple channels, including the cafeteria, classroom, and home.
2. The District shall make cafeteria menus and nutrition information available through various platforms.

## Nutrition Promotion

The District shall make cafeteria menus and nutrition information available through the following platforms:

- School Website
- Parent Email
- Daily Announcement
- Menus in Each Classroom
- Menus in the Lunchroom

The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement uses behavioral economics to positively influence food choices made by children. The evidence-based techniques implemented through the Movement have been proven to increase children's consumption of nutritious foods. The District shall participate in the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement by utilizing the Smarter Lunchrooms 60-point Scorecard and other educational and promotional tools. The District shall implement the following Smarter Lunchrooms techniques:

- Using the 60-point Scorecard

Farm to School efforts positively impact School Nutrition Programs by serving fresh and nutritious food items. Additionally, Farm to School programs have been linked to increased consumption of fruits and vegetables. The district shall participate in the following Farm to School activities:

- Ag in the Classroom for 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade
- American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture, Educator's Guide, Book, Poster Contest. [www.agfoundation.org](http://www.agfoundation.org)

## Marketing

- A.** The Local Education Agency will prohibit the marketing and advertising of all foods and beverages that do not meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards on the school campus (i.e. locations on the school campus that are accessible to students) during the school day (i.e. the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day). The marketing standards described above apply, but are not limited to, oral, written, and graphic statements made for promotional purposes. Items subject to marketing requirements include, but are not limited to, posters, menu boards, vending machines, coolers, trash cans, scoreboards, and other equipment. This policy does not require schools to immediately replace equipment that does not meet this requirement, however, the District shall implement these standards as equipment needs replaced in the future.

# Physical Activity

Physical activity is a key component of the health and well-being of all students. Physical activity lowers the risk for certain diseases, including obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Physical activity also helps improve brain function, allowing students to perform better in school.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends adolescents get at least 60 minutes of physical activity five days per week. Nearly 79 percent of school-age children fall short of meeting this requirement. The Local Education Agency recognizes this connection and commits to promoting and providing opportunities for physical activity during and outside the school day.

## **Goals for Physical Activity**

1. Students in early childhood programs and grades K through grade 12 shall participate in regularly scheduled formal and informal physical activity programs. Special emphasis should be placed on promoting an active lifestyle in early childhood through the primary grades as health habits are established at a young age. Reasonable accommodations shall be made for students with disabilities and/or other limitations.
2. Elementary schools shall provide a daily, supervised recess period to all students.

## **Physical Education**

In accordance with the Illinois Learning Standards, the Local Education Agency shall meet all Illinois requirements and standards for Physical Education. The LEA shall offer Physical Education class as follows:

- Grade K – 60 min.
- Grade 1 – 60 min.
- Grade 2 – 60 min.
- Grade 3 – 80 min.
- Grade 4 – 90 min.
- Grade 5 – 90 min.
- Grade 6 – 90 min.

## **Other Opportunities for Physical Activity**

The District shall include additional physical activity opportunities, outside of Physical Education class, during the school day through the following:

- Lunch recess – 20 min. daily
- Classroom recess – 20 min. daily
- Brain breaks in class as needed

The following opportunities for participation in school-based sports shall be offered to students each year:

- Students participate in sports programs through a co-op with the Community Recreational Center and the Geneseo Public School District.

## **Physical Activity Promotion**

The District shall promote physical activity through the participation in the following initiative(s):

- Distribute information about community athletic camps and clubs

## **Other School-Based Activities**

Just as it takes a comprehensive curriculum to provide education to support students' futures, the Local Education Agency's wellness approach must also be comprehensive in its intent to provide students with the tools they need to live a healthy lifestyle. In order to further establish positive behaviors related to nutrition, physical activity, and health, the LEA commits to making additional wellness-based activities available to all students beyond the cafeteria and gymnasium.

## **Goals for Other School-Based Activities**

2. Consistent School Activities and Environment - Healthy Activity
  - a. Schools are encouraged to limit extended periods of inactivity. When activities such as mandatory testing make it necessary for students to be inactive for long periods of time, it is recommended that schools give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.
  - b. Physical activity facilities and equipment on school grounds shall be safe.
  - c. Schools are encouraged to work with the community to create a safe and supportive environment for students walking or biking to school.

The Local Education Agency shall offer other school-based activities to support student health and wellness, including coordinated events and clubs. The following events shall be organized and promoted each year:

- Back to School Swim Party – August
- Roller Skating – January/February
- Sock Hop – February
- Screen free week - February
- Fitness testing twice a year
- All-school Dodgeball Tournament
- All-school Field Day
- Sports specific learning units in P.E.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Pickleball, Bowling, and Disc Golf Field Trip

The following health, wellness, and/or nutrition clubs shall be offered to students each year:

- The school distributes information about community athletic camps and clubs