

## **St. Francis of Assisi School Wellness Policy**

The following Wellness Policy has been modified and adapted from the Des Moines Diocesan Policy #712, "Nutrition and Physical Activity Wellness Policy" for local use at St. Francis of Assisi School in West Des Moines, Iowa.

### **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

#### **Nutrition and Physical Activity Wellness Policy**

St. Francis of Assisi School and the St. Francis of Assisi School Board promote healthy students by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. St. Francis of Assisi School supports a healthy environment where students learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. By facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and activity, schools contribute to the basic health status of students. Improved health optimizes student performance potential.

St. Francis of Assisi School provides a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors. The entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy goals to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs, and habits as they related to good nutrition and regular physical activity.

St. Francis of Assisi School supports and promotes dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance. All foods available on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities during the instructional day should meet or exceed the school's nutrition practices. Foods should be served with consideration toward nutritional integrity, variety, appeal, taste, safety and packaging to ensure high-quality meals.

St. Francis of Assisi School established a local Wellness Committee in 2008. The committee had the responsibility of developing and implementing the St. Francis of Assisi School Wellness Policy based on the Diocesan Schools Board Wellness Policy recommendations. The Student Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC) is responsible for the ongoing evaluation of our policy. School Administration will report annually to the St. Francis of Assisi School Board regarding the effectiveness of the Wellness Policy.

### **SPECIFIC WELLNESS GOALS**

#### **Nutrition Education and Promotion - Appendix A**

St. Francis of Assisi School will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion. To accomplish this goal,

- A baseline assessment of nutrition education currently provided has been conducted. Based on this assessment, a sequential and interdisciplinary nutrition education curriculum has been developed which addresses age appropriate topics covered in each grade level. Nutrition education may be integrated into other areas of the curriculum such as, but not limited to, math science, language arts, social studies, PE, and guidance;

- The staff responsible for nutrition education will effectively deliver an accurate nutrition education program as outlined. Preparation will provide basic knowledge of nutrition, combined with skill practice in program-specific activities and instructional techniques and strategies designed to promote healthy eating habits.
- Nutrition education information will be an appropriate, approved and/or recommended curriculum.
- The School Lunch Program and cafeteria will serve as a learning laboratory to allow students to apply classroom nutrition education; and
- The School Lunch Program, complying with federal, state, and local requirements, will promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health enhancing nutrition practices.

## **Physical Activity- Appendix B**

### ***Physical Education***

St. Francis of Assisi School will provide physical education that:

- is taught by a licensed physical education teacher;
- currently shall be taught in grades 1-5 a minimum of once per week;
- currently shall be taught in grades 6-8 a minimum of twice per week; and
- shall be in compliance with the physical activity requirements as established by the Health Kids Act effective July 1, 2009

### ***Recess***

Elementary and middle school students should be provided recess periods during the school day as allowed per curriculum schedule, and preferably be offered outdoors, if able.

### ***Physical Activity and Punishment***

Staff members and employees should not use physical activity (ex. running laps, push-ups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (ex. recess, physical education) as punishment.

## **Other School-Based Activities that Promote Student Wellness - Appendix C**

### ***Integrating Physical Activity into Classroom Settings***

Students need opportunities for physical activity beyond recess and physical education classes in order for them to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior. Toward that end, St. Francis of Assisi School will:

- offer classroom health education that complements physical education;
- discourages sedentary activities such as watching television, playing computer games, etc. as part of the school day; and
- encourages classroom teachers to provide activity breaks between lessons and classes, and to use additional recess time as a reward, as appropriate/possible during the school day.

### ***Communication with Parents***

St. Francis of Assisi School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The school will:

- encourage parents to pack healthy sack lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and food that do not meet nutrition standards; and
- provide parents with a list of foods that meet the school's snack standards, and suggestions for non-food related items for celebrations/birthday treats, rewards, and fundraising activities.

### ***Food Marketing in Schools***

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. Our school will promote healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and whole-grain products, and low fat dairy products.

### ***After School Programs***

St. Francis of Assisi Kids Care Program will encourage physical activity and healthy habit formation. The Kids Care program will abide by the healthy snack and physical activity requirements under its certification through the Department of Health and Human Services.

### ***Staff Wellness***

St. Francis of Assisi School values the health and well-being of every staff member and will work to support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Toward that end, our school will work to establish and maintain a Staff Wellness Committee which will support staff activities and education based on interest.

## **Nutritional Guidelines for All Foods Available on Campus - Appendix D**

### ***School Meals***

Meals served at St. Francis of Assisi School through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, the nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal law;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables, preferably fresh when available/ affordable;
- serve low fat or non-fat dairy products, as well as nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives, when available/affordable.

Schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents, students, and staff on menus and/or other sources of communication in the lunchroom and school kitchen.

### ***Breakfast***

To ensure that students have breakfast, either home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn, St. Francis of Assisi School will:

- operate a breakfast program, to the extent possible or deemed necessary;

- notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program, if available;
- encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their students through education in the school newsletter, other printed nutrition information sent home with students.

### ***Free and Reduced-Price Meals***

St. Francis of Assisi School will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-priced meals. Toward this end, St. Francis of Assisi school utilizes an electronic identification and payment system.

### ***Qualifications of Food Service Staff***

St. Francis of Assisi School will:

- employ a food service director who is properly qualified, certified, and/or credentialed according to current professional standards; and
- assure/maintain records that demonstrate that all food service staff and school lunch volunteers have had adequate pre-service training in food service operations; and provide continuing education opportunities according to their level of responsibility.

### ***Sharing of Foods***

St. Francis of Assisi School will, to the extent practical, discourage students from sharing foods/beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about communicable disease, food allergies, and other restrictions on some children's diets. The school will implement a share table policy to ensure safe food handling practices for sharing appropriate foods.

### ***Food Served/ Sold Outside of Meals (ex. a la carte sales)***

St. Francis of Assisi School Wellness Policy will address the following circumstances, keeping foremost in mind nutrition guidelines promoting student health, and reducing the incidence of childhood obesity;

- The St. Francis School Lunch Program will only provide a la carte/snack items sold outside of the reimbursable school meals program which meet the following nutrition standards as per the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010:
  - ***Beverages: Allowed***
    - Plain water (with or without carbonation)
    - Unflavored low fat milk
    - Unflavored or flavored fat free milk or milk alternatives permitted by NSLP/SBP
    - 100% fruit or vegetable juice and
    - 100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation), and no added sweeteners.

### ***Foods***

*A food item sold individually:*

- Be a "whole grain-rich" grain product or
- Have a first ingredient a fruit, vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food: or

- Be a combination food that contains a least  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of fruit and/or vegetable: or
- Snack Items have a calorie limit equal to or less than 200 calories. Entree items have a calorie limit equal to or less than 350 calories
- Snack items will have a sodium limit of less than or equal to 200 mg. Entree items will have a sodium limit of equal to or less than 480 mg
- Total fat will be equal to or less than 35% of calories. Saturated fat will be less than 10% of calories and trans fats will be zero grams
- will have no more than 35% of its weight from added sugars

### ***Classroom Snacks***

St. Francis School recognizes the importance of snacks as a way for students to maintain energy and focus academically during the school day. To this end, snacks will be provided in bulk by food services through the classroom teacher.

### ***Food Served as Rewards or in Celebrations***

Teachers/staff will be encouraged to use non-food items for student rewards/incentives. For school based celebrations, staff/parents will be required to provide snacks/drinks based on the above mentioned nutrition and portion size standards. Homeroom parents will be provided with a list of acceptable party treats for classroom parties.

### ***Foods Served at School-Sponsored Events Outside of the School Day (Concessions Stand, etc.)***

Concessions stands at St. Francis of Assisi school sponsored events outside of the school day will offer some items which meet the above mentioned nutrition and portion size standards as healthy choice alternatives.

### ***Food Safety***

St. Francis of Assisi School will develop standards which addresses food safety and sanitation policies and procedures that need to be followed when the school lunch program facilities are used by non-School Lunch program employees in order to maintain food safety and sanitation standards of foods provided, and maintain sanitation standards as outlined by the schools HACCP program.

## **Plan for Measuring Implementation - Appendix E**

### ***Monitoring***

The Des Moines Diocesan Schools Superintendent will ensure compliance with established Diocesan Schools Board Nutrition and Physical Activity Wellness Policy.

At St. Francis of Assisi School:

- the school administration will ensure compliance with the Diocesan Schools Board Nutrition and Physical Activity Wellness Policy and will report on the school's compliance to the superintendent;
- food service staff will ensure compliance with the nutrition policy and goals with food service areas and will report of this matter to the administration;

- the building administration will report on the most recent USDA School Meals initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. If the school has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past 3 years, the administration will request from the state agency that a SMI review be schedule as soon as possible;
- the superintendent will develop a summary report every 3 years on diocesan-wide compliance with the Diocesan Schools Board established Nutrition and Physical Activity Wellness Policy, based on input from the local schools with the diocese; and
- the report will be provided to the Diocesan Schools Board and also distributed to all local school wellness committees, parent/teacher organizations, administrators, and health services personnel in the diocesan schools.

### ***Policy Review***

To help with implementation of the Diocesan Schools Board Nutrition and Physical Activity Wellness Policy, St. Francis of Assisi School will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and practices. The result of this assessment will be compiled at the diocesan level to identify and prioritize future needs. Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas of improvement. As part of that review, the Diocesan Schools Office will review the Nutrition and Physical Activity Wellness Policy, its goals and practices, and the provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity. The Diocesan Schools Office, and individual schools within the Diocese, will collaborate to review the wellness policy and goals, and develop work plans to facilitate future implementations.

Approved: December 2008

Reviewed/Revised January 2011

Reviewed/Revised May 2012

Reviewed/Revised February 2015

Reviewed/Revised November 2017

Reviewed/Revised June 2021