

SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

August, 2006

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Grade School is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being and the ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activities. The link between nutrition and learning is well documented. Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, physical and mental growth and lifelong health and well-being. The purpose of this policy is to offer students the tools and knowledge necessary to make healthy choices for their body.

Component A: Nutritional Guidelines

Food Service

- Menus will meet the nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture
- School meals will follow good menu planning principles, which feature a variety of healthy choices that are tasty, attractive and of excellent quality
- Off-site catering and/or on-site food service programs will provide and post the nutrient breakdown of menus
- School will consider students needs in planning for a healthy school nutrition environment
- Students will be asked for input and feedback on menus

Food Service Staff

- The School food service staff will be properly qualified according to current professional standards and regularly participate in professional development activities
- The School food service program will follow all food safety guidelines
- Food staff members will receive HACCP(Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points) training

Pleasant Eating Experiences

- School personnel will assist all students in developing the healthy practice of washing hands before eating
- A pleasant eating area for students and staff with adequate time for unhurried eating should be provided
- A minimum 30-minute uninterrupted lunch period (including recess) should be scheduled
- Schools are encouraged to provide recess before lunch or at a different time than lunch
- The school will review tutoring, pep rallies, assemblies club/organization meetings, and other activities during lunch time
- The withholding of food as punishment for students is prohibited

Component B: Nutrition Education

- Nutritional education is addressed in the K-12 Health Curriculum standards of the Diocese of Phoenix Catholic schools and is to be integrated across the curricula
- Students in Kindergarten through grade 12 will receive nutrition education that teaches the skills needed to adopt healthy eating behaviors
- The school will provide nutritional information to parents that will encourage parents to provide safe and nutritious food for their children
- School will promote advertising of healthy food choices

Component C: Physical Activity

Physical Education

- Sequential physical education curriculum consistent with Diocesan Curriculum Standards will be implemented
- Suggested class time for Physical Education is 150 minutes per week for elementary students (k-5th grade)

- Suggested class time for Physical Education is 225 minutes per week for middle (6th-8th Grade) and high school students will be offered Physical Education classes for the entire school year
- Physical Education classes should be that of a regular classroom teacher not to exceed 1:35 teacher/student ratio
- A physical and social environment that is safe and enjoyable for all, including those not athletically gifted, must be provided
- All elementary and high school students must participate in physical education classes
- Physical education classes may not be withheld as punishment or for completion of assignments
- Students should be moderately to vigorously active at least 50% of the time while in PE class

Physical Activity

- The school will provide daily recess of at least 20 minutes per day. Transition between classes for grades 4-8 is considered recess time
- Classroom teachers will give students simple physical activity breaks during classroom hours
- Intramural programs and/or physical activity clubs that meet all students' needs, especially those who are not those that are not athletically gifted, should be offered or made available
- After school childcare programs are to provide developmentally appropriate physical activity for participating children and reduce or eliminate watching TV or videos

Component D: Other School-Based Activities

- Food and beverages sold or served on school grounds or at school-sponsored events during the normal school day (first bell to last bell of the school day) shall meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and other nutrition standard guidelines as set forth by the Arizona Department of Education Child Nutrition Programs. This includes:
 - ala carte offerings in the food service program
 - food and beverage choices in vending machines, snack bars, and school stores
 - food and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities

- food and beverages served at student parties, celebrations, meetings and school snacks
- Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value as defined by 7 CFR 210.11(2) are prohibited from being served during the school day. Foods of minimal nutritional value as defined by USDA include carbonated beverages, water ices, chewing gum, hard candies, jellies and gums, marshmallow candies, fondant, licorice, spun candy, and candy coated popcorn.
- Celebrations should be limited to 3 per year (Christmas, Last day of School and one of the school's choice) where Minimal Nutritional Value foods may be served

Component E: Parents and Staff Involvement

- Students will receive positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal about healthy eating and physical activity from all school personnel
- School staff is encouraged to use non-food rewards - Food as a reward for students' accomplishments is to be used sparingly
- Parental involvement in the child's nutrition education is encouraged and welcomed
- Parents and the community are encouraged to institute and support physical activity programs

Component E: Implementation and Evaluation

- The Wellness Policy will be distributed to students, parents, and staff and will be published in each school's parent/student handbook by August, 2007 and then annually
- The principal or designee will ensure compliance with these guidelines in his/her school
- School food service staff will ensure compliance and report nutrition policies within school food service areas and to the school principal
- Each school will conduct a Baseline Assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environment. Baseline Assessment is to be sent to the Catholic Schools Office by October 1, 2006
- An annual assessment and report on the school's compliance will be submitted to the Catholic School Office by May 30th

A Commitment to Nutrition and Physical Activity

- The Diocese of Phoenix Catholic Schools Office will appoint a School Health Advisory Committee to address nutrition and physical activity issues. The Committee will develop and evaluate guidelines that support a healthy school and shall offer revisions to these guidelines as needed
- The Diocese of Phoenix Catholic Schools Office encourages school fundraisers to offer non-food items or healthy food choices

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND REFERENCES

ARS 15-242

www.azleg.state.az.us/ars/15/00242.htm

The Arizona Nutrition Standards

Arizona Healthy School Environment Model Policy

www.ade.az.gov/health-safety/cnp/HB2544/

www.ade.az.gov/health-safety/cnp/nslp/GuidanceManual

Action for Healthy Kids Coalition

www.actionforhealthykids.org/index.htm

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/default.htm

Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points (HACCP)

www.cfsan.fda.gov/

United States Department of Agriculture and Team Nutrition School Wellness Policies:

www.fnx.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/Wellnesspolicy.html

School Nutrition Association School Wellness Policies

www.schoolnutrition.org

National alliance for Nutrition and Activity

www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org

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