CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
DIOCESE OF EVANSVILLE
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Holy Rosary Catholic School Wellness Policy

2026-2027

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Evansville are committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn, by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Evansville that:

- The schools 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 Preschool-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *US. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.*
- Staff will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students, and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Evansville will continue to implement and annually update this policy for health and wellness of all students.

Holy Rosary Catholic School's Wellness Policy includes the following elements, each addressed with specific goals:

I. Wellness Committee

- Holy Rosary Catholic School will form a Wellness Committee to serve as a resource to develop, implement, monitor, review, and revise school nutrition and physical activity policies.
- The Wellness Committee will meet at a minimum quarterly with an agenda and minutes to be kept at the school.
- The Wellness Committee will consist of individuals from the following areas:
    - School Administrator
    - PE Teacher and interested faculty and staff members
    - Student(s)
    - Parent(s) or School Council Member
    - Cafeteria or Child Nutrition Manager
    - Health Care/Nutritionist/Certified Dietician professional
    - Interested individuals from the general public who have a vested interest in our schools

II. USDA Requirements for School Meals

- The school breakfast and lunch programs at Holy Rosary Catholic School will:
  - Meet, at minimum, nutrition requirements established by USDA for federally funded programs, as found on the USDA website at https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards-school-meals.
  - Provide access to and emphasis on high quality foods and beverages, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and water.
  - Be appealing and attractive to students.
  - Be served in clean and pleasant surroundings.
  - Provide students with adequate time to eat (**the School Nutrition Association recommends at least twenty minutes for lunch**).
  - Promote school meal participation with taste tests, contests, etc., and make available a nutritional analysis of menu items.
- Parents will be provided information regarding eligibility and application for participation in the free/reduced price meals.

III. Nutritional Guidelines for All Food and Beverages Sold

- Food and beverages sold outside of the Child Nutrition Program, including a' la carte and vending machine items, will be approved by either the school's Food Service Director or the School Wellness Committee, and will meet the following guidelines:
  - Beverages
    - Water
    - Fruit and vegetable juices
    - Fruit based drinks containing 100% fruit juice
    - Low-fat unflavored or fat-free flavored fluid milk
  - Foods
    - Individual food items must meet USDA Smart Snack Standards, which can be accessed at: https://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks
  - Elementary and Middle Schools (Grades Preschool-8)
    - Vending machines dispensing either food or beverages are not accessible to students in grades Preschool-8.
    - Sale of foods and/or beverages containing caffeine or non-nutritive sweeteners is prohibited during the school day.
  - Fundraising
    - 50% of the school fundraising activities will not involve food.
    - Two exemptions, each exemption lasting one day in duration only, are allowed during the school year if approved by the School Wellness Committee.
  - School-Sponsored Events (such as, but not limited to, Athletic Events, Dances, or Performances)
    - It is recommended that an effort be made to offer or sell only those foods and beverages that meet the above nutritional guidelines.

IV. Nutritional Guidelines for Non-Sold Foods and Beverages

- Preschool Programs, After-School Care, and/or Extra-Curricular Programs
  - Snacks served will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health.
  - Snacks served will emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and the importance of water as a beverage.

- Celebrations
    - Holy Rosary Catholic School will allow healthy food choices ***for a limited number of*** celebrations throughout the school year***. Teachers and room contact parents will communicate these celebrations to the classroom.***
    - One celebration per year may be designated as exempt, which would allow for each healthy food or beverage to pair with a food or beverage that does not meet the nutrition guidelines for food and beverages sold individually. ***Holy Rosary's exempt celebration will be Christmas.***
    - Holy Rosary Catholic School **will** celebrate the birthdays of our students, however, this will be a non-food celebration. ***Bringing in a treat/gift for students or the classroom is optional and not an expectation. If a child wishes to bring a treat for his/her birthday, ideas would include pencils, eraser, stickers, or a gift for the classroom such as an indoor recess game, puzzle, book for classroom library, deck of cards. You may want to ask your child or the classroom teacher for additional suggestions.***
- Rewards
    - Teachers and staff should not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior.

V. Food and Beverage Marketing

- Holy Rosary Catholic School will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition guidelines for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually.
- Promotional materials (fall festival, give back nights, steak nights, fish fries, etc.) that are distributed during the school day will not contain images or wording for food or beverage items that do not meet the nutritional guidelines for food or beverages sold individually.
- As contracts expire, promotional materials, such as, but not limited to, scoreboards, vending machines, etc. that currently advertise non-compliant foods or beverages will be changed to market water or only the company and not the product.

VI. Nutrition Education

- Holy Rosary Catholic School will follow health education curriculum standards and guidelines as stated by the Indiana Department of Education.
- Nutrition education will be taught by a licensed teacher in grades K-12. In self-contained classrooms, teachers holding an appropriate license may teach their own health and nutrition education, as well as other required subjects as their license allows.
- Nutrition education will be taught throughout grades K-12 including, but not limited to:
    - Nutrition Knowledge
        - Benefits of healthy eating
        - Essential nutrients
        - Nutritional deficiencies
        - Use and misuse of dietary supplements
        - Safe food preparations
        - Handling and storage
        - Caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure

- Nutrition Related Skills
  - Planning healthy meals
  - Understanding and using food labels
  - Critical evaluation of nutrition information
  - Commercial food advertising
- Assessing Personal Eating Habits and Setting Achievable Goals

- Teachers are encouraged to integrate nutrition education into core curriculum in areas such as math, science, social studies, and language arts.
- Professional development opportunities will be shared with teachers and staff throughout the year.
- Cafeteria staff will participate in annual trainings as part of the professional standards.
- Additional School Goal (if above goals are met):

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VII. Nutrition Promotion

- Cafeteria staff will introduce students to new food choices once per semester. Consistent encouragement will be given to students to try new foods and make positive comments about foods.
- The cafeteria can be used to display nutrition education posters and food facts to encourage interest in healthy foods.
- The School Wellness Committee will explore and identify at least two of the Smarter Lunchroom techniques at http://www.smarterluchrooms.org/scorecard-tools/smarter-lunchrooms-strategies to implement in order to promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students.
- Holy Rosary Catholic School shall schedule mealtimes so there is minimum disruption by bus schedules, recess, and other special programs or events, thereby allowing sufficient time for students to eat (**the School Nutrition Association recommends at least twenty minutes for lunch**).
- All elementary and middle schools will provide the *Nutrition Nuggets* newsletter, via the school website, take home folders, or by email, in an effort to communicate, promote, and educate parents and guardians regarding nutrition and wellness.
- Additional School Goal (if above goals are met):

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VIII. Physical Activity

- Classroom Setting
  - Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle.
  - Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks, ie. Brain breaks, between lessons or classes as appropriate.
  - Teachers should discourage extended periods of inactivity (periods of two or more hours). When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain sedentary for long periods of time, students should be provided with periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.
- Physical Education Class
  - All students will receive regular physical education.
  - Student involvement in other physical activities will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement in grades K-8.
  - High school students must earn two credits in physical education.
  - Students will spend at least 50% of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
  - The student to teacher ratio for physical education classes will be no larger than other classes (30 to 1).
  - Professional development will be available to PE teachers, especially at the Diocesan Teacher Share Meetings.
  - A licensed PE teacher in grades that are departmentalized will teach physical education. In self-contained classrooms, teachers holding an appropriate license may teach their own physical education, as well as other required subjects as their license allows.
- Recess
  - All elementary school students (K-5) will have at least 20 minutes per day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity, verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.
- Physical Activity and Consequences
  - Teachers and other school and community personnel will not arbitrarily use physical activity (running laps, push-ups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (recess, physical education) as consequence to behavioral infractions.
- Additional School Goal (if above goals are met):

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IX. Additional School-Based Activities

- Faculty and Staff will have the opportunity to be involved in wellness programs and/or efforts to build effective school health initiatives.
- Faculty and Staff should encourage healthy eating behaviors by being role models to students during school hours when in the presence of students.
- Cafeteria staff will be hired with the understanding that they are responsible to adhere to the policies the school has in place.
- Holy Rosary Catholic School will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. Crossing guards, school safety patrol, and bike racks will be available at each K-8 school.

- Nutrition education and wellness will be offered to students, parents, and staff through any of the following methods:
    - Health fairs,
    - Healthy eating and wellness seminars,
    - Newsletters,
        - Handouts,
        - Internet information consistent with USDA *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*,
        - Team Nutrition information.
- Additional School Goal (if above goals are met):

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X. Evaluation

- The school administrator, along with the School Wellness Committee, will complete the Diocesan Wellness Policy Checklist on school-wide compliance with the established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies on an annual basis. The completed checklist will be submitted to the Catholic Schools Office by June 1.
- Every three years, the school administrator, along with the School Wellness Committee, will complete one of the following School Health Environment Assessment Tools and submit to the Catholic Schools Office by June 1:
    - USDA's WellSAT 2.0
    - Upgrade Needs Assessment

XI. Person Responsible

- The school administrator will ensure compliance with the established Wellness Policy.
- The preschool director will ensure compliance with the established Wellness Policy in the Early Learning setting.
- The school food service staff ensures compliance with the nutrition policies for the school meal program and all food and beverages sold through the cafeteria.

XII. Communication

- Progress reports should be shared annually with the public using any of the following channels of communication :
    - The Message,
    - School newsletter,
    - Website,
    - School Messenger, and
    - Other forms of communication.
- Progress reports ensure transparency by including:
    - Web address of the wellness policy,
    - Description of each school's activities and goals and current level of progress,
    - Contact details for School Wellness Committee, and
    - Information on how to join the School Wellness Committee.