AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Mission Statement for Wellness

Aquinas Catholic Schools 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.

Nutrition guidelines

Nutrition guidelines have been selected by Aquinas Catholic School for all foods available in each school building during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and increasing healthy behavior and personal lifestyle.

The guidelines include the following:

1) school lunch program will be offered which meets or exceeds the requirements of federal and state law
2) no foods in competition with the lunch program shall be made available to the students anywhere on school premises during the period of one-half hour prior to the serving period of lunch and lasting until one-half hour after the serving of lunch

Nutrition Education

The main goal is to implement a curriculum that meets or exceeds the health and nutrition education objectives established by the Nebraska Department of Education. The following are actions to achieve such goals:

1. Curriculum: Nutrition education will be integrated into other subjects to complement, but not replace, the health and nutrition education curriculum that is provided in accordance with NDE Rule 10. Educators are to incorporate the promotion of healthy eating nutrition lifestyles in all subject areas as appropriate.
2. Display Nutrition Education Materials: The cafeteria shall display posters or other communication suitable to the ages of students served that promote healthy nutrition choices. Educators are encouraged to incorporate such communications in their classrooms as well.
3. Nutrition Health Events: Educators are encouraged to search for and take advantage of events that promote nutrition education. Activities may include: Health fairs, traveling health exhibits, field trips to farm or food production facilities and health speakers (school assemblies and classroom presentations).
4. Family: Parents are welcome to join their children at school lunch as appropriate. Health Wellness information will be sent to parents through school communication venues.
5. Staff: Our employees are encouraged to be healthy role models for students. It is important for students to receive consistent messages. Staff is discouraged from eating

foods and drinking beverages of minimal nutritional value during the school day in the presence of students.

Physical Activity to Promote Student Wellness

The established goal is to implement a curriculum that meets or exceeds the health and physical education objectives established by the Nebraska Department of Education. The administration establishes the following additional goals:

1. Curriculum: Health and physical education will be integrated into other subjects to complement, but not replace, the health and physical education curriculum provided in accordance with NDE Rule 10. Educators are to incorporate physical activity promotion in all subject areas as appropriate.
2. Physical Activity during the School Day: Elementary students will have the opportunity for daily recess. Weather and other conditions permitting, recess will be outdoors. Physical activity within class periods will be encouraged.
3. Punishment: Physical activity will not be used as punishment and will not be withheld as punishment. This guideline shall not apply to extra-curricular activities. In no event will physical activity be used as a form of corporal punishment.
4. Physical Activity Health Events: Educators are encouraged to search for and take advantage of events that promote physical activity education.
5. School Communications: Wellness ideas to parents will include information that promotes physical activity. Such communications may include information about the benefits of physical activity to children and distribution of information about youth sports programs.
6. Our employees are encouraged to be healthy role models for students.

Other School Activities to Promote Student Wellness

The established goal is to offer other suitable opportunities to students to engage in health-promoting activities. The administration establishes the following additional goals and actions to achieve such goals:

1. Extracurricular Programs: The school will offer athletic and other activity programs subject to and in compliance with, the bylaws of the Nebraska School Activities Association. Coaches or sponsors of activities shall provide plans to parents or students regarding nutritional guidelines desired for pre-game or pre-event meals.
2. Advertising: The administration will monitor advertising that occurs in the school and endeavor to limit messages that promote foods of minimal nutritional value. The school lunch rooms provide “What’s for Lunch” posters along with appropriate non-discrimination posters.
3. Community Resources: The administration will strive to coordinate the school wellness program efforts with those available from medical, public health and other community organizations. The school shall actively develop and support the engagement of students, families, and staff in community health enhancing activities and events at the school and throughout the community.

The administration establishes the following actions to meet the nutrition guidelines:

1. Conditions for school meals:
    a. Students will be provided adequate time to eat. In general, students will, upon arrival in the cafeteria, have at least 20 minutes to eat lunch.
    b. Efforts shall be made to establish acceptable eating conditions. The factors to promote these conditions will be a clean, orderly environment, pleasant adequate seating, and enforcement of student conduct rules with staff supervision.
2. Selection of School Meals: School meals shall at a minimum meet nutrition requirements established by state and federal law. Emphasis is to be on good menu planning principles that offer healthy food choices including lean meats, a variety of fresh fruits and non-fried vegetables daily, whole grains, and low-fat or nonfat milk daily. These choices shall be located where they are readily accessible to students and staff.
3. Limit portion sizes of desserts and fried foods. Elementary students in grades PreK-2 are to be offered balance meals. Elementary students are not to be sold individual food or beverage selections. Elementary students in grades 3-5, Middle School and High School students may be sold foods ala carte as deemed appropriate by the School Wellness Committee in cooperation with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation recommendation for competitive foods. All la carte offerings shall be selected with input from students, parents and staff. Student's meals for home: Parents will be encouraged via health promotional materials to make healthy choices for student lunches when students bring their meals from home.
4. Closed Campus. To encourage students to eat a nutritious lunch, students will not be permitted to leave school during the school day for the purpose of lunch.
5. Vending Machines:
    a. Vending machines with foods/beverages will not be available to use by students at any time.
6. Foods available during the school day:
    a. Water: Student will be allowed access to water during the school day. Water fountains are available and water is available free of charge at all school meals. Educators may in their discretion allow students to bring water bottles to classes. Classroom Celebrations: Parents and Staff are encouraged to find a non-food and healthy food alternatives for classroom celebrations including individual birthdays and special occasions. Most snacks are sent home at the end of the day.
7. Fund-raising: School clubs are discouraged from selling foods of minimal nutritional value as part of fund-raising efforts. School clubs are not to sell foods during the school days.
8. School activities/events: Concession stands at school activities and events will include healthy food choices.

School Environment:

1. School buildings and grounds, structures, buses and equipment shall meet all current health and safety standards, including environmental air quality, and be kept inviting, clean, safe and in good repair.

2. Schools shall maintain an environment that is free of tobacco, alcohol and illegal drugs. This applies to staff, students and visitors.
3. Safety procedures and appropriate training for students and staff shall support personal safety and a violence and harassment free environment.
4. Local Wellness Policy is located on the school website and upon request.

Triennial Assessment

At least once every three years, the following is measured and made available to the public:

1. the extent to which the schools comply with Aquinas Wellness Policy.
2. the extent to which the policy compares to model local wellness policies.
3. the progress made in attaining the goals of the Aquinas Wellness Policy.

School Wellness Committee:

Principals of buildings, chief administrative officer, head cook/director of lunch program, one teacher, one student, and one parent. The policy is to be reviewed annually.

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