

Wellness Policy of St. Michael's School

(Revised and Updated March 2024)

St. Michael's School has a wellness program which includes goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness. Examples of these include but are not limited to our participation in our salad bar focusing on fresh fruits and vegetables with lunch.

We encourage parents to keep the focus on healthy alternatives when sending snacks with your child to school.

I. POLICY GOALS

Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical activity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;

Thus, St. Michael's Catholic School is committed to providing an environment that promotes and protects children's health, well being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and increased physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of St. Michael's Catholic School that:

- St. Michael's will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades PreK - 5th will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages served at St. Michael's will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity for the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent possible, St. Michael's will participate in available federal school meal programs [including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program (including after-school snacks)]. St. Michael's students may participate in the summer food program at other locations.
- St. Michael's 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.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

II. ESTABLISH OF GOVERNING BODIES

St. Michael's will create a wellness committee to work with the Nutrition Head and the Physical Education teacher to develop, implement, monitor, review, and as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The committee also will serve as a resource for implementing those policies. The wellness committee will consist of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and to the extent possible should include parents, students, representatives of the school nutrition authority, the school physical education authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, and health professionals.

III. ESTABLISHMENT OF NUTRITION GUIDELINES

Meals served 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, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- Serve only fat-free milk or reduced fat milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- Ensure that all grains must be whole grain rich.

St. Michael's Nutrition Department should engage students through taste-tests of new entrees to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, the Department should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials. Parents are welcome to come to school and eat the food that is served.

Breakfast. To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, and in order to meet the nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- St. Michael's will operate a School Breakfast Program.
- St. Michael's, to the extent possible, will arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfast that encourages participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom to the preschool, and if needed a "grab-and-go" breakfast, or breakfast during morning break or recess.
- St. Michael's will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- The Nutrition Department will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

Free and Reduced-Priced Meals. St. Michael's 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-price school meals. Toward this end, St. Michael's may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide meals at no charge to all children, regardless of income; promote the availability of school meals to all students; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals, such as "grab-and-go" or classroom breakfast.

Summer Food Service Program. To the extent possible, and when more than 50% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, St. Michael's students are eligible to participate in the summer food programs that are offered in Grand Forks.

Meal Times and Scheduling. St. Michael's School:

- Will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- Should schedule meal periods at appropriate times; e.g. lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- Should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- **Lunch is scheduled before or after recess for students.**
- Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- Should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g. orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff. Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of St. Michael's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals. Staff development programs will include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibilities.

Sharing Food and Beverages. St. Michael's will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually. (i.e., foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.) St. Michael's food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables. All foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores, or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

Beverages.

Allowed: water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain 100% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally equivalent non-dairy beverages (to be defined by USDA).

Not Allowed: soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drink that contain less than 100% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

Foods.

Food items served:

- Will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
- Will have no more than 35% of its weight from added sugar;
- Will contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, French fries, baked goods, and other snack items; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes;
- A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).

Portion Sizes.

Limit portion size of foods and beverages sold individually to those listed below:

- One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;
- One ounce for cookies;
- Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items;
- Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream;
- Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;
- Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water; and
- The portion size of a la carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater than the size of comparable portions offered as part of the school meals. Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits.

Snacks.

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. St. Michael's will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. If eligible, when snacks are provided through after-school programs, St. Michael's will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program.

Parties

St. Michael's will limit parties that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages served individually (above).

School-Sponsored Events.

Food and beverages offered and served during the school day will meet the nutrition standards for meals. Food and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day may or may not meet the nutrition requirements listed above.

Outside Purchased Food

St. Michael's discourages outside restaurant food brought into school for breakfast and lunch. To limit the possibility of allergens and to encourage healthy eating options, we ask that parents do not bring in restaurant purchased food during meal times in the cafeteria.

IV. ESTABLISHMENT OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

Daily Physical Education (P.E.) K-5th. All students in grades K-5th, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive physical education or its equivalent of 90 minutes/week for elementary for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified or DPI approved physical education teacher. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g. interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess.

All students will have at least 30 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which St. Michael's will encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before, During, and After School.

St. Michael's will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs, before and after school programs and intramural programs which will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

Before-school programs will be developed and provide and encourage - verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities - daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants. After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage - verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities - daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

St. Michael's will discourage extended periods (i.e., periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, St. Michael's will give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity and Punishment

Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g. running laps, push ups, walking laps) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g. recess, physical education) as punishment. Physical activity will not be earned for academic, social, or behavioral incentive.

Safe Routes to School.

St. Michael's 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. When appropriate, the school will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours.

School spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

V. ESTABLISHMENT OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION PROMOTION

Nutrition Education and Promotion. St. Michael's aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. St. Michael's will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subject;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens.
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and healthy-enhancing nutrition practices;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- Links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- Includes training for teachers and other staff.

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting. For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e., at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communication with Parents. St. Michael's will encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. Classroom teachers will provide parents a list of foods that meet the school's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties. In addition, St. Michael's will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

St. Michael's will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

St. Michael's will use educational materials to share healthy eating ideas along with nutritional information in the cafeteria (posters, talks, and stickers).

Food Marketing in Schools. School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, St. Michael's will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above). School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged. Examples of marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies with families buy low-nutrition food products; in-school television, such as Channel One; free samples or coupons; and food sales through fundraising activities. Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include: vending machine covers promoting water, pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines; and coupons for discount gym memberships.

Staff Wellness

St. Michael's highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The school values the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of all staff members.

VI. MONITORING AND POLICY REVIEW

Monitoring. The committee will establish a committee designee who will ensure compliance with established school-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. The committee designee will ensure compliance with those policies and will report on the compliance level to the committee.

School food and service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the Nutrition Director or the principal. In addition, St. Michael's 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 five years, the district will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.

The designee or committee will develop a summary report yearly on compliance with the established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, school principal, and school health services in the community.

Policy Review. The wellness committee will conduct a yearly baseline assessment of St. Michael's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies based on the yearly

summary report. The results are that this assessment will be compiled by the committee to identify and prioritize needs, review policy compliance, and assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the wellness committee will revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.