



Aquinas Catholic Community School

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Forming disciples of Christ through the practice of faith and the pursuit of knowledge.

Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

The Aquinas Catholic Community School Advisory Council supports the health and well-being of ACCS students by promoting nutrition and physical activity at all grade levels.

In accordance with federal law, it is the policy of the Council to provide students access to healthy foods and beverages; provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity; and require that all meals served by the school corporation meet or exceed the federal nutritional guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A Health Council will be formed and maintained to oversee these activities.

The School Wellness Policy shall be made available to students and families by means of school registration, the student handbook and the school website.

I. Health Council & Stakeholder Participation

The council will engage parents/guardians, food service professionals, the physical education instructor, students, school health care professionals, school council members, school administrators, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing school-wide nutrition and physical activity policies. A Health Council will be formed and maintained at the corporation level to oversee the development, implementation and evaluation of the school corporation's wellness policy.

A. In accordance with state and federal law, the school corporation will form and maintain a corporation level Health Council that includes at least the following stakeholders:

1. Parents/Guardians
2. Food Service Director/Professionals
3. Teachers of Physical Education
4. Students
5. School health care professionals/School Nurse
6. ACCS Advisory Council members
7. School administrators
8. Any interested member of the public
9. Representatives of interested community organizations
10. Other potential members of the council include teachers, teaching assistants, and community representatives such as recreation professionals, city planners, industry professionals and voluntary service workers.

B. The Health Council shall meet at least annually to review nutrition and physical activity policies and to develop an action plan for the coming year. The Health Council shall meet as needed during the school year to discuss implementation activities and address barriers and challenges.

C. The Health Council shall report annually to the school principal, pastor, and ACCS Advisory Council on the implementation of the wellness policy and include any recommended changes or revisions.

D. ACCS Advisory Council will adopt or revise nutrition and physical activity policies based on recommendations made by the Health Council.

II. Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals

The council will provide and promote the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs to ensure that all students have access to healthy foods to support healthier choices and promote optimal learning.

III. Nutrition Guidelines for Food and Beverages

- A. ACCS will not sell food/beverages via vending machines or concessions during the school day.
- B. Fundraisers selling food items that do not meet the federal nutrition standards are limited to three fundraisers per school year.
- C. The council will allow marketing in school buildings and on school grounds during the school day for only those food and beverages provided by the school that meet the federal nutrition standards. Marketing that promotes student health will be permitted in school buildings and on school grounds.
- D. Special dietary needs of students will be considered when planning meals, according to the document Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs in the School Nutrition Programs.
- E. ACCS will provide the USDA School Breakfast Program to all students who either qualify for free/reduced meals or choose to purchase.
- F. To the extent possible, schools will utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom, serving “grab-and-go” breakfasts and arranging transportation schedules to allow for earlier arrival times.

IV. Nutrition Education and Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition topics shall be integrated within the comprehensive health education curriculum and taught at every grade level (K-8) according to standards of the Indiana Department of Education. ACCS will link nutrition education activities with existing coordinated school health programs or other comparable comprehensive school health promotion frameworks.

A. Nutrition Education Goals

- 1. Health education will be provided as part of a comprehensive health education program and taught by licensed instructors.
- 2. The school will provide nutrition education training opportunities to teachers and staff for all grade levels.

B. Nutrition Promotion Goals

- 1. Nutrition promotion will include lessons that cover topics such as how to read and use food labels, choosing healthy options and portion control.
- 2. Foods of minimal nutritional value, including brands and illustrations, shall not be advertised or marketed to students or in educational materials.

V. Physical Activity and Physical Education

The Council supports the health and well-being of students by promoting physical activity through physical education, recess and other physical activity breaks; and before- and after-school activities.

A. Physical Activity Goals

- 1. Students from Preschool – 8th grade receive physical education instruction from a licensed instructor at least once per week.
- 2. Elementary students receive 30 minutes of physical activity daily, middle school students receive 15 daily minutes.
- 3. Students from 5th – 8th grade have the opportunity to participate in sports such as basketball, volleyball, soccer, track and cross country.
- 4. All teachers will be encouraged to use physical activity breaks during classroom time as often as possible.

5. ACCS discourages extended periods of inactivity (2 or more hours). During events such as mandatory school-wide testing, teachers will give students periodic physical breaks.
6. Students will not be removed or excused from physical education to receive instruction on other content areas.
7. School staff will not use physical activity or withhold opportunities for physical activities as punishment.

VI. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

The council supports the health and well-being of our students and staff by creating and promoting policy and environmental supports to provide physical activity and healthy eating opportunities.

A. Other Activity Goals

1. The school will implement a walking program for staff and students, promoting consistency in remaining active by tracking miles.
2. The school will implement Girls on the Run, a fun, research-based curriculum that creatively integrates running, for students from 4th- 8th grade.

VII. Evaluation

Through implementation and enforcement of this policy, the school will create an environment that supports opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating behaviors. To ensure continuing progress, ACCS will evaluate implementation efforts and their impact on students and staff at least every three years. The council will notify the public of the results of the three-year assessment and evaluation.

1. The school principal is responsible for retaining all documentation of compliance with this policy and its regulations. The principal shall ensure ACCS is in compliance with the corporation's wellness policy every three school years by assessing wellness implementation strategies. The principals shall provide a report to the Advisory Council. The principal's report shall contain the following information: the school's progress toward meeting the wellness goals over the previous three school years; the website address for the wellness policy and how the public can receive a copy of the policy; a description of the progress in meeting the goals, a summary of the event or activities related to the implementation of the policy; the name, position, and contact information of the school official coordinating the health advisory council or the school's wellness team; and information on how individuals and the public can get involved with the school's wellness team.
2. The evaluation of the wellness policy and implementation will be directed by the Health Council and will be responsible for the three-year assessment of the school's compliance with the policy and its regulations. The three-year assessment must measure the implementation of this policy and its regulations; the extent to which each school is in compliance with the policy; the extent this policy compares to other model school wellness policies; and a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy. As a result of this assessment and evaluation the policy and regulations will be revised as needed.
3. The three-year assessment and evaluation report will be made available to the public by posting it on the school website.

VIII. Communication

Each year, parents, students and staff will be updated on the content and implementation of the ACCS Wellness Policy at Back to School Night, including the assessment of the policy.

Additional stakeholders will be invited yearly to join the Health Council and participate in the maintenance and updating of the wellness plan.