

## **WELLNESS POLICY**

### **WELLNESS POLICY PURPOSE**

The purpose of the policy is to assure a school environment that promotes and protects students' health, wellbeing and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

### **GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

- A. St. Stephen's Catholic School recognizes that nutrition education and physical education are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters student attendance and education.
- B. The school environment shall promote and protect students' health, well-being and ability to learn by encouraging healthy eating and activity.
- C. The school encourages the involvement of students, parents, teachers, food service staff and other interested persons implementing, monitoring and reviewing school nutrition and physical activity policies.
- D. Children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn and thrive.
- E. All students in grades Preschool-8th grade will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- F. Qualified food service personnel will provide students 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 to eat.

- G. St. Stephen's school will have a Wellness Committee. The committee will assist the school by implementing, monitoring and reporting requirements of this policy. The school administrator will meet with the committee at least two times per year to discuss wellness issues at their school.
- H. The school administrator will monitor and ensure compliance of the policy.
- I. The Wellness policy will be on the school website.
- J. The Wellness Policy will be reviewed tri-annually.

## **Guidelines**

### **A. Food and Beverages**

1. All foods and beverages made available at school will be consistent with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
2. Food service personnel will take every measure to ensure that student access to foods and beverages meet or exceed all federal, state, and local laws and guidelines.
3. Food service personnel shall adhere to all federal, state and local food safety and security guidelines.
4. St. Stephen's Catholic School will provide students access to hand washing before they eat meals or snacks.
5. St. Stephen's Catholic School will make every effort to provide students with sufficient time to eat after sitting down for school meals and will schedule meal periods at appropriate times during the day.

### **B. School Food Service Program/Personnel**

1. St. Stephen's Catholic School will provide healthy and safe school meal programs that strictly comply with federal, state and local statutes and regulations.

2. St. Stephen's Catholic School Principal will designate an appropriate person to be responsible for St. Stephen Catholic School's food program, whose duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
3. As part of St. Stephen's Catholic School's responsibility to operate a food service program, the school will provide continuing professional development for all food service personnel in the school.
4. St. Stephen's Catholic School will prevent the overt identification of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.

#### C. Nutrition Education and Promotion

1. St. Stephen's Catholic School will encourage and support healthy eating by students and engage in nutrition promotion that is:
  - a. Offered as part of a comprehensive program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
  - b. Part of science/health education classes as well as classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and other subjects where appropriate.
  - c. Enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant and includes participatory activities such as contest, promotions, taste testing.
2. St. Stephen's Catholic School will encourage all students to make age appropriate, healthy selections of food and beverages, including those sold

individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs, such as through concession stands.

3. If food is provided for classroom celebration, it must be commercially prepared.
4. St. Stephen's Catholic School will not withhold food or beverages as punishment.

#### D. Physical Activity

1. Students need opportunities for physical activity and to fully embrace regular physical activity. Toward that end, health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities.
2. St. Stephen's Catholic School will provide physical education classes as part of its curriculum.
3. It is a goal that classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.
4. St. Stephen's Catholic School will provide opportunities for students to participate in after school sports to encourage physical activity outside of the school day.

#### E. Communication with Parents

1. St. Stephen's Catholic School recognizes that parent and guardians have a primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and well-being.
2. St. Stephen's Catholic School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
3. St. Stephen's Catholic School encourages parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and refrain from including beverages and food without nutritional value.

## F. Product marketing in Schools

1. School based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. The promotion of healthy foods including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.
2. Schools are encouraged to consider nutritious products, competitive pricing, and product placement and promotion strategies for the consumption of healthy foods.
3. Only foods and beverages that meet Smart Snack Standards will be sold and marketed in the school.

**\*This institution is an equal opportunity provider\***