

Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Evansville Lutheran School (ELS) supports the health and well-being of our students by promoting nutrition and physical activity at all grade levels.

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

The ELS Wellness Policy shall be made available to students and families through the school office (hard copies) and on our school website, www.evansvillelutheralschool.com

I. Wellness Coordinator

The school will identify at least one person as responsible for monitoring the local wellness policy. Two staff members will serve as the wellness coordinator(s).

II. Wellness Council

The board will engage parents/guardians, food service professionals, the physical education teacher, students, school health care professionals, ELS BCE members, the school administrator, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing the ELS nutrition and physical activity policies. An ELS School Wellness Council overseen by the Principal will be formed and maintained to oversee the development, implementation and evaluation of the wellness policy.

- a. In accordance with state and federal law, ELS will form and maintain a Wellness Council that includes at least the following:

1. Parents/Guardians
2. Food Service Director/Professionals
3. Teachers of Physical Education
4. Students
5. School health care professionals/Registered Dietitians/School Nurse

6. School board members
 7. School administrators
 8. Any interested member of the church or school community.
 9. Representatives of interested community organizations.
- b. 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.
 - c. The Council shall meet at least quarterly to review nutrition and physical activity policies and to develop an action plan for the coming year. The Council shall meet as needed during the school year to discuss implementation activities and address barriers and challenges.
 - d. The Council shall report annually to the ELS BCE on the implementation of the wellness policy and include any recommended changes or revisions.
 - e. The ELS BCE will adopt or revise nutrition and physical activity policies based on recommendations made by the Advisory Council.

III. Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals

The ELS Board of Education will provide and promote Child Nutrition Programs to ensure that all students have access to healthy foods to support healthier choices and promote optimal learning.

- a. School Meal Content
 - i. Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:
 1. Be appealing and appetizing to children;
 2. Meet, at a minimum, the nutrition requirements established by the USDA for federally funded programs;
 3. Contain 0 percent trans fats;
 4. Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
 5. 80 percent of the grains offered are whole grain-rich.
 6. All cooked foods will be baked or steamed. Proper procurement procedures and preparation methods will be used to decrease excess fat, calorie and sodium levels in food.

7. Schools are encouraged to purchase or obtain fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practical.
8. Students will have the opportunity to provide input on local, cultural and ethnic favorites.
9. The food services department shall provide periodic food promotions that will allow for taste testing of new healthier foods being introduced on the menu.
10. Special dietary needs of students will be made when planning meals, according to the document Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs in the School Nutrition Programs. The school will make substitutions for food and/or beverage components for students with special dietary needs at no additional cost to the student. This includes, but is not limited to, food allergies and/or intolerances, texture modifications, carbohydrate counts, and calorie modifications. Substitutions shall be made on a case-by-case basis.
11. The food services department will share and publicize information about the nutritional content of meals with students and parents/guardians. The information will be available in a variety of forms that can include handouts, the school website, articles, school newsletters, presentations that focus on nutrition and healthy lifestyles, and through any other appropriate means available to reach families.

b. School Meal Participation

- i. To the extent possible, schools will provide the USDA School Breakfast Program to all students.
- ii. To the extent possible, schools will utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation and serving “grab-and-go” breakfasts.
- iii. Schools will inform families of the availability and location of Summer Food Service Program meals, in accordance with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

c. Mealtimes and Scheduling

- i. Adequate time will be provided to students to eat lunch (at least 20 minutes after being served) and breakfast (at least 10 minutes after being served).
- ii. Elementary schools may schedule recess before lunch.
- iii. School meals will be served in clean and pleasant settings.

- iv. Students will have convenient access to hand-washing and sanitizing stations.
 - v. Potable (drinking) water must be readily available at all mealtimes.
 - vi. Appropriate supervision will be provided in the cafeteria and rules for safe behavior shall be consistently enforced.
- d. Professional Development
- i. Professional development and training will be provided at least annually to food service managers and staff on proper food handling techniques and healthy cooking practices.

IV. Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages

The ELS Board of Education will provide and allow foods and beverages that support proper nutrition, promote healthy choices, and comply with federal nutrition standards (Smart Snacks) in vending machines, school stores and concession stands. This also includes food and beverages made available in schools during the school day for such events as school fundraisers and food and beverages brought into the schools by students or other person for such events as birthdays and classroom celebrations.

- a. Sold foods and beverages
 - i. The vending machine may be used during the school day by students to purchase bottled water only. Students may purchase non-Smart Snack compliant beverages 30 minutes after the school day ends.
 - ii. K-8 à la carte and other beverages outside of school meals shall be limited to:
 - 1. Water without flavoring, additives, or carbonation,
 - 2. Low-fat and nonfat milk (in 8- to 12-ounce portions),
 - 3. 100% fruit juice in 4-ounce portions as packaged for elementary/middle school,
 - 4. For elementary grades, beverages may be up to 8-oz portions, while middle school grades may be up to 12-oz portions.
 - iii. Availability
 - 1. Vending machines for school staff will not be accessible to students.
 - 2. Food and beverages will not be sold in school stores.

3. Students and staff will have free, potable (drinking) water for consumption available in water fountains throughout the school building.
- iv. Concession Stands
 1. The concession items sold at school-sponsored events to participants, fans and visitors shall include healthy options.
- v. Fundraisers
 1. Fundraising activities will support healthy eating and wellness. Schools will promote the sale of non-food items for school-sponsored fundraising. For a food or beverage item to be sold as a fundraiser, it must meet the approved nutrition standards. Fundraisers subject to this rule are those sold during the school day on school grounds. School day is defined as from midnight the night before to 30 minutes after the end of school.
 2. Fundraisers selling food items that do not meet the federal nutrition standards are limited to two such fundraisers per school building per year.
- b. Non-sold food and beverages:
 - i. Food as a Reward or Punishment
 1. Teachers and staff will not use food as a reward. For example, the use of sugar-sweetened beverages or candy as a classroom reward at any school is not appropriate.
 2. School staff will not withhold food or drink at mealtimes as punishment.
 - ii. Classroom Celebrations
 1. Classroom celebrations will focus on activities (e.g., giving free time, extra recess, music and reading time) rather than on food.
 2. Classroom celebrations that include food will be limited to one per month. Food items must comply with federal nutrition standards.
 3. Schools shall inform parents/guardians of the classroom celebration guidelines.
 4. Classrooms are allowed three exempted celebrations that can contain non-Smart Snack compliant foods.

V. Food and Beverage Marketing

- a. Signage or similar media on the school campus during the school day may only advertise food and/or beverages provided and sold by the school that meet the competitive foods standards for foods sold in schools (Smart Snacks).

VI. Nutrition Education

- a. 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.
- b. Schools will link nutrition education activities with existing coordinated school health programs or other comparable comprehensive school health promotion frameworks.
- c. Cafeteria staff will participate in providing nutrition education. Students will be educated through new school experiences and exposed to a wide variety of food choices. Consistent encouragement should be given to children to try new foods.
- d. We discourage students from making negative comments about new foods and healthy foods so that the child will learn to try new flavors.
- e. Health education will be provided as part of a comprehensive health education program and taught by a licensed instructor.
- f. The ELS will provide nutrition education training opportunities to teachers and staff for all grade levels.

VII. Nutrition Promotion

- a. Nutrition promotion will include lessons such as how to read and use food labels, choosing healthy options and portion control.
- b. School staff will collaborate with community groups and organizations to provide opportunities for student projects related to nutrition (e.g., cultivating school gardens, reading food labels and maintaining a caloric balance between food intake and physical activity/exercise).
- c. Nutrition promotion resources will be provided to parents/guardians through handouts, website links, school newsletters, presentations and any other appropriate means available to reach parents/guardians.
- d. Nutrition educators will partner with school staff of the school food service program to use the cafeteria as a learning lab. Healthy items, such as salads and fruits, will be displayed prominently in cafeterias to make healthier choices more appealing.
- e. Nutrition labels will be provided on all foods to allow students to easily identify healthier foods.
- f. Foods of minimal nutritional value, including brands and illustrations, shall not be advertised or marketed in educational materials.

VIII. Physical Education and Physical Activity

The ELS BCE supports the health and well-being of students by promoting physical activity through physical education, recess, Minds in Motion and other physical activity breaks; before- and after-school activities; and walking and bicycling to school. Additionally, the ELS BCE supports physical activity among elementary students by providing them with at least 30 of the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Each elementary school shall provide daily physical activity in accordance with Indiana Code 20-30-5-7.5.

a. Physical Education K-8

- i. All students in grades K-8 will participate in physical education in order to meet the Physical Education Standards.
- ii. Waivers will not apply towards the physical education courses required for a diploma. Credit flexibility in physical education will be limited to elective physical education courses.
- iii. Physical education classes will have the same student/teacher ratio used in other classes. In Indiana, the ratio for a single school shall not exceed an average of 30 to 1.
- iv. The physical education program shall be provided adequate space and equipment to ensure quality physical education classes for students.

b. Daily Recess and Physical Activity Breaks

- i. ELS will use space available to offer activities during indoor recesses. Possibilities may include but are not limited to games in the gym, fitness stations in the hallways and exercise/dance videos or physical games within the rooms.
- ii. All elementary school students will have at least 1 period of active recess per day that is at least 20 minutes in length as recommended by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE). This recess period will be outdoors when possible. If outdoor recess is not possible due to inclement weather, teachers will provide an indoor physical activity break in the classroom.
- iii. All teachers will be encouraged to use physical activity breaks during classroom time as often as possible.
- iv. Schools should discourage extended periods of inactivity (2 or more hours). During events such as mandatory school-wide testing, teachers will give students periodic breaks for moderate physical activity.

c. Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

- i. Schools will offer intramurals, clubs, interscholastic sports and voluntary activities to increase opportunities for physical activity before

and/or after school, taking into account student interest and supervisor availability.

- ii. After-school enrichment providers will include physical activity in their programs, to the extent space and equipment allow.

d. **Physical Activity and Remedial Activities/Punishment**

- i. Students will not be removed or excused from physical education to receive instruction in other content areas.
- ii. School staff will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

IX. Other School Based Activities

The ELS Board of Education 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. **Walking and Bicycling to School**

- i. Where appropriate and safe, schools will allow walking and bicycling to school.
- ii. To the extent possible, the school corporation will make improvements so it is safer, easier and more enjoyable for students to walk and bicycle to school.
- iii. The school corporation will explore the availability of both local and federal funding (e.g., Safe Routes to School funds administered by the Indiana Department of Transportation) to finance such improvements.
- iv. Schools will promote walking and bicycling to school, including the promotion of International Walk to School Day, which falls on the first Wednesday of October each year.

b. **Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours**

- i. School spaces and facilities, such as the playground and gym may be made available to students, staff and community members before and after the school day; on weekends; and during school vacations. Please consult with St. Paul's Church office for further information.

c. **Staff Wellness**

- i. The ELS will promote programs to increase knowledge of physical activity and healthy eating for faculty and staff. Presentations on health and wellness will be provided at least twice each school year.
- ii. The school corporation will work with local fitness centers to offer reduced membership fees.

- iii. Schools will allow staff to use school facilities outside of school hours for activities such as group fitness classes, walking programs and individual use.
- iv. Staff will be encouraged to participate in community walking, bicycling or running events.
- v. Schools will promote breastfeeding by making reasonable efforts to provide a private location for employees to express breast milk in accordance with IC 22-2-14-2.
- d. Physical education will be taught by a licensed physical education instructor.
 - i. All staff involved in physical education will be provided opportunities for professional development focusing on physical activity, fitness, health and wellness.

X. Evaluation and Communication of Wellness Policy

- a. Through implementation and enforcement of this policy, ELS will create an environment that supports opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating behaviors. To ensure continuing progress, ELS will evaluate implementation efforts and their impact on students and staff at least every three years. The ELS BCE will notify the public of the results of the three-year assessment and evaluation.
- b. The ELS BCE designates the school principal to ensure compliance with this policy and its administrative regulations. The school administration is responsible for retaining all documentation of compliance with this policy and its regulations, including but not limited to each school's three-year assessment and evaluation report and this wellness policy and plan. The School administration will also be responsible for public notification of the three-year assessment and evaluation report, including any updates to this policy made as a result of the school's three-year assessment and evaluation.
- c. Implementation and Data Collection
 - i. ELS will use an evidence-based assessment tool to track the collective health of students over time by collecting data such as body composition (height and weight), aerobic capacity, and/or muscular strength, endurance and flexibility.
 - ii. The school administration is responsible for retaining all documentation of compliance with this policy and its regulations, but the principals shall ensure that ELS is in compliance with the wellness policy every three school years by assessing wellness implementation strategies. The principals shall provide a written report to the ELS BCE. 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.

- iii. The evaluation of the wellness policy and implementation will be directed by the Wellness Council and will be responsible for the three-year assessment of each 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.
- iv. The three-year assessment and evaluation report will be made available to the public by posting it on the school website.