Indiana Model School Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Intent of this Policy

The intent of this model school wellness policy is to provide language for physical activity and nutrition for a school corporation that aligns with best practice recommendations. It is the "ideal" school wellness policy. It is not expected that your corporation will be able to use all of the best practices as written.

Please use the model guidelines that are feasible or revise them to meet the needs and priorities of your school corporation and community.

A corporation may find it more practical to phase in the adoption of its guidelines than to implement a comprehensive nutrition and physical activity policy all at once. Compromises might be necessary as corporation decision-makers consider the challenges (e.g., limited class time, funding and space constraints) while striving to reach the ideal.

Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Philosophy: The Board of School Trustees of [SCHOOL CORPORATION] supports the health and well-being of the school corporation's students by promoting nutrition and physical activity at all grade levels.

Therefore, in accordance with the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act and the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, it is the policy of the Board to:

Statement of Purpose: 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 Coordinated School Health Advisory Council will be formed and maintained to oversee these activities.

I. Coordinated School Health Advisory Council

[SCHOOL CORPORATION] will engage students, parents/guardians, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing corporation-wide nutrition and physical activity policies. A Coordinated School Health Advisory 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 Indiana Code 20-26-9-18, and the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA), the school corporation will form and maintain a corporation level Coordinated School Health Advisory Council that includes at least the following:

- Parents/Guardians
- Food Service Directors and Staff
- Students
- School Health Professionals/Registered Dietitians
- Physical Education Teachers
- School Board Members
- School Administrators
- Any Interested Members of the General Public
- Representatives of Interested Community Organizations

Other potential members of the Council include teachers, school nurses, teaching assistants, and community representatives such as recreation professionals, city planners, industry professionals and voluntary service workers.

B. The Advisory Council shall meet frequently 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.

C. The Advisory Council shall report annually to the Superintendent and School Board on the implementation of the wellness policy and include any recommended changes or revisions.

D. The School Board will adopt or revise nutrition and physical activity policies based on recommendations made by the Advisory Council.

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

II. Nutrition Education and Promotion

Nutrition topics shall be integrated within the comprehensive health education curriculum and taught at every grade level (K-12) according to standards of the Indiana Department of Education. Schools will link nutrition education and promotion activities with existing coordinated school health programs or other comparable comprehensive school health promotion frameworks.

A. Nutrition education and promotion will be provided as part of a Comprehensive Health Education Program.

1. Health education will be taught by a licensed health education instructor.
2. The school corporation will provide nutrition education training opportunities to teachers and staff for all grade levels.
3. Nutrition education will include lessons that cover topics such as how to read and use food labels, choosing healthy options and portion control.
4. 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).
5. Nutrition education resources will be provided to parents/guardians through handouts, website links, school newsletters, presentations and any other appropriate means available to reach parents/guardians.
6. 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.
7. Nutrition labels will be provided on all foods to allow students to easily identify healthier foods.
8. Foods of minimal nutritional value, including brands and illustrations, shall not be advertised or marketed in educational materials.

III. Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals

[SCHOOL CORPORATION] 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.

A. School Meal Content

1. Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:
- Be appealing and appetizing to children;
- Meet, at a minimum, the nutrition requirements established by the USDA for federally funded programs;
- Contain 0 percent trans fats;
- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- 100% of the grains offered are whole grain-rich.

2. 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.
3. Schools are encouraged to purchase or obtain fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practical.
4. Students will have the opportunity to provide input on local, cultural and ethnic favorites.
5. The food services department shall provide periodic food promotions that will allow for taste testing of new healthier foods being introduced on the menu.
6. 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.*
7. 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

1. To the extent possible, schools will provide the USDA School Breakfast Program to all students.
2. 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.
3. 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. Schools in which more than 50 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-priced school meals will sponsor the Summer Food Service Program when feasible.
4. Schools will provide the After School Meal Program, when it becomes available, in accordance with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

C. Mealtimes and Scheduling

1. 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).
2. Elementary schools will schedule recess before lunch.
3. School meals will be served in clean and pleasant settings.
4. Students will have convenient access to hand-washing and sanitizing stations.
5. Potable (drinking) water must be readily available at all mealtimes.
6. Appropriate supervision will be provided in the cafeteria and rules for safe behavior shall be consistently enforced.

D. Professional Development

1. 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

[SCHOOL CORPORATION] will provide and allow foods and beverages that support proper nutrition and promote healthy choices in vending machines, school stores and concession stands, or as school fundraisers and classroom celebrations.

A. Approved Nutrition Standards, based on the nutrition standards of the Institute of Medicine (2007) and the standards of the USDA Smart Snacks.

1. K-12 à la carte, school vending machines and other foods outside of school meals shall be limited to:
- No more than 30 percent of total calories from fat,
- Less than 10 percent of total calories from saturated fats,
- 0 percent trans fats,
- No more than 35 percent of calories from total sugars,
- No more than 200 milligrams of sodium per portion as packaged,
- No more than 200 calories per package, and
- 100 percent of the grains offered are whole grain-rich.

2. K-12 à la carte, school vending machines and other beverages outside of school meals shall be limited to:
- Water without flavoring, additives, or carbonation,
- Low-fat and nonfat milk (in 8- to 12-ounce portions),
- 100% fruit juice in 4-ounce portions as packaged for elementary/middle school and 8 ounces (2 portions) for high school, and
- All beverages other than water, white milk or juice shall be no larger than 12 ounces .

B. Availability

1. A vending machine at an elementary school that dispenses food or beverage items may not be accessible to students.

2. Vending machines in middle and high schools:

- Will not be available during mealtimes.
- Will contain items that meet the approved nutrition standards.

3. Vending machines for school staff will not be accessible to students.

4. Food and beverages will not be sold in school stores.

5. Students and staff will have free, potable (drinking) water for consumption available in water fountains throughout the school building.

C. Concession Stands

1. The concession items sold at school-sponsored events to participants, fans and visitors shall include at least 50 percent healthy beverages and foods, according to the approved nutrition standards.

D. 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 meet the approved nutrition standards.

3. Schools shall inform parents/guardians of the classroom celebration guidelines.

E. 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.

F. 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.

V. Physical Activity and Physical Education

[SCHOOL CORPORATION] supports the health and well-being of students by promoting physical activity through physical education, recess and other physical activity breaks; before- and after-school activities; and walking and bicycling to school. Additionally, [SCHOOL CORPORATION] supports physical activity among elementary students by providing them with at least 30 of the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day.

A. Physical Education K-12

1. All students in grades K-12 will participate in physical education in order to meet the Physical Education Standards. Also, high schools will encourage students to take more than the courses of physical education required for all Indiana diplomas.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. The physical education program shall be provided adequate space and equipment to ensure quality physical education classes for students.

5. Physical education will be taught by a licensed physical education instructor.

6. All staff involved in physical education will be provided opportunities for professional development focusing on physical activity, fitness, health and wellness.

B. Daily Recess and Physical Activity Breaks

1. Each elementary school shall provide daily physical activity in accordance with Indiana Code 20-30-5-7.5.

2. 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.

3. All teachers will be encouraged to use physical activity breaks during classroom time as often as possible.

4. 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

1. 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.

2. 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

1. Students will not be removed or excused from physical education to receive instruction in other content areas.

2. 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.

E. Walking and Bicycling to School

1. Where appropriate and safe, schools will allow walking and bicycling to school.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

F. Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

1. School spaces and facilities, such as the playground, gym, pool and track, will be made available to students, staff and community members before and after the school day; on weekends; and during school vacations. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

VI. Staff Wellness

[SCHOOL CORPORATION] supports the health and well-being of our staff by creating and promoting policy and environmental supports to provide physical activity and healthy eating opportunities.

A. Nutrition and Physical Activity

1. The school corporation 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.

2. The school corporation benefits department will work with local fitness centers to offer reduced membership fees.

3. Schools will allow staff to use school facilities outside of school hours for activities such as group fitness classes, walking programs and individual use.

4. Staff will be encouraged to participate in community walking, bicycling or running events.

5. Staff vending machines will contain at least 50 percent healthy choices as outlined in the approved nutrition standards.

6. At least 50 percent of the food options available at staff meetings will meet the approved nutrition standards. During meetings lasting longer than one hour, staff will have the opportunity to stretch and be physically active.
7. Schools will promote breastfeeding by making reasonable efforts to provide a private location for employees to express breast milk, in accordance with Indiana Code 22-2-14-2.

VII. Evaluation

[SCHOOL CORPORATION] is committed to enforcing the policies and guidelines included in this document. Through implementation of the School Wellness Policy, the corporation will create an environment that supports opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating behaviors. To ensure continuing progress, the corporation will evaluate implementation efforts and their impact on students and staff.

A. Implementation and Data Collection

1. The school corporation 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.
2. [DESIGNATED STAFF MEMBER] shall ensure that their schools are in compliance with the corporation's wellness policy halfway through the school year by assessing wellness implementation strategies. The principals shall then report to the superintendent, who will provide a report to the school board.
3. The evaluation of the wellness policy and implementation will be directed by the Coordinated School Health Advisory Council.
4. Policy language will be assessed each year and revised as needed.