

608 WELLNESS POLICY

The vision for Catholic education in the Diocese of Greensburg is one where the environment of every school physically, mentally, morally, spiritually, and socially nurtures children to feel and be secure and loved, to love and respect themselves as children of God, to love and care for one another, and to love coming to school and learning, doing, and succeeding.

The schools in the Diocese of Greensburg recognize that wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. Research continues to support the inextricable links between student health, behavior, and academic achievement. Schools that exemplify healthy eating and physical activity strongly influence the development of sound lifetime habits, preferences, and practices for good, all-around health.

To ensure the health and well-being of all students, the Office for Catholic Schools establishes that the schools in the Diocese of Greensburg shall provide to students:

- A comprehensive nutritional program consistent with federal and state requirements.
- Access at reasonable cost to foods and beverages that meet established nutrition guidelines.
- Physical education courses and opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day.
- Curriculum programs for grades K-12 that are designed to educate students about proper nutrition and lifelong physical activity, in accordance with Pennsylvania curriculum regulations and academic standards.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of this policy to ensure each of the schools, programs, and curriculum is compliant with this policy, related policies, and established guidelines or administrative regulations.

Each building principal or his/her designee shall report annually to the Superintendent or his/her designee regarding the status of wellness programs and compliance of this policy in his/her school regarding:

- A listing of activities and programs conducted to promote nutrition and physical activity.
- Recommendations for policy and/or program revisions.
- Suggestions for improvement in specific areas.

The Superintendent or his/her designee will establish a Wellness Committee which shall conduct an assessment of this policy at least once every three (3) years based on content and implementation. This assessment will be made available to the public in an accessible and easily understood manner and include:

- The extent to which each school is in compliance with law and policies related to school wellness.
- The extent to which this policy compares to model wellness policies.
- A description of the progress made by the schools in attaining the goals of this policy.

At least once every three (3) years, the policy will be updated or modified, as needed, based on the results of the most recent triennial assessment and/or as diocesan and community needs and priorities change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technologies emerge; and new federal or state guidance or standards are issued.

The schools in the Diocese of Greensburg shall annually inform the public, including parents/guardians, students, and others in the community about the contents, updates, and implementation of this policy via website, student handbook, newsletters, posted notices, and/or other efficient communication methods. This notification shall include information on how to access the School Wellness Policy and how the school is working to improve the health and physical activity of the students.

608.1 Recordkeeping

The Office for Catholic Schools shall retain records documenting compliance with the requirements of the School Wellness policy, which shall include:

- The written Diocesan Wellness policy.
- Documentation demonstrating that the schools have informed the public, on an annual basis, about the contents of the wellness policy and any updates to the policy.
- Documents of efforts to review and update the wellness policy, including who is involved in the review and methods used to inform the public of their ability to participate in the review.
- Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the wellness policy and notification of the assessment results to the public.

608.2 Wellness Committee

The Schools shall establish a Wellness Committee comprised of principals, teachers (including Physical Education teachers), parents/guardians, advisory board members, representatives of the school food authority, school health officials, students, and community members. This

committee shall serve as an advisory committee regarding student health issues and shall be responsible for developing, implementing, reviewing, and updating the wellness policy.

The Wellness Committee shall review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques in establishing goals for nutrition education and promotion, physical activity and other school based activities that promote student wellness as part of the policy development and revision process.

608.3 Advisory Health Council

An Advisory Health Council may be established by the Superintendent to study student health issues and to assist in organizing follow-up programs.

608.4 Nutrition Education

Nutrition education will be provided within the sequential, comprehensive health education program in accordance with curriculum regulations and the academic standards for Health, Safety, and Physical Education.

- Nutrition education shall teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Promoting student health and nutrition enhances readiness for learning and increases student achievement.
- Nutrition education shall provide all students with the knowledge and skills needed to lead healthy lives.
- Nutrition education lessons and activities should be age appropriate.

608.5 Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influences lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs.

- Schools shall promote nutrition through the implementation of Farm to School activities where possible. Activities may include, but not be limited to, the initiation/maintenance of school gardens, taste-testing of local products in the cafeteria and classroom, classroom education about local agriculture and nutrition, field trips to local farms, and incorporation of local foods into the school meal programs.
- Consistent nutrition messages shall be disseminated and displayed throughout the school.

608.6 Physical Activity

- Schools shall strive to provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day for all students.
- Physical activity breaks shall be provided for students during classroom hours.
- Physical activity shall not be used or withheld as a form of punishment.

608.7 Physical Education

A sequential physical education program consistent with curriculum regulations and Health, Safety, and Physical Education academic standards shall be developed and implemented.

- Quality physical education instruction that promotes lifelong physical activity and provides instruction in the skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong participation shall be provided.
- Physical education classes shall be the means through which all students learn, practice, and are assessed on developmentally appropriate skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong, health-enhancing physical activity.

608.8 Other School Based Activities

Drinking water shall be available and accessible to students, without restriction and at no cost to the student, at all meal periods and throughout the school day.

Nutrition professionals should administer the school meal program, and professional development should be provided, as required by federal regulations.

- Schools shall provide adequate space for eating and serving school meals.
- Students shall be provided a clean and safe meal environment.
- Students shall be provided adequate time to eat: ten (10) minutes sit down time for breakfast; twenty (20) minutes sit down time for lunch.

608.9 Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods/Beverages at School

All foods and beverages available in the schools during the school day shall be offered to students with consideration for promoting student health and reducing obesity.

Foods and beverages provided through the National School Lunch and/or Breakfast programs shall comply with established federal nutrition standards.

Food and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day, such as athletic events and dances, shall offer healthy alternatives in addition to more traditional fare.

608.9a Competitive Foods

Competitive foods available for sale shall meet or exceed the established federal nutrition standards (USDA Smart Snacks in School). These standards shall apply in all locations and through all services where food and beverages are sold to students, which may include, but are not limited to: a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, snack carts, and fundraisers.

Competitive foods are defined as foods and beverages offered or sold to students on school campus during the school day, which are not part of the reimbursable school breakfast or lunch.

For the purposes of this policy, school campus means any area of property under the jurisdiction of the school that students may access during the school day.

For purposes of this policy, school day means the period from midnight before school begins until thirty (30) minutes after the end of the official school day.

608.9b Fundraiser Exemptions

Fundraising activities held during the school day involving the sale of competitive foods shall be limited to foods that meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, unless an exemption is approved in accordance with applicable Board policy and administrative regulations.

The school may allow a limited number of exempt fundraisers as permitted by the Pennsylvania Department of Education each school year: up to five (5) exempt fundraisers in elementary and middle school buildings, and up to ten (10) exempt fundraisers in high school buildings. Exempt fundraisers are fundraisers in which competitive foods are available for sale to students that do not meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

The schools shall establish regulations to implement fundraising activities, including procedures for requesting a fundraiser exemption.

608.9c Non-Sold Competitive Foods

Non-sold competitive foods available to students, which may include but are not limited to foods and beverages offered as rewards and incentives, at classroom parties and celebrations, or as shared classroom snacks, shall meet or exceed the standards established by the school.

If the offered competitive foods do not meet or exceed the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards the foods and beverages will not be used as a reward or incentive.

- Classroom parties shall offer a minimal amount of foods containing added sugar as the primary ingredient.
- When possible, water, 100 percent fruit juice or 100 percent fruit juice diluted with water, and/or low-fat or non-fat milk will be served at classroom parties.

- Food celebrations shall not occur until thirty (30) minutes after the end of the last lunch period.

The school shall provide a list of suggested nonfood ideas and healthy food and beverage alternatives to parents/guardians and staff.

608.9d Marketing/Contracting

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day shall meet or exceed the established federal nutrition standards (USDA Smart Snacks in School) and comply with school policy. Existing contracts shall be reviewed and modified to the extent feasible to ensure compliance with established federal nutrition standards, including applicable marketing restrictions.

608.10 Management of Food Allergies

The school shall establish regulations to address food allergy management in order to reduce and/or eliminate the likelihood of severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reactions and ensure a rapid and effective response in case of a severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. The school will also protect the rights of students by providing them, through accommodations when required, the opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities.

608.11 Safe Routes to School

- The school shall assess, and, to the extent possible, implement improvements to walking and biking to school safer and easier for students.

NSLP school lunch payment policy is in the appendix of this document. (600 F)

609 Diocese of Greensburg Policy Protecting God's Children

Educators and other professional employees are responsible for the welfare and safety of pupils in their charge. They are required to report suspected child abuse occurring within the home, community, or school to the building principal who in turn will notify the superintendent and Children and Youth Services.

Preventing child sexual abuse is the goal of "Protecting God's Children for Adults," the program selected by the Diocese of Greensburg to educate clergy, staff and volunteers who work with children about child sexual abuse and the ways to create safe environments for children. Adults learn how to recognize the signs and symptoms that an adult is a potential risk of harm to children and how to know that a child is being abused or exploited in some way. All clergy, staff, and

volunteers who have regular contact with children and youth are required to attend the training session. All diocesan employees are required to have participated in the Diocesan provided "Protecting God's Children Program" as a condition of employment.

The Protecting God's Children mandate also includes assuring that all children in our schools and parish education programs receive training to help them protect themselves from persons who might inflict sexual abuse on a child. Each school must submit to the Diocese their plan for fulfilling this mandate, which includes partnering with the county agency that provides the required training. It is important to teach children their dignity and right to the respect of others, how to recognize potentially harmful behavior toward them, and what to do when they feel themselves threatened in some way.

610 Multi-Hazard Plan

The Diocese of Greensburg, in cooperation with the schools in the diocese, have developed a diocesan multi-hazard plan that follows the PEMA (Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency) format. Each school has a copy of this plan, which has been individually tailored to meet each school's individual needs and circumstances.

School safety and security are important issues of concern for every school principal. All diocesan schools shall have a Safety Committee consisting of the building principal, pastor, custodian and representatives from the faculty, fire department and police. This committee shall review the building for safety issues and develop a plan for evacuation and lock-down situation.

All schools in the diocese must review their plan each year in order to update information and ensure teachers and staff are familiar with their roles and responsibilities.

The Crisis Management Plan designed by the diocese shall be available and accessible for all school employees.

The principal will conduct monthly fire drills and one of which is an evacuation drill annually to a secure site. Lock-down mode is to be conducted once per semester.

All buildings must have an operational security system within the building limiting the access of unauthorized persons.

All visitors must report to the office and sign-in and sign-out.

610.1 Fire Drills

Fire Drills shall be conducted at least once each month. Teachers and students shall become thoroughly familiar with the use of fire escapes, appliances, routes, and exits. When students have reached the designated safety area, the teacher shall call the roll from the class record book. The

date of the drill shall be recorded on the diocesan fire drill form. At least one lock-down drill should be conducted each year.

The date of the monthly fire drill/disaster drill should be recorded by the building principal.

610.2 Severe Weather Drill

Severe weather drills are conducted annually when announced by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management System through the county offices. The purpose of this exercise is to test procedures in the event of such an emergency. When announced, schools will respond to the scenario presented. The principal reports the results of the drill to the Office for Catholic Schools, and the drill is marked on the fire drill sheet.

610.3 Bus Drills

All schools using or contracting for school buses for the transportation of school children shall conduct, on school grounds, two emergency evacuation drills on buses during each school year. The first is to be conducted during the first week of the first school term, and the second during the month of March, and at such other times as the chief school administrator may require. Each such drill shall include practice and instruction concerning the location, use, and operation of emergency doors and fire extinguishers, and the proper evacuation of buses in the event of fire or accident.

611 Megan's Law

Local authorities may inform a school when a sexually violent predator moves into the neighborhood. You can also access information on sexually violent predators at www.pameganslaw.state.pa.us

If you receive notification that a sexually violent predator is in close proximity to the school, you are able to print a flyer from the above website. This should be distributed to all employees who supervise children, including crossing guards. They have the responsibility to notify the police if they observe the registered sex offender in the area and the offender “appears to be present without purpose or otherwise create a concern for the safety of the children”

Principals can also send a letter home to parents indicating that the school has received word that there is a sexually violent predator in the area. You are also able to give them the website address to access the information.