

## **Western Michigan Christian High School Wellness Policy**

Western Michigan Christian School is committed to providing a school environment that enhances opportunities for learning and lifelong wellness. The Board recognizes that good nutrition and regular physical activity affect the health and well-being of the school's students. Furthermore, research concludes that there is a positive correlation between a student's health and well-being and his/her ability to learn. Moreover, schools can play an important role in the developmental process by which students establish their health and nutrition habits by providing nutritious meals through the school's meal program by supporting the development of good eating habits and by promoting increased physical activity both in and out of school.

The Board, however, believes this effort to support the students' development of healthy behaviors and habits with regard to eating and exercise cannot be accomplished by the schools alone. It will be necessary for not only the staff, but also parents and the public at large to be involved in a community-wide effort to promote, support, and model such healthy behaviors and habits.

The Board sets the following goals in an effort to enable students to establish good health and nutrition habits:

### **Nutrition Standards/Education**

1. Offer a school meal program that meets the expectation of state guidelines.
2. Nutrition education shall be integrated into other subject areas of the curriculum, when appropriate, to complement, but not replace, the standards and benchmarks for health education.
3. Make water available to students throughout the school day.

*Nutrition Goal:* Students are encouraged by at least 50% of teachers to drink water from water bottle fill stations throughout the school day. Students will be permitted to have water bottles at their desks and are given ample opportunities to refill water containers.

### **Physical Education**

1. A sequential, comprehensive physical education program shall be provided for students in grades 7-12 in accordance with the standards and benchmarks established by the state of Michigan.
2. Physical education classes shall provide students with opportunities to learn, practice, and be assessed on developmentally appropriate knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to engage in lifelong, health-enhancing physical activity.
3. Planned instruction in physical education shall teach cooperation, fair play, and responsible participation.
4. Planned instruction in physical education shall include cooperative as well as competitive games.

*Physical Education Goal:* Planned instruction in physical education shall include cooperative as well as competitive games.

### **Physical Activity**

1. Physical activity and movement shall be integrated, when possible, across the curricula and throughout the school day.

2. Provide physical activity breaks for all students, including breaks for students and extracurricular activities.
3. Encourage parents/guardians to support their students' participation in physical activity both at and outside of school, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activities in family events.
4. Provide opportunities for students in 7th-12th grade to participate in interscholastic sports programs.

#### **Other School Based Activities**

- A. With regard to other school-based activities:
  - a. Allow other health-related entities to use the school facilities for activities such as screenings for vision and hearing.
  - b. Free drinking water shall be available to students during designated meal times and may be available throughout the school day.
  - c. The schools shall provide at least thirty (30) minutes daily for students to eat.
  - d. Students are discouraged from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some students' diets.
- B. With regard to nutrition promotion, the school will promote foods and drinks that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- C. Limiting school fundraisers that do not comply with the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards to one event per month throughout the school.
- D. Restrict the use of vending machines throughout the school.

*Other School-based Activities Goal:* The school will schedule mealtimes so there is a minimum disruption by bus schedules, and other special programs or events.

#### **Nutrition Promotion/Education**

Furthermore, with the objectives of enhancing student health and well being, and reducing childhood obesity, the following guidelines are established:

- A. In accordance with Policy 8500, entitled Food Service, the food service program shall comply with Federal and State regulations pertaining to the selection, preparation, consumption, and disposal of food and beverages, including but not limited to the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, as well as to the fiscal management of the program.
- B. As set forth in Policy 8531, entitled Free and Reduced Price Meals, the guidelines for reimbursable school meals are not less restrictive than the guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The sale of foods of minimal nutritional value in the food service area during the lunch period is prohibited.
- C. The school will market and advertise only foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- D. The sale of foods and beverages to students that do not meet the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards to be consumed on the school campus during the school day is prohibited.
- E. The food service program will provide all students affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to be healthy and to learn well regardless of unpaid meal balances and without stigma.

### **Wellness Committee**

The school will form a Wellness Committee to establish, oversee, and periodically review established goals and to update the school health policies and programs. The Wellness Committee will also oversee the policy's implementation.

The Wellness Committee will, to the extent possible, include parents/guardians, students, food service representatives, physical and health education teachers, school and community health care professionals, and community members. The Board encourages community participation in the Wellness committee and appoints the school's Principal as the designated official representative. The Principal can be reached at 231-799-9644

### **Triennial Assessment & Documentation**

The Board designates the school Principal as the individual(s) charged with operational responsibility for verifying that the school meets the goals established in this policy.

The Board will review this policy at least every 3 years to determine compliance, progress, and the extent to which the policy compares to model school wellness policies. Parents/guardians, students, school employees, Board members, and community members may provide input to the Wellness Policy via the review process.

A copy of this policy will be maintained in the school's offices and posted on the school website at <https://wmchs.net/parents-students/hot-lunch/>. The Principal will maintain all legally required documentation for implementation of this policy.

### **School Meal Program**

The school will make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges of current students. The building principal or designee will contact households about unpaid meal charges and may establish payment plans due dates by telephone, email, or other written or oral communication. If these collection efforts are unsuccessful, the school may pursue any other methods to collect delinquent debt of current students as allowed by law with collection efforts continuing into a new school year.

Unpaid meal charges of inactive students, such as graduated students and students no longer enrolled at WMC, that are not collected by the end of the school year will be classified as bad debt. No later than December 31 of the following school year, non-federal funds will be used to reimburse the school meal program for the amount of bad debt.

### **Prohibition of "Lunch Shaming"**

The school will strive to eliminate any form of "lunch shaming". Lunch shaming is the public identification or stigmatization of students who cannot pay for a school meal. In furtherance of this goal, the school prohibits the following:

1. Requiring a student who cannot pay for a school meal or who has unpaid meal charges to wear a wristband or handstamp;
2. Requiring a student to dispose of a meal after it has been served because the student cannot pay for the meal or has unpaid meal charges;
3. Communicating directly with a student about unpaid meal charges;
4. Requiring a student to perform chores or other labor to pay a student meal debt;
5. Discussing a student's unpaid meal charges in the presence of other students.

**Public Updates**

The schools will inform the public annually about the local wellness policy, including its content and any updates to and about the policy. The Triennial Assessment, including progress toward meeting the goals of the policy, will also be made available to the public. The school will provide information on how the public can participate on the wellness committee and assist with the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy. All communication will be culturally and linguistically appropriate and will be available via the school's website and schoolwide communications (email, newsletters, mailings).