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Preamble

Saints Academy, Inc. recognizes that good nutrition and regular physical activity affect the health and well-being of all students. Furthermore, research suggests that there is a positive correlation between a student's health and well-being and his/her/their 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 and snacks through the school meal programs, supporting the development of good eating habits and promoting increased physical activity.

Saints Academy, Inc. is committed to creating an environment that promotes and protects the overall well-being of all students and staff. The guidelines listed below encourage a comprehensive wellness approach that is sensitive to both individual and community needs.

1. Local School Wellness Policy Leadership

Saints Academy, Inc. will assemble a representative wellness committee that will meet bi-annually to monitor and set goals for the development and implementation of its local school wellness policy. The policy shall be reviewed annually, and an updated copy shall be sent to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services when a fundamental change or overhaul is made.

- The school principal and local school staff shall have the responsibility to comply with federal and state regulation.
- The Food Service Director, Ielca Mercer, shall ensure overall compliance with the local school wellness policy.
- Parents/guardians, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators and the public shall be permitted to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the local school wellness policy.

Saints Academy, Inc. will review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques in establishing goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity and other school-based activities that promote student wellness such as a review of Smarter Lunchroom tools and techniques.

2. Nutrition Promotion

- The school environment, including the cafeteria and classroom, shall provide clear and consistent messages that promote and reinforce healthy eating.

- Students will have access to useful nutrition information. Posters, worksheets and brochures will be available in classrooms and throughout each school's campus.
- Schools will provide parents with healthy snack ideas, lists of foods for healthy celebrations and opportunities for physical activity before and after school.
- Organizations operating concessions at school functions will promote healthy food choices at a lower profit margin to encourage student selection.

3. Nutrition Education

Academic performance and quality of life issues are affected by the choice and availability of nutritious foods in our schools. Healthy foods support student physical growth, brain development, resistance to disease, emotional stability and ability to learn.

- Students receive nutrition education that is interactive and teaches skills they need to adopt age-appropriate healthy eating behaviors. Classroom lectures, activities and student participation are provided in nutrition and health classes. Classroom written tests (such as multiple choice, essay and fill in the blank) are given in the areas of nutrition. (Example topics include mindful eating, balanced meals, how to read nutrition facts labels).
- The staff responsible for nutrition education will be adequately prepared and participate regularly in professional development activities to effectively deliver an accurate nutrition education program as planned. Preparation and professional development activities will provide basic knowledge of nutrition combined with skill practice in program-specific activities and instructional techniques and strategies designed to promote healthy eating habits.
- The nutrition benchmarks included in Florida's Physical Education Standards shall be taught as part of the structured and systematic unit of instruction during physical education classes and will be integrated into other subject areas (e.g., math, science) where there is a natural fit.

4. Physical Activity

- All students in grades K-5 shall receive 150 minutes per week (75 minutes bi-weekly) of instructionally relevant physical education. For middle school physical education in grades 6-8, all students shall receive a minimum of one semester of physical education in each of the three years offered by **Saints Academy, Inc.** with the approved state course codes. (Sunshine State Standards)
- All elementary school students will have at least 75 minutes of recess per week. Each school will provide space, equipment, and an environment conducive to safe and enjoyable play.
- Students will have the opportunity to be involved in physical activity through physical education programs, before and after school activities or other activity programs. Students will be encouraged to participate in community-offered fitness and athletic programs.
- Regular classroom teachers will be encouraged to provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

5. Other School-Based Activities

Saints Academy, Inc. will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting. These initiatives will include nutrition, physical activity and other wellness components so that all efforts work towards the same set of goals and objectives used to promote student well-being, optimal development and strong educational outcomes.

General Guidelines

- **Saints Academy, Inc.** shall consider the components of the Centers for Disease Control's Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model in establishing other school-based activities that promote wellness.
- The goals outlined by the wellness policy will be considered in planning all school-based activities (such as school events, field trips, dances and assemblies).
- Afterschool programs will encourage healthy snacking and physical activity.
- **Saints Academy, Inc.** shall actively develop and support the engagement of students, families and staff in community health-enhancing activities and events at the school or throughout the community.
- **Saints Academy, Inc.** shall be in compliance with drug, alcohol and tobacco-free policies.

Eating Environment

- Students will be provided an adequate amount of time to consume their meal with a minimum of 20 minutes after receiving their food from the line.
- **Saints Academy, Inc.** will provide nutritious, fresh, locally grown food that reflects Florida's bountiful harvest.
- Convenient access to facilities for hand washing and oral hygiene will be available during meal periods.

Recycling

- **Saints Academy, Inc.** shall maximize the reduction of waste by recycling, reusing, composting and purchasing recycled products.

Employee Wellness

- **Saints Academy, Inc.** wellness committee will have a staff wellness subcommittee that focuses on staff wellness issues, identifies and distributes wellness resources and performs other functions that support staff wellness in coordination with human resources staff.
- All staff will be provided with opportunities to participate in physical activities and healthy eating programs that are accessible and free or low-cost.

Health Services

- A coordinated program of accessible health services shall be provided to students and staff and shall include, but not be limited to, violence prevention, safety, communicable disease prevention, health screening, including body mass index, community health referrals, immunizations, parenting skills and first aid/CPR training.

Behavior Management

- **Saints Academy, Inc.** is committed to prohibiting the use of food as a reward, unless incorporated into an activity that promotes positive nutrition messages (such as a guest chef or field trip to a farm).
- Staff will not deny or require physical activity as a means of punishment.

6. Guidelines for All Foods and Beverages Available During the School Day

Saints Academy, Inc. shall operate and provide food service in accordance with USDA's National School Lunch Program (NSLP) standards and applicable laws and regulations of the state of Florida. The guidelines for reimbursable meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by USDA.

General Guidelines

- All reimbursable meals will meet nutrition standards mandated by USDA, as well as any additional state nutrition standards that go beyond USDA requirements.
- Reimbursable meals will include a variety of nutrient-dense foods, including whole grains and fiber-rich fruits and vegetables, while accommodating special dietary needs and ethnic and cultural food preferences.
- To the maximum extent possible, **Saints Academy, Inc.** will participate in available federal school meal programs, including NSLP.
- Free, potable water will be made available to all students during each meal service.
- **Saints Academy, Inc.** will source 5-10% of all fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practicable.

Competitive Foods

- All foods and beverages sold on the school campus to students outside of reimbursable school meals are considered "competitive foods," and must comply with the nutrition standards for competitive food as defined and required in 7 CFR 210.11.
 - *School campus means, for the purpose of competitive food standards implementation, all areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day.*
 - *School day means, for the purpose of competitive food standards implementation, the period from the midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.*
- Competitive foods include items sold a la carte in the cafeteria, from vending machines, school stores, snack bars and for in-school fundraisers.

- Unless being sold by **Saints Academy, Inc.** food service program, it is impermissible for any competitive food item sold to students during the school day to consist of ready-to-eat combination foods of meat or meat alternate and grain products, as defined in 7 CFR 210.10 and 210.11. (FAC 5P-2.002)

General nutrition requirements for competitive foods:

- Be a grain product that contains 50 percent or more whole grains by weight or have a whole grain as the first ingredient; or
- Have as the first ingredient one of the non-grain major food groups: fruits, vegetables, dairy or protein foods (meat, beans, poultry, seafood, eggs, nuts, seeds, etc.); or
- Be a combination food that contains 1/4 cup of fruit and/or vegetable.
- If water is the first ingredient, the second ingredient must be one of the above.

Nutrient Standards for Competitive Foods

| Nutrient Standards | Snack Items and Side Dishes (including any added accompaniments) | Entrée Items (including any added accompaniments) |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Calories | 200 calories or less | 350 calories or less |
| Sodium Limits | 200 mg or less | 480 mg or less |
| Total Fat Limits | 35% or less of total calories | 35% or less of total calories |
| Saturated fat | Less than 10% of total calories | Less than 10% of total calories |
| Trans fat | 0 g of trans fat as served (less than or equal to 0.5 g per portion) | 0 g of trans fat as served (less than or equal to 0.5 g per portion) |
| Sugar | 35% of weight from total sugar as served or less | 35% of weight from total sugar as served or less |

Exemptions:

- Any entrée item offered as part of the breakfast or lunch program is exempt if it is served as a competitive food on the day of service or the day after service in the breakfast or lunch program.

- Fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables with no added ingredients, except water.
- Canned fruits with no added ingredients except water, which are packed in 100 percent juice, extra light syrup, or light syrup.
- Low sodium/No salt added canned vegetables with no added fats.
- Reduced fat cheese, nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters, as well as seafood and whole eggs with no added fat are exempt from the total fat and saturated fat standards.

*Refer to 7 CFR 210.11 competitive food service standards for additional exemptions.

Nutrition standards for beverages

Portion sizes listed are the maximum that can be offered.

| Beverages | Elementary | Middle | High |
|---|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Plain water | unlimited | unlimited | unlimited |
| Unflavored low-fat milk | 8 fl. oz. | 12 fl. oz. | 12 fl. oz. |
| Unflavored or flavored fat-free milk | 8 fl. oz. | 12 fl. oz. | 12 fl. oz. |
| 100% fruit or vegetable juice | 8 fl. oz. | 12 fl. oz. | 12 fl. oz. |
| 100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water but no added sweeteners | 8 fl. oz. | 12 fl. oz. | 12 fl. oz. |
| Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are labeled to contain 5 calories or less per 8 fl. oz., or 10 calories or less per 20 fl. oz.) | Not allowed | Not allowed | 20 fl. oz. |
| Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are labeled to contain 40 calorie or less per 8 fl. oz. or 60 calories or less per 12 fl. oz.) | Not allowed | Not allowed | 12 fl. oz. |

For elementary and middle school students: foods and beverages must be caffeine-free with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances. Food and beverages for high school students may contain caffeine.

Standards for food and beverages available during the school day that are not sold to students:

- Class parties or celebrations shall be held after the lunch period.
- **Saints Academy, Inc.** will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month.
- The school will provide parents/guardians and staff a list of ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities.
- Only foods that meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards can be served.

Fundraising

- Fundraising efforts will be supportive of healthy eating by complying with all applicable regulations and nutrition standards for competitive foods while also emphasizing the sale of nonfood items.
- No fundraisers that include the sale of food items will occur until thirty (30) minutes after the conclusion of the last designated meal service period.
- The board of directors is permitted to grant a special exemption from the standards for competitive foods as specified above for the purpose of conducting infrequent school-sponsored fundraisers, not to exceed the following maximum number of school days per school campus each school year:

| School Type | Maximum Number of School Days to Conduct Exempted Fundraisers |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Elementary Schools | 5 days |
| Middle School/Junior High Schools | 10 days |

- As applicable, each sponsor shall maintain records documenting the occurrence of any exempted school-sponsored fundraisers to demonstrate compliance with the rule found at FAC 5P-2.002.

7. Policy for Food and Beverage Marketing

School-based marketing will be consistent with policies for nutrition education and health promotion. As such, the following guidelines apply:

- The school will only be allowed to market and advertise those foods and beverages that meet or exceed USDA’s Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors are encouraged. Examples may include vending machine covers promoting water, pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines, sales of fruit for fundraisers and coupons for discounted gym memberships.
- **Saints Academy, Inc.** will foster a cafeteria environment that promotes healthy eating, including the incorporation of fresh, locally grown foods into student meals.
- **Saints Academy, Inc.** replacement and purchasing decisions will reflect the marketing guidelines mentioned above.

8. Evaluation and Measurement of the Implementation of the Wellness Policy

Saints Academy, Inc's. wellness committee will update and make modifications to the wellness policy based on the results of the annual review and triennial assessments and/or as local priorities change, community needs change, wellness goals are met, new health information and technology emerges and new federal or state guidance or standards are issued. The wellness policy will be assessed as indicated at least every three years following the triennial assessment.

Triennial Progress Assessments

Saints Academy, Inc. will assess the local school wellness policy to measure compliance **at least once every three years**. This assessment will measure the implementation of the local school wellness policy, and include:

- The extent to which **Saints Academy, Inc.** is in compliance with the local school wellness policy.
- The extent to which the local school wellness policy compares to model local school wellness policies; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the local school wellness policy.

9. Informing the Public

Saints Academy, Inc. will ensure that the wellness policy and most recent triennial assessment are always available to the public. **Saints Academy, Inc.** will also actively notify households (as applicable/possible) on an annual basis about any updates made to the wellness policy and the availability of the triennial assessment results, as well as provide information to the community about the school nutrition environment.

- **Saints Academy, Inc.** will ensure the most updated version of the wellness policy and triennial assessments are always available on its website for the public to view.
- **Saints Academy, Inc.** will present wellness policy updates, as applicable, during meetings with the Parent Teacher Association/Organization, school board, district superintendent, health and wellness committee and other interested groups or stakeholders.
- Wellness updates will be provided to students, parents/guardians, and staff, as applicable, in the form of handouts, **Saints Academy, Inc.'s** website, articles and/or newsletters, to ensure that the community is informed, and that public input is encouraged.
- As applicable, **Saints Academy, Inc.** will provide all parents/guardians with a complete copy of the local school wellness policy at the beginning of the school year.

10. Community Involvement

Saints Academy, Inc. is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. **Saints Academy, Inc.** will actively communicate ways in which

parents/guardians, students, representatives of the school food authority, school health professionals, staff, representatives from the local agriculture community, food and nutrition professionals and the public can participate in the development, implementation, and annual review of the local school wellness policy through a variety of means, including:

- **Saints Academy, Inc.** will consider student needs in planning for a healthy nutrition environment. Students will be asked for input and feedback using surveys and attention will be given to their comments.
- **Saints Academy, Inc.** will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on **Saints Academy, Inc.'s** website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters to ensure that all parents/guardians are actively notified of any updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy.
- **Saints Academy, Inc.** will invite the public and school community to participate on the Wellness Committee.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.