

St. Mary's School

Wellness Policy



ST. MARY’S SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Revised August 2024

- I. PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to assure a school environment that promotes and protects student’s health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The St. Mary’s School Education Committee recognizes that nutrition education and physical education are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters student attendance and education.
- B. The school environment should promote and protect students’ health, well-being, and ability to learn by encouraging healthy eating and physical activity.
- C. The St. Mary’s School encourages the involvement of students’, parents, teachers, food service staff, and other interested person in implementing, monitoring and reviewing school district nutrition and physical activity policies.
- D. Children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive.
- E. All students in grades Preschool through grade 6 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- F. Qualified food service personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; try to accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

III. GUIDELINES

A. Foods and Beverages

- 1. All foods and beverages made available on campus will be consistent with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and meet Smart Snacks requirements.
- 2. Food service personnel will take every measure to ensure that student access to foods and beverages meet or exceed all federal, state, and local laws and guidelines.
- 3. Food service personnel shall adhere to all federal, state, and local food safety and security guidelines.
- 4. The school will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.
- 5. The school will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
- 6. The school will make every effort to provide students with sufficient time to eat after sitting down for school meals and will schedule meal periods at appropriate times during the school day.
- 7. The school will discourage tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.

B. School Food Service Program/Personnel

1. The St. Mary's School will provide healthy and safe school meal programs that strictly comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations.
2. The St. Mary's School shall designate an appropriate person to be responsible for the school's food service program, whose duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available on campus to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
3. As part of the school's responsibility to operate a food service program, the school will provide continuing professional development for all food service personnel in schools.



C. Nutrition Education and Promotion

1. The school will encourage and support healthy eating by students and engage in nutrition promotion that is:
 - a. Offered as part of a comprehensive program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
 - b. Part of health education classes as well as classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects, where appropriate; and
 - c. Enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and includes participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, and field trips.

D. Physical Activity

1. Students need opportunities for physical activity and to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior. Toward that end, health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities such as watching television;
2. Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons, where appropriate; and
3. Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

E. Communications with Parents

1. The school recognizes that parents and guardians have a primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and well-being.
2. The school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
3. ***The school encourages parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and refrain from including beverages and foods without nutritional value.***
4. The school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities and will support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- A. After approval by the education committee, the wellness policy will be implemented throughout St. Mary's School.
- B. School food service staff, will ensure compliance within the school's food service areas and will report to the building principal.
- C. The school's food service program administrator may provide an annual report to the principal setting forth the nutrition guidelines and procedures for selection of all foods made available on campus.
- D. The principal will ensure compliance with the Wellness Policy and may provide an annual report of the school's compliance with the policy to the education committee.
- E. The school will post this wellness policy on its website, to the extent it maintains a website.

Legal References: Minn. Stat § 121A.215 (Local School District Wellness Policy)
42 U.S.C. § 1751 *et seq.* (Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act)
42 U.S.C. § 1771 *et seq.* (Child Nutrition Act of 1966)
P.L. 108-265 (2004) § 204 (Local Wellness Policy)
7 U.S.C. § 5341 (Establishment of Dietary Guidelines)
7 C.F.R. § 210.10 (School Lunch Program Regulations)
7 C.F.R § 220.8 (School Breakfast Program Regulations)

Local Resources: Minnesota Department of Education
Minnesota Department of Health
County Health Departments
Action for Healthy Kids Minnesota

St. Mary's School Wellness Policy can be viewed in its entirety at <https://www.stmarystracy.com>

If you wish to be a member of the Wellness Committee, please contact Mrs. Ashley Honetschlager at either 507-532-6642 or AHonetschlager@holy-redeemer.com

For additional information about Health and Physical Education state standards, please visit:
education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/stds/hpe/

NUTRITION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY

STUDENT NUTRITION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Policy Intent/Rationale:

St. Mary's School promotes healthy schools, by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. St. Mary's School supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. The school contributes to the basic health status of children by facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and ensures that every child has a better opportunity to reach a higher level of achievement.

A. Provide a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors.

The entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity. A healthy school environment should not be sacrificed because of a dependence on revenue from the high added fat, high add sugar, and low nutrient foods to support school programs.

B. Support and promote proper dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance.

All foods/beverages available on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities during the instructional day should meet or exceed the St. Mary's School's nutrition standards. Any foods/beverages sold will meet Smart Snacks requirements.

C. Provide more opportunities for students to engage in physical activity.

A quality Physical Education program is an essential component for all students to learn about and participate in physical activity. Physical activity is to be included in St. Mary's School's daily education program from grades Preschool through grade 6. Physical activity should include regular instructional physical education, as well as co-curricular activities and recess. St. Mary's students will receive specific physical education instruction 2 – 3 each week depending on the length of the week.

D. St. Mary's School is committed to improve academic performance for all students.

Educators, administrators, parents, and all school support personnel must consider the critical role students' health plays in academic stamina and performance and adapt the school environment to ensure students' basic nourishment and activity needs are met. To ensure widespread understanding of the benefits to school environments where nutritious foods are provided and where students have an opportunity for physical activity, an awareness campaign that highlights research

demonstrating the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity, and capacity of students to develop and learn will be conducted on a regular basis

E. Maintain a School Wellness Committee with the purpose of:

- Developing guidance to explicate this policy
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- Evaluating policy progress
- Serving as a resource to school personnel, (e.g. providing lists of healthy incentives, snacks, birthdays, etc.) and
- Revising policy as necessary

A school-wide Wellness Committee will be maintained. The Committee will meet a minimum of two times annually with Committee membership including, but not limited to:

- Food Service Director/Head Cook
- A parent representative
- A student representative
- Food Service Manager
- An Education Committee member
- School Principal (co-chair)
- Physical Education teacher (co-chair)

The Wellness Committee will be responsible for reviewing an Annual Report by June 15 of each year that includes, but may not be limited to, the following information:

- Monthly school menus and meal counts
- Any sales of foods/beverages throughout the school hours will meet Smart Snacks requirements.
- Summary listing of physical activity programs and opportunities for students throughout the school year.
- The Wellness Committee will conduct a triennial assessment of the Wellness Policy. The results of the assessment will be made available to the public. The triennial assessment will contain three required components: 1) compliance with the wellness policy 2) how the wellness policy compares to the model wellness policies 3) progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy.

STUDENT NUTRITION

The School Lunch Program:

- The full meal school breakfast and lunch program will continue to follow the USDA Requirements for Federal School Meals Program and only marketing of foods/beverages that meet Smart Snacks requirements.
St. Mary's School's Food Service Program will meet the Smart Snacks requirements.
- The Food Service Director/Cafeteria Cook will work closely with the Wellness Committee.

Lunchroom Environment/Climate:

- The lunchroom environment that provides students with a relaxed, enjoyable climate shall be maintained.
- The lunchroom environment is a place where students have:

- >Adequate space to eat in clean & pleasant surroundings;
- >Adequate time to eat meals. (The American School Food Service Association recommends at least 20 minutes for lunch from the time students are seated with food); and
- >Convenient access to hand washing or hand sanitizing facilities before meals.

Teacher-to-Student Incentive:

Strong consideration should be given to non-food items as part of any teacher-to-student incentive program. The use of food items as part of a student incentive program is strongly discouraged. Should teachers feel compelled to utilize food items as an incentive, they are asked to adhere to the School Nutrition Standards and Smart Snacks requirements.

Student Nutrition Education:

St. Mary’s School will implement a comprehensive curriculum approach to nutrition in Preschool through 6th grade. All Preschool through grade 6 instructional staff will be encouraged to integrate nutritional themes into daily lessons when appropriate. The health benefits of good nutrition should be emphasized. These nutritional themes include but are not limited to:

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|--|-------------------------------|
| Knowledge of “My Plate” | Healthy Heart Choices |
| Serving sizes | Healthy Breakfast |
| Sources & variety of foods | Healthy Snacks |
| Diet & disease | Healthy Diet |
| Food Labels | Understanding Calories |
| Identify & limit foods of low nutrient density | Proper Food Safety/Sanitation |
| Major Nutrients | Multi-Cultural Influences |

The nutrition policy reinforces nutrition education to help students practice these themes in a supportive school environment.

Parent Nutrition Education:

- Nutrition education will be provided to parents.
- Nutrition education may be provided in the form of handouts, postings on the school website, articles and information provided in school newsletters, presentations that focus on nutritional value and healthy lifestyles, and through any other appropriate means available for reaching parents.

Staff Nutrition & Physical Activity Education:

With the purpose of:

- Encouraging all school staff to improve their own personal health and wellness
- Improving staff morale
- Creating positive role modeling
- Developing the commitment of staff to promote the health of students
- Developing the commitment of staff to help improve the school nutrition and physical activity environment.

Nutrition and physical activity education opportunities will be provided to all school staff. These educational opportunities may include, but are not limited to, the distribution of educational and informational materials, the arrangement of presentations and workshops that focus on nutritional value and healthy lifestyles, health assessments, fitness activities and other appropriate nutrition and physical activity-related topics.

SCHOOL NUTRITION STANDARDS

Nutrition Standards Intent/Rationale:

St. Mary's School strongly encourages the sale or distribution of nutrient dense foods for all school functions and activities. Nutrient dense foods are those foods that provide students with calories rich in the nutrient content needed to be healthy. In an effort to support the consumption of nutrient dense foods in the school setting, our school had adopted the following nutrition standards governing the sale of food, beverage, and candy on school grounds. All effected parties are encouraged to study these standards and adhere to the policy using the following Nutrition Standards as minimal guidelines.

Food:

- Encourage the consumption of nutrient dense foods, i.e. Whole Grains, Fresh Fruits & Vegetables and Dairy Products.
- Any given food item for sale prior to the start of the school day and throughout the instructional day, will have no more than 30% of its total calories derived from fat.
- Any given food item for sale prior to the start of the school day and throughout the instructional day, will have no more than 10% of its total calories derived from saturated fat.
- Nuts & seeds with minimal added fat in processing (no more than 3 grams of added fat per 1.75 ounce or less package size) are exempt from these standards because they are nutrient dense and contain high levels of monounsaturated fat.
- It is recognized that there may be rare special occasions when the school principal may allow a school group to deviate from these Standards, but those special occasions must be recorded and included in the Nutrition & Physical Activity Wellness Committee's annual report.

Beverages:

- ONLY milk, water and beverages containing 100% fruit juices with no added artificial or natural sweeteners may be sold on school grounds both immediately prior to and throughout the instructional day.
- USDA defines the school day as midnight through 30 minutes after the bell rings, so 30 minutes after the end of the school day would be the earliest.

Candy:

- Candy is defined as any processed food item that has:
 1. Sugar {including brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, fructose, glucose (dextrose), high fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, maltose, molasses, raw sugar, table sugar (sucrose) and/or syrup} is listed as one of the first two ingredients.

AND

2. Sugar is more than 25% of the item by weight.
 - Vending sales will not be permitted on school grounds.
 - Non-vending sales of candy will be permitted ONLY at the conclusion of the instructional school day.
- USDA defines the school day as midnight through 30 minutes after the bell rings, so 30 minutes after the end of the school day would be the earliest.

STUDENT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Physical Activity Goal:

St. Mary's School shall provide physical activity and physical education opportunities that provide students with the knowledge and skills to lead a physically active lifestyle.

St. Mary's School shall utilize the following Implementation Strategies:

1. Physical education classes and physical activity opportunities will be available for all students.
2. Physical activity opportunities shall be offered daily during school recess times and/or during physical education classes.
3. School leaders of physical activity and physical education shall guide students through a process that will:
 - Expose youngsters to a wide variety of physical activities
 - Teach physical skills to help maintain a lifetime of health fitness.
 - Encourage self-monitoring so youngsters can see how active they are and set their own goals.
 - Be active role models.
4. Begin fitness or activity logging in elementary school.
 - Children should accumulate at least 60 minutes (and up to several hours) of age-appropriate physical activity on all or most days of the week.
 - Children should participate in several bouts of physical activity lasting 15 minutes or more each day.
 - Children should participate each day in a variety of age-appropriate physical activities designed to achieve optimal health, wellness, fitness & performance benefits.

Extended periods (periods of two or more hours) of inactivity are discouraged for children, especially during the daytime hours.
5. Physical education classes shall be sequential, building from year-to-year and content will include movement, personal fitness, and personal & social responsibility. Students should be able to demonstrate competency through application of knowledge, skill and practice.

STUDENT HEALTH EDUCATION

Health Education will be taught to all students, preschool through grade 6.

Health Education Goals include gained knowledge of:

Nutrition

Social-Emotional Education

Basic First Aid Skills

Water Safety

Electricity/Electrical Safety