

St. Mary School Wellness Policy



Revised December 2018

St. Mary School Wellness Policy Rationale

St. Mary School knows that it takes everyone – parents, teachers, school administrators, health professionals and elected officials – working together to teach children about the importance of a balanced lifestyle. Our school wellness policy may promote better nutrition; encourage a commitment to exercise and support parents' efforts by helping children to make informed choices that will impact them for a lifetime. Our policy will follow local, state and federal guidelines.

Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive;

Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;

Whereas, obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity;

Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood;

Whereas, 33% of high school students do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and 72% of high school students do not attend daily physical education classes;

Whereas, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;

Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores, and snack bars include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies, and snack cakes;

Whereas, school districts around the country are facing significant fiscal and scheduling constraints;

Community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies.

Responsibility of Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education will create, strengthen, or work within the existing school family to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The Ministry of Education also will serve as a resource to school personnel for implementing those policies.

Free and Reduced Meals

St. Mary personnel 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. Toward this end, personnel may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide meals at no charge to all children, regardless of income; promote the availability of school meals to all students.

Meal Times and Scheduling

- will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for lunch;
- should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.;
- should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods;
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks;

Fundraising Activities

To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities will not involve food or will use only foods that meet the above nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. St. Mary School will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water and milk as the primary beverages. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. The principal will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

Rewards

St. Mary will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations

Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

Nutrition Guidelines

Beverages

Beverages are an important part of a healthy, balanced diet: they quench thirst, provide hydration, give energy, and deliver essential vitamins or minerals. Beverages complement the foods we eat and are a needed component of a balanced diet.

*During morning snack, students drink water or juice.

*At lunch, students drink water, milk, or juice with their food whether it is hot or cold lunch.

*For special celebrations including birthdays, open houses, or assemblies, students drink water, milk, or 100% juice products.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day, in after-school care, or enrichment programs make a positive contribution to children's diets and health. We have assessed 9:00 a.m. as our snack time based on when children arrive at school and when lunch is offered. We use the Wisconsin Department of Instruction's snack guidelines as what may be eaten during these times.

*The parent and faculty handbooks state the snack time and lists appropriate snacks.

*The parent and faculty handbooks state that snacks that don't comply will be sent home uneaten.

*The parent and faculty handbooks state snack times.

*Snacks aren't used as a reward or punishment.

Field Trips

All field trips that involve food include nutritional and dietary concerns. The beverage choices are water and natural juices for children. The main menus follow portion and protein percentages suggested by the WI DPI. Movement is encouraged for children and adults and healthy life style choices are modeled by adults.

Curriculum Guidelines

Rationale

St. Mary's School recognizes that physical activity has many health benefits, such as reducing stress, helping to ward off heart disease, lowering blood pressure, decreasing obesity, transitioning into schedule changes, concentrating on tasks, and managing life styles. It is important that our activities connect to these health issues, learning habits, and family patterns.

Physical Activity

Morning, Lunch, and After Recesses – These are part of the daily schedule and afford opportunities for movement. Movement includes playing traditional games such as Four Square, Kick Ball, or Dodge Ball. There is a basketball net which affords the opportunity for practicing shots individually, as partners, or in small groups. Children are encouraged to move around and discouraged from sitting or doing sedentary activities such as reading books. Inclement weather brings the recesses inside to the school gym where more structured movement activities are encouraged due to space restraints.

Physical Education - All students in grades K-8, receive physical education for an equivalent of 60 minutes/week for K-3rd grade students, 80 minutes per week for 4th-5th grade students, and 135 minutes/week for middle school students for the entire school year. All physical education is taught by a certified physical education teacher. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (*e.g.*, interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

*Age and developmentally appropriate lessons are part of the curriculum.

*Food intake and physical activity go hand-in-hand and consideration of their interdependence is planned.

*Individualized and small group activities are in preparation for long term choices.

*Children are encouraged to incorporate physical activity into their family life styles.

*Our Athletic Committee is encouraged to provide extra curricular sports opportunities including individual and team sports.

*Classroom teachers are encouraged to participate in lessons that involve going outside and moving.

Fall Fundraiser – Marathon It which will take place each October will encourage students to collect pledges for walking, running, and biking.

Health Classes – All students in K-8 receive Health Classes throughout the school year. The Health Lessons are part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.

- The lessons includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, and participatory activities.
- The lessons promote fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices.
- The lessons emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure such as physical activity and exercise.
- There are links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services.
- There is media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing through labels and advertisement.

Classroom Curriculum

The classroom curriculum integrates nutritional learning into all core subjects including science, math, language arts, social studies, and reading.

Lunch Room

St. Mary School complies with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's Hot Lunch Program policies. School food service staff ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and report on this matter to the school principal. In addition, the hot lunch supervisor reports on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting change. The food service staff is required to attend yearly workshops updating them on DPI policy changes, advising on implementing new components, and reviewing present standards. The policy is based on these guidelines:

*The food service staff receives training in the food guide pyramid, diet and disease issues, nutritional snacks, nutrients, serving size, healthy heart choices, calorie intake, food labels, and sanitation.

- *Breakfast is essential to the start of the day and lunch isn't the first meal.
- *All children have access to the program.
- *Participation in the program is encouraged.
- *There is adequate space to eat with pleasant surroundings.
- *There is 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 their food).
- *There is convenient access to hand washing or hand sanitizing facilities before meals.
- * There is awareness that children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive.
- *There is awareness that good health fosters student attendance and education.
- *There is an awareness that obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity.
- * There is awareness that heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood.
- *There is awareness that according to reports, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid.
- *It is a learning environment where safety concerns and rules need to be followed by students.
- *Communication with parents is essential about nutritional choices, portions, and general rules unique to that environment.
- *The policy is a tool to educate parents.
- *School nutrition services shall use the Smarter Lunchroom Self-Assessment Scorecard to determine ways to improve the school meals environment.

Staff Nutrition & Physical Activity Education

St. Mary School Staff recognizes its role in creating a positive role modeling environment for all of its students. In this regard, the staff will:

- *Encourage each other to improve their own personal health and wellness issues.
- *During faculty meetings or any interaction, participate in building staff morale.
- *Build the commitment of staff to promote the health of students.
- *Build the commitment of staff to help improve the school nutrition and physical activity environment.

Parents' Role

Nutrition education is provided to parents beginning at the early childhood level and is continued through middle school levels.

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

Principal's Role

As the administrator, the principal will have the main supervisory responsibilities associated with the whole Wellness Policy. These responsibilities will include:

- * The principal ensures compliance with policies in his/her school in regards to the Physical Education/Nutrition Curriculum and reports this compliance to the Superintendent of Schools and WI Department of Public Instruction.
- *The principal confirms that the school's food service staff is in compliance with nutrition policies and reports on this matter to the Home and School Association, Superintendent of Catholic Schools (Diocese of Superior), and the WI Department of Public Instruction. In addition, the school hot lunch supervisor reports to the principal on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes
- *The principal ensures that morning and lunch recesses are given to the students on a daily basis.

Policy Review

A Wellness Committee consisting of faculty, staff, and parents will review the policy every August before the start of a new school year.

