

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Nutrition Education

Updated December 2017

St. Mary's School promotes healthy students by supporting wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity as a part of the total learning environment. St. Mary's School supports a healthy environment where students learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices.

St. Mary's School will provide a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors. St. Mary's School will support and promote proper dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance. The entire school environment will positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity.

Nutrition Education and Promotion

St. Mary's School will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is included in health curriculum at all grade levels and also infused into the core curriculum such as math, science, language arts, and social sciences
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and physical activity.
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

Physical Education and Activity

St. Mary's School will provide physical education that:

- is taught by a certified physical education teacher.
- includes students with disabilities; students with special health-care needs may be provided accommodations or alternative educational settings.
- engages students in moderate to vigorous activity during at least 50 percent of physical education class time.

St. Mary's School will provide recess for K-5 students that:

- is at least 30 minutes a day.
- is outdoors when weather permits.
- encourages moderate to vigorous physical activity.

When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Employees should not use physical activity (running laps, pushups) as punishment.

Employees should not take away recess or other opportunities for physical activity for homework completion during the school day.

Other School-based Activities to promote student wellness

Integrating Physical Activity into Classroom Settings

For students to receive the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond the physical education class. Toward that end, St. Mary's School will:

- offer classroom health education that complements physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities;
- discourage sedentary activities, such as watching television, playing computer games, etc.;
- provide opportunities for physical activity to be incorporated into other subject lessons; and,
- encourage classroom teachers to provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communication With Parents

St. Mary's School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. St. Mary's School will:

- share nutrition information in newsletters or on the school website;
- encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the established nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages;
- provide parents a list of foods that meet the schools' snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards and fundraising activities;
- provide information about physical education and other physical activity opportunities before, during and after the school day;
- support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school;

Food Marketing in Schools

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. St. Mary's School will:

- limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually;
- prohibit school-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages;
- promote health foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products; and market activities that promote healthful behaviors.

Staff Wellness

St. Mary's School values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

St. Mary's School will:

- participate in the Diocesan wellness program to include annual health assessment and coaching and setting of personal wellness goals

Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods Available within the school

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant surroundings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state and federal law;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- serve low-fat and fat-free milk and nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives (as defined by the USDA; and, ensure that whole grain products are served.

Free and Reduced-Priced Meals

St. Mary's 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 meals. Toward this end, St. Mary's School will:

- utilize electronic identification and payment systems; and
- promote the availability of meals to all students.

Meal Times and Scheduling

St. Mary's School will:

- schedule meal periods at appropriate times
- provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (orthodontia, high decay risk).

Qualification of Food Service Staff

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the meal programs. As part of St. Mary's School's responsibility to operate a food service program, St. Mary's School will:

- provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals; and
- provide staff development programs and/or training programs for food service director, kitchen managers and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Food Safety

All foods made available on campus adhere to food safety and security guidelines.

- All foods made available through food service comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines are implemented to prevent food illness in schools.
- For the safety and security of the food and facility, access to the food service operations are limited to food service staff and authorized personnel

Sharing of Foods

St. Mary's School discourages students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meals or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Food waste reduction and Share Table procedures

Food waste reduction is a concern for St. Mary's school. Foodservice employees, teachers and school staff will work together to ensure that unused food from the child nutrition program is not wasted. This can include unserved food items and those collected at a sharing table. All school staff will follow these procedures:

1. All employees in school foodservices must:
 - a. Prepare food amounts as directed on production records.
 - b. Prepare and store donated foods according to standard operating procedures and local health guidelines.
 - c. Encourage students to select a variety of foods in compliance with program regulations.
 - d. Not provide leftover entrees to students, the food will be frozen following food safety rules and can be used again at a later date.
2. Teachers and school staff should:
 - a. Encourage students to take only foods they plan to eat with the understanding of what food items are needed for a reimbursable meal.
 - b. Encourage students to eat foods they have selected
 - c. Inform students about the sharing table in a way that does not pressure students to donate food from their meal.
 - d. Ensure students do not bully one another to donate food.
 - e. Allow students to save non-perishable foods for later consumption (apple, carrot sticks, packaged items)
 - f. Review menu items which are frequently wasted.
3. Sharing table monitors should:
 - a. Accept only foods that do not require temperature controls such as whole fruit or pre-packaged apple slices.
 - b. Accept foods that are prepackaged in their unopened original containers.
 - c. Accept juice that is served in a sealed container, sealed fruit cups, applesauce or pre-packaged carrot slices.
 - d. Supervise student involvement and be present at all times

Foods Sold Outside the Meal

Snacks, Rewards, Celebrations, Fundraising

- Snacks served during the school day will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health. St. Mary's School will disseminate a list of suggested snack items to teachers and parents.
- St. Mary's School will discourage the use of foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually, as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through meals) as a punishment.
- The school will be encouraged to evaluate their celebration practices that involve food during the school day. St. Mary's School will disseminate a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.
- School fundraising groups will be encouraged to use non foods or foods that are compliant to or complement the school's wellness policies.

Food items brought to school

- Teachers in grades PK-8 will make it clear to parents that there is a student in their son/daughter's class with a food allergy.
- St. Mary's strongly suggests using no- food times for rewards or birthdays such as pencils, stickers and bookmarks.
- Snacks and treats brought to school must be pre-packaged or purchased from a commercially certified kitchen. Some suggestions include dried fruits, pretzels, string cheese, juice box, graham crackers, cheese nips, pudding cups or yogurt.
- St. Mary's recognizes that Concession Stand and Booster Club functions outside the academic day and are not part of these guidelines.

Celebrations - The school will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party should include at least several healthy food options. The school will distribute a list of healthy party food ideas to teachers, parents/room mothers.

School Sponsored Events - Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside of the school day will come as close as possible to the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold separately. Concession stands will offer at least one healthy food option such as pretzels, fresh fruit, or fresh vegetables.

Food Safety - All foods made available at school adhere to food safety and security guidelines.

-all foods made available at school comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (FIACCP) plans and guidelines are implemented to prevent food illness in schools.

-For the safety and security of the food and facility, access to the food service operations are limited to authorized personnel only. For further guidance, see the US Department of Agriculture food security guidelines.

PLAN FOR MEASURING IMPLEMENTATION

Monitoring

The superintendent will ensure compliance with established school-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

In St. Mary's School:

- The principal will ensure compliance with those policies in the school and will report on the school's compliance to the superintendent and wellness committee annually;
- Food service staff, at the school or system level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within food service areas and will report on this matter to the administration.
- St. Mary's School Food Service Director will report on the most recent administrative review to ensure compliance with the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.
- A summary report will be developed every three years on school-wide compliance with the school system's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies; and,
- The report will be provided to the St. Mary's School Board and be made available to parents, teachers, principals and health services personnel.

Policy Review

St. Mary's School will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and practices. The results of the school assessment will be compiled to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessment will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, St. Mary's School will review the nutrition and physical activity policies and practices and the provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity. Policies and plans will be revised as necessary to facilitate their implementation.