

# St. Mary's Catholic School Wellness Policy

Revised and updated 3/2022

St. Mary's Catholic School (hereto referred to as SMCS) is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well being and the ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. We have developed this policy to enhance the learning and development of lifelong wellness practices.

The Wellness Committee membership will represent the whole school and include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents; students; food service staff, physical education teachers; school administrators, school board members; health professionals; and the general public.

School Wellness Policy Point of Contact: Fr. Garrett Nelson or Melissa Beitel, co-principals

The Principal(s) will facilitate development of, and updates to, the wellness policy, while ensuring compliance.

The wellness committee names and contact information are:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title / Relationship to the School or District</b>	<b>Email address</b>	<b>Role on Committee</b>
Fr. Garrett Nelson	Administrator	fgarrett@stmaryscatholicschool.net	school wellness policy coordinator, ensures compliance with the policy
Melissa Beitel	Administrator	mbeitel@stmaryscatholicschool.net	school wellness policy coordinator, ensures compliance with the policy
Kristy Coate	Physical Education Teacher	kcoate@stmaryscatholicschool.net	Assists in the evaluation of the wellness policy and implementation

Beth Coate	Parent/Part-time school employee	elizabeth.coate@gmail.com	Assists in the evaluation of the wellness policy
Christianne Hubbard	School Cook/Parent	christhubbard@aol.com	Ensures compliance with policy in respect to our hot lunch program

### Nutrition Education Goals:

Nutrition education is defined as "any set of learning experiences designed to facilitate the voluntary adoption of eating and other related behaviors conducive to health and well being." SMCS adopts the following nutrition guidelines, with the goal of promoting student health.

- Students in grades K-8 shall receive nutrition education that is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy eating behaviors and provide them with the knowledge and skills to promote and protect their health.
- Nutrition education shall be offered in the school cafeteria as well as in the classroom, with coordination between food service staff and teachers. Students may take an active role by creating posters to be displayed in the cafeteria;
- Students shall receive consistent nutrition messages throughout the school, classrooms, cafeterias, homes, community and media and school based marketing that will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion;
- Nutrition educational activities shall be integrated into the health education or core curricula. Hands on cooking of healthy recipes can be incorporated into lesson plans as well as family/student involvement as sharing recipes/nutritional tips through cookbooks, district website and school calendar;
- Students shall be encouraged to start each day with a healthy breakfast.
- Fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat dairy products, healthy food preparation methods and health enhancing nutrition practices shall be promoted.
- Caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise) shall be emphasized in health and physical education classes.

## Physical Activity Goals:

The primary goal for SMCSs physical activity component is to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity and understand the short and long term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle. SMCS adopts the following physical activity guidelines:

- Students shall be given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education classes, daily recess periods for elementary school students, physical activity integrated (stretching or physical activity breaks) into the elementary curriculum and through the integration of physical activity in the academic curriculum wherever possible at the secondary level;
- Students shall be given opportunities for physical activity through opportunities before and/or after school programs including, but not limited to, interscholastic athletics, hosting running and other sports/wellness clubs from the community, and practices on campus.
- SMCS shall encourage parents to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models and to include physical activity in family events;
- All attempts will be made to not use physical activity (e.g., running laps or pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment

## Physical Education:

- All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. SMCS will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.
- The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts.
- The SMCS physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments via the Presidential Youth Fitness Program and will use criterion-based reporting for each student.

## Other school based activity goals to promote wellness:

- There shall be a clean, safe, enjoyable meal environment for all students with adequate time to enjoy eating healthy foods with their friends;
- Every effort will be made to provide enough space and serving area to ensure all students have access to school meals with minimum wait time;
- Drinking fountains shall be available so that students can get water at meals and throughout the day;
- All students are encouraged to participate in school meals programs and the identity of students who eat free and reduced price meals will be protected;
- No school activities, events or parties will interfere with student access to a nutritionally balanced lunch. Any celebratory treats will be served after lunch in an attempt not to interfere with lunch.
- Food and beverage marketing activities shall be consistent with and reinforce the objectives of the education and nutrition environment goals of SMCS.
- SMCS shall encourage that all fundraising efforts and school events such as field trips, dances and assemblies in the schools are supportive of healthy eating, healthy food choices and physical activity;
- Efforts will be made to keep school physical activity facilities open for use by students outside regular school hours.

## Nutrition Guidelines for all foods on campus

Students' lifelong eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of foods and beverages available in their daily environment. SMCS establishes the following program requirements and nutrition standards to address all foods and beverages sold or served to students:

- Nutrition standards shall focus on maximizing nutritional value by decreasing fat and added sugars, and moderating portion size; we are committed to serving meals with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low fat milk in meeting the nutritional needs of school children within their calorie requirements.
- SMCS participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) run by the USDA. SMCS is committed to provide meals through this program that are accessible to all children, appealing and attractive to children, served in a clean and pleasant setting, and that promote healthy food and beverage choices.
- All foods and beverages made available (including vending machines and school parties/celebrations) during the school day will prioritize nutrient density.

- All foods made available shall adhere to food safety guidelines;
- Classroom snacks shall feature healthy choices and a list of such healthy choices shall be disseminated to teachers and parents;
- Celebrations that involve food during the school day shall be limited, when possible. Each party shall include no more than one or two foods or beverages that do not meet the standards of SMCS snack policy. A list of party ideas can be found in our school handbook.
- Students shall be discouraged from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on children's diets;
- Families, teachers, students and school officials shall be involved in selecting food choices for their schools in order to identify new, healthy and appealing food selections;
- SMCS shall make decisions on these guidelines based on nutrition goals, not on profit.
- Foods sold during school hours will follow USDA Smart Snacks in school nutrition standards.
- Concessions: food sold during non-school hours are encouraged to offer healthy options (ie. fresh fruit/veggies, wholegrain crackers) but are not required to meet nutritional standards in every case. Water and 100% fruit or vegetable juice can be sold, no soda.

## Measurement and Evaluation

At least once every three years, SMCS will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

- The extent to which compliance with the wellness policy is met;
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the schools wellness policy.

The current principal or administrator is responsible for managing the progress assessment and may be contacted for additional information.

The Wellness Committee will monitor schools' compliance with this wellness policy.

SMCS will actively notify households/families of the availability of the progress report.

## Side Notes that are not a part of the official policy

Ideas to start incorporating nutrition education into our school:

- The School Nutrition Association celebrates national school lunch week, where they celebrate the school lunch program with a theme, they provide lots of ideas and activities. This could be incorporated into a week of learning about healthy eating. Usually done in October but can be done anytime.
- Use Livingston Food Resource Center to supplement educational information and to provide free lessons to various grade levels.
- Participate in the harvest of the month again. Taste tests once a month could be part of lunch. Kristy could highlight/talk about (what nutrients it has and what they can do for the body) the featured product briefly in PE the week of the taste test. A little extra work for Christiane and Kristy but it wouldn't be hard with a little planning.
- MT team nutrition has nutrition education resources by ages. Teachers could use these resources to start talking about health once a month(or whatever you see fit) in their classrooms. <https://www.montana.edu/teamnutrition/nuted/index.html>
- We can celebrate national nutrition month with core teachers implementing lessons that month. <https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/celebrate-national-nutrition-month/>