

St. Mary's Springs Academy Wellness Policies on Physical Activity, Nutrition, Emotional, Social and Spiritual Wellness

Preamble

St. Mary's Springs Academy is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating, physical activity and policies that support social, emotional and spiritual wellness. Therefore, it is the policy of St. Mary's Springs Academy that:

- The school system will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing system-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will 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.
- School will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.
- School will provide educational opportunities that teach students about good sportsmanship, stress relief and coping strategies to resolve anger, sadness, frustration and disappointment.
- School will provide a comprehensive school counseling program that addresses the social and emotional wellness of each student through assessment, self-reflection and goal setting.
- School will provide curriculum that links Catholic teachings with daily living and morality in decision making.

- School will provide a comprehensive program that promotes a positive environment for social and spiritual development.
- School will provide opportunities for students to be physically active in the classroom whenever possible/practical.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. School Health Council

St. Mary's Springs Academy will develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise all wellness policies. The council also will serve as a resource to school sites for implementing those policies.

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

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 settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;¹
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk² and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.^{3,3}

School should engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, school should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and

¹ To the extent possible, school will offer at least two non-fried vegetable and two fruit options each day and will offer five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of a week. Schools are encouraged to source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practicable.

² As recommended by the USDA.

³ A whole grain is one labeled as a "whole" grain product or with a whole grain listed as the primary grain ingredient in the ingredient statement. Examples include "whole" wheat flour, cracked wheat, brown rice, and oatmeal.

students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals. 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 meals⁴. Toward this end, school 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; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals, such as “grab-and-go” or classroom breakfast.

Meal Times and Scheduling. School:

- will provide adequate time for students to eat their meal after sitting down;
- 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 provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff. Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school system’s responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in school. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.⁵

Sharing of Foods and Beverages. School should discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children’s diets.

⁴ It is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for free, reduced-price, or "paid" meals.

⁵ School nutrition staff development programs are available through the USDA, School Nutrition Association, and National Food Service Management Institute.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (*i.e.*, foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.)

Elementary School. Given young children’s limited nutrition skills, food in elementary school should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.

Middle/Junior High and High Schools. In middle/junior high and high schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores, or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards by the 2012-2013 school year:

Beverages

- **Allowed:** water or seltzer water⁶ without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by USDA);
- **Not allowed:** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; soda; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

Foods

- A food item sold individually:
 - will follow the USDA guidelines for recommended nutritional value for school lunch programs.
- By the 2013-2014 school year, a choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice without added sugar or syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).⁷

⁶ Surprisingly, seltzer water may not be sold during meal times in areas of the school where food is sold or eaten because it is considered a “Food of Minimal Nutritional Value” (Appendix B of 7 CFR Part 210).

⁷ Schools that have vending machines are encouraged to include refrigerated snack vending machines, which can accommodate fruits, vegetables, yogurts, and other perishable items.

Portion Sizes:

- Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually to those listed below:
 - One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;
 - One ounce for cookies;
 - Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items;
 - Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream;
 - Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;
 - Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water; and
 - The portion size of a la carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater than the size of comparable portions offered as part of school meals. Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits.

Fundraising Activities. To support children’s health and wellness, fundraising should attempt to be done with items other than food. This includes all fundraising done by any organization or club associated with St. Mary’s Springs Academy. If food is involved, the following requirements will be in place:

- 2012-2013- Reasonable attempt to involve nutritionally sound items for purchase
- 2013-2014- 25% of all items sold must be nutritionally sound
- 2014-2015- 50% of all items sold must be nutritionally sound

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 as the primary beverage. 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.

- If eligible, schools that provide snacks through after-school programs will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program.

Rewards. School will not use foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic performance or good behavior,⁸ and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations. School 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).

School-sponsored Events (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances). Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day will meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion. St. Mary's Springs Academy aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. School should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level 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;
- may include enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- 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 energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

⁸ Unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan (IEP).

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting. For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.*, at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class.

Toward that end:

- classroom health education will complement 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, such as watching television;
- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

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

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Daily Physical Education (P.E.) K-12. All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, receive physical education. All physical education will be 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.

Daily Recess. All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which school should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

School should discourage extended periods (*i.e.*, periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, school should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School. St. Mary's Springs Academy will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. High school, and middle school as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs. Schools will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls and students with disabilities.

After-school child care and enrichment programs will provide and encourage – verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

Physical Activity and Punishment. Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

V. Social, Emotional and Spiritual Wellness

Catholic Identity. Teachers and other school and community personnel will be educated on Catholic Teachings and use them to guide interaction with all members of the St. Mary's Springs Academy community. In addition, students will attend Liturgy and/or Prayer Service on a regular basis (as determined by Administration) and take part in daily religion class. St. Mary's Springs Academy will distribute a Wellness Calendar to encourage families to take part in daily spiritual growth.

Social/Emotional Wellness. A comprehensive program will be in place at all levels to encourage Christian behavior. Standards determined by Administrative Team will be enforced for both staff and students and continually monitored.

St. Mary's Springs Academy will follow the Wisconsin Comprehensive Counseling Model for social, emotional and career development. Opportunity for guidance from School Counselors and Priests will be provided when possible and appropriate.

VI. Policy Review

Policy Review. To help with the initial development of the system's wellness policies, each school in the system will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies.⁹ The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the system level to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments 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, the school system will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The system, and individual schools within the system, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

⁹ Useful self-assessment and planning tools include the *School Health Index* from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), *Changing the Scene* from the Team Nutrition Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and *Opportunity to Learn Standards for Elementary, Middle, and High School Physical Education* from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education.