



*St. Mary's Catholic School educates the whole child: spiritually, intellectually, and physically.*

## **Wellness Policy**

St. Mary's shall promote student well-being and academic achievement by supporting quality nutrition and physical activity as part of the learning environment. St. Mary's recognizes that collaborating with parents, students, school personnel, and community members is the most effective method of creating a healthy environment for children. Learning about and adopting positive lifestyle habits are essential for them to achieve their full academic potential, as well as lifelong good health and wellbeing.

### **Rationale:**

- Good nutrition and adequate physical activity help children grow, develop, and do well in school.
- A good portion of children's diets are consumed in the school environment. St. Mary's has a responsibility to help students establish and maintain lifelong, healthy, and enjoyable eating and physical activity patterns, while creating environments that reflect respect for body-size differences.
- Childhood weight problems are a medical concern, not just cosmetic. Poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, and being overweight can lead to complications such as elevated blood cholesterol and blood pressure, gallbladder disease, osteoarthritis and joint problems, asthma, type II diabetes, depression, anxiety, and sleep apnea.

### **Nutrition Standards for ALL Foods Available at our school during the school day.**

- St. Mary's will use the guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for reimbursable school meals, as well as competitive foods and beverages available & advertised during the school day, will be followed to ensure that St. Mary's offers school meals that will meet the nutrition standards. This includes food & beverages sold in a la carte sales, and food & beverage used for classroom rewards and fundraising efforts.

### **Nutrition Education:**

- Meals will feature a variety of healthy choices that are tasty, attractive, of excellent quality and served at the proper temperature. St. Mary's will promote and encourage students to choose healthy foods including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-dairy products – will be encouraged.
- Teachers / Staff will teach skills to utilize research-based nutrition information such as USDA “My Plate” in “real-life” practice, such as reading nutrition fact labels, skills in purchasing and preparing healthy meals and snacks.
- Nutrition education opportunities for parents/staff will be encouraged and will include a variety of activities/topics.
- The school meal program will work with teachers/staff to create a learning environment within the school cafeteria.
- All reimbursable meals, a la carte items and beverages sold in school and advertised will meet or exceed all the nutrition standards established by the USDA.
- Yearly goals will be set along with an assessment review every 3 years based on the goals set.

### **Physical Education:**

All students will be provided physical education a minimum of:

- 60 minutes for PK 3 & PK4, 90 minutes for grades K-6<sup>th</sup> per week.
- All students will strive to meet the current Wyoming standards.
- Promote other activities that involve physical activity at recess and lunchtime lasting 15 minutes or more each day.
- Encourage and allow faculty and staff to attend professional development training and workshops that focus on positive use of physical activity in the classroom.
- Children should participate each day in a variety of age-appropriate physical activities designed to achieve health, wellness, fitness and performance benefits.
- Staff/Teachers will provide suggested methods of incorporating movement/activity into the classroom.
- St. Mary's will encourage families and community members to support programs outside of the school that encourage physical activity.
- Physical activity will not be used or taken away as a punishment.

- St. Mary's provides an environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students, including those who are not athletically gifted.
- Physical activity programs are carried out in environments that reflect respect for body-size differences and varying skill levels.

**Other School Based Activities Designed to Promote Student Wellness:**

- Safe drinking water will be available throughout the school day.
- Convenient access to facilities for hand washing will be available to anybody.
- Nutrition education, healthy eating and physical activity will be actively promoted via positive modeling by staff, marketing materials (posters, flyers, websites lessons).
- St. Mary's cafeteria will have adequate seating, appropriate supervision, a clean and pleasant eating environment.
- Student adequate mealtime shall not be interrupted by other academic activities unless the meal is available during the academic activity.
- Students will be strongly encouraged to actively participate in recess.

**Marketing:**

- Students should receive positive, motivating, messages, both verbal and non-verbal about healthy eating and physical activity in the school. All school personnel should help reinforce these positive messages.
- Healthy eating and physical activity should be actively promoted to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at registrations, PTO meetings, Open Houses, Health Fairs, teacher in-services, etc.

**St. Mary's Wellness Council**

Will set goals, monitor, and review the policy and guidelines and ensure that we are following all Federal, State, and Local Regulations pertaining to the Wellness Policy. The Food Service Director and PE Teacher will co-chair this committee. This committee may also include teachers, students, and potential stakeholders.

The Council will then report to the principal its recommendations for improvements and goals for the school year.

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Our website will have an open invitation to any potential stakeholders to please contact the office if you would like to participate in the development, review, update, and implementation of the SMCS Wellness Policy.

**This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.**