



“We, the family of St. Mary’s School, are committed to promoting Catholic values to God’s children through faith, Christ-centered worship, service and academic excellence.”

St. Mary’s School Wellness Policy (2022-2023)

Policy Preamble

St. Mary’s School recognizes that good nutrition and regular physical activity affect the health and well-being of the students. Furthermore, research suggests that there is a positive correlation between a student's health and well-being and his/her ability to learn. Moreover, schools can play an important role in the developmental process by which students establish their health and nutrition habits by providing nutritious meals and snacks through the schools' meal programs, by supporting the development of good eating habits, and by promoting increased physical activity both in and out of school. St. Mary’s School has implemented the following wellness policy.

Policy Leadership

A Wellness Committee oversees the activities set forth in this policy. The Committee shall meet to review, update, and evaluate the policy and to develop an action plan for the coming year. The Committee will also discuss the implementation of the established activities and address any barriers and challenges.

The Wellness Committee shall include a diverse group to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy. Members may include:

- Principal
- Classroom teacher
- Physical education teacher
- School food service representative
- Community member/parent
- Medical/health care professional

Nutrition Standards for All Foods

St. Mary’s School is committed to serving healthy meals to our students. The school meal program aims to improve the diet and health of school children, model healthy eating patterns, and support healthy choices while accommodating cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

The St. Mary’s Food Service Mission Statement is as follows:

“Mind and body wellness is promoted throughout St. Mary’s Catholic School Food Service Program as we strive to offer a quality menu, affordable to all, prepared and served in a clean

safe environment which encourages pleasant community mealtime for our students, staff and faculty.”

Standards and Guidelines for School Meals

St. Mary’s School is committed to ensuring that:

- All meals are accessible to all students.
- All meals are appealing and attractive and served in clean and pleasant settings.
- Families, staff and students have feedback on lunch choices.
- Students are provided 20 minutes to eat for lunch periods. Meal periods are scheduled at appropriate times (between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.). Band, piano and church practice will be scheduled to minimize disruption to meal periods.

In addition, St. Mary’s School nutrition services shall notify parents of the availability of breakfast and lunch food programs and shall be encouraged to determine eligibility for reduced or free meals (applies to lunch meal only).

Foods and Beverages Sold Outside of the School Meals Program

- A la Carte foods are not available to students through the hot lunch program.
- Vending machines are not allowed in school.
- Concessions- Organizations operating concessions at school functions should include some healthy food choices in their offerings. Groups should also market these healthy options at a lower profit margin to encourage selection by students.

Marketing

Marketing includes brand names, trademarks, logos, or tags except when placed on a food or beverage product/container; displays, such as vending machine exteriors; corporate/brand names, logos, trademarks on cups, posters, school supplies, education materials, food service equipment, and school equipment (e.g. message boards, scoreboards, uniforms); advertisements in school publications/mailings; sponsorship of school activities, fundraisers, or sports teams; educational incentive programs such as contests or programs; and free samples or coupons displaying advertising of a product. There are currently no written agreements with food or vending companies to sell foods or beverages in school.

Foods Provided but Not Sold

Parties and Celebrations: St. Mary’s School encourages foods offered on the school campus meet or exceed nutrition standards including those provided at celebrations and parties and classroom snacks brought by staff or family members. A list of nutritional snack options has been provided to school staff. Newsletters and notes from teachers encourage healthy snacks for the classroom. Some suggested food are listed below:

- Raw vegetables with yogurt dips or low fat dressing
- String Cheese
- Fresh Fruit slices
- 100% Fruit Juices
- Low fat yogurt, pudding cups and jello
- Rice cakes
- Dried Fruits
- Low fat granola bars

Food Rewards: Non-food rewards for student behavior or academic success will be promoted and a list of ideas is available to staff and family members.

Suggestions for Non-Food Rewards:

Extra recess time

Make deliveries to the office

Be a classroom helper

Sit by friends

Lunch outside

Extra art, reading or music time

Trip to reward bin with non-food items (pencils, bookmarks, stickers, puzzles)

Fundraising: The school will ensure that all school's fundraising efforts are supportive of healthy eating. All fundraising activity requires administration's approval. Whenever food and beverages are sold that raise funds for the school, healthy food choices should be offered.

Nutrition Education

St. Mary's School shall provide nutrition education that helps students develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors. As such:

- Nutrition education shall be offered in the cafeteria as well as the classroom, with coordination between the food service staff and teachers.
- Students in grades 4K-8 will receive nutrition education as part of the curriculum-based Health subject. Teachers may integrate nutrition education into other classroom subjects such as math, science, and language arts.
- Food Service Staff will be provided opportunities for on-going professional development in the area of nutrition.
- Teachers will receive periodic training and updates on incorporating nutrition education materials into classroom education.
- Nutrition education shall be provided to students and families.

Nutrition Promotion

St. Mary's School is committed to providing a school environment that promotes students to practice healthy eating and physical activity. Students shall receive consistent nutrition messages that promote health throughout the school, classrooms, cafeteria, and school media.

Physical Activity

The primary goal for a school's 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 benefits for a physically active and healthy lifestyle. St. Mary's School shall provide students with age and grade appropriate opportunities to engage in physical activity. As such:

- St. Mary's School shall offer the following for recess on all or most days during the school year (early dismissal/late arrival days are exempt).
 - Grades K-2 (50 minutes per day)
 - Grades 3-4 (35 minutes per day)

- Grades 5-8 (20 minutes per day)
- Outdoor recess shall be offered, weather permitting.
- Recess monitors/teachers shall encourage students to be active during recess.
- St. Mary's shall offer after school physical activity opportunities for all students. This includes interscholastic sports offered to the various grades including football, wrestling, cross country, track and field, volleyball and basketball.
 - Participation on sports teams may be limited if there is failure to meet WIAA or other school codes, e.g. academic or attendance requirements.
- Other school activities include: Fitness Challenge (grades 4K-8), NFL Play 60 Competition, Jump Rope for Heart (Grades 4K-8), Track and Field Days (Grades 4K-2 and Grades 3-5), and Kickball Tournament.
- St. Mary's School shall support active transport to and from school by engaging in the following activities:
 - Crossing guards are used; promotes walking to school for physical activity.
 - Crosswalks exist on streets leading to schools.
 - Bike rack is provided to promote biking to school for physical activity.

Physical Education

- St. Mary's students in each grade shall receive the following minutes of physical education per week throughout the school year.
 - Grades K-2 (60 minutes per week)
 - Grades 3 – 4 (70 minutes per week)
 - Grades 6-8 (80 minutes per week)
- Physical education staff shall have the opportunity for professional development on a yearly basis. Additionally, physical education teachers will utilize a specific curriculum which incorporates the basics of various sports throughout the year (basketball, volleyball, soccer, softball, track, football, etc.).
- A swimming session at the local swim center is provided yearly for students in grades 4K-8. This is a 45 minute session per day for an 8 day period, which follows the American Red Cross program.

Other School Based Activities that Promote Wellness

As appropriate, St. Mary's shall support students, staff, and parents' efforts to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Water consumption: Water consumption will be encouraged throughout the day. Water fountains are also available. Staff members will be particularly sensitive to student needs for water during periods of hot weather. Students shall be allowed to bring, and carry throughout the day, approved water bottles filled with only water.

Water bottle Policy:

Water bottle must have secure caps.

Students may not share water bottles.

Empty bottles must be recycled, discarded or taken home for sanitation.

Students misusing water bottles will be subject to disciplinary actions.

Teachers have discretion in determining classroom use.

Water bottles may not be used in computer labs, science labs or the library.

Staff Wellness

St. Mary's School has educational activities for school staff members on healthy lifestyle behaviors. The following activities below promote healthy eating and physical activity among school staff: access to schedules for the local swim center, MHS wellness facility and other community programs. In addition, the hot lunch program is available to staff. Mental health and financial consulting in-services for staff have been conducted and are told of retreats. Staff are given ten discretionary days.

Community Engagement

St. Mary's School shall inform and invite parents to participate in school-sponsored activities throughout the year. St. Mary's School will actively inform families and the public about such activities.

Healthy and Safe Environments

St. Mary's School has created a school safety plan that includes an emergency response plan that focus on supporting a healthy and safe environment. The school performs 12 emergency drills annually, consisting of nine fire drills, two tornado drills and one school safety drill. We provide appropriate training for students, teachers, parents, and staff that support personal safety and a safe environment (drug-free, child abuse, suicide prevention, drills, etc.). St. Mary's has followed the county health department's recommendations on health issues. A crisis intervention team helps create a healthy and safe environment and reviews certain issues that arise. Furthermore, there is a student services team of staff that helps students academically, behaviorally and socially. Crises line and suicide line numbers are displayed and are available to all students.

Monitoring and Evaluation

St. Mary's School Wellness Policy shall be updated as needed based on evaluation results, emersion of new health science information/technology, and/or new federal or state guidance issued.