

ST. MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS SCHOOL
Wellness Policy
June 2006
Reviewed December 2015

WELLNESS POLICY

Not later than the first day of the school year beginning after June 30, 2006, all schools that receive funding from the federal school lunch program are required to have a Wellness Policy.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assure a school environment that promotes and protects students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

St. Mary Help of Christians School is committed to providing a healthy school environment.

- A. The school recognizes that nutrition education and physical education are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters student attendance and education.
- B. The school environment should promote and protect students' health, well-being, and ability to learn encouraging healthy eating and physical activity.
- C. The school encourages the involvement of students, parents, teachers, nutritional service staff, and interested persons in implementing, monitoring, and reviewing the school's nutrition and physical activity policies.
- D. Children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, thrive, and achieve academic success.
- E. All students will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- F. Qualified Nutritional Services personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students and will provide a clean, safe, and pleasant environment with adequate time for students to eat.

III. GUIDELINES/PROCEDURES

A. Foods and Beverages

- 1. All foods and beverages made available will be consistent with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
 - a. Food and beverages offered over the course of a school week will provide students a variety of choices to maintain a balanced diet.

- b. Food and beverages available during the school day will include a variety of healthy choices that are of excellent quality, appealing to students, and served at the proper temperature.
 - c. The school will offer a choice of fruits and vegetable for meals.
 - d. The school will offer 1% and skim milk as a beverage choice. The school will not offer soft drinks or sell them on school premises.
 - e. Food and beverages will be offered in appropriate portion sizes for elementary students and middle school students.
2. Nutritional Services personnel will take every measure to ensure that student access to foods and beverages meets all federal, state, and local laws and guidelines.
 3. Nutritional Services personnel shall adhere to all federal, state, and local food safety and security guidelines.
 4. The school will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
 5. The school will make every effort to provide students with sufficient time to eat after sitting down for school meals and will schedule meal periods at appropriate times during the school day.
 6. The school will discourage meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.
 7. The school will discourage 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.
 8. The school will encourage all children to have breakfast in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn.
 9. Snacks. Snacks served during the school day will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, will emphasize serving whole grains, fruits, vegetables and dairy as primary snack items.
 10. Rewards. The school may use food and/or beverages during the school day only if they do not undermine the health of the students or reinforce unhealthy eating habits. The school will limit the use of food or beverages as rewards/incentives (unless this practice is allowed by an individual education plan or behavior intervention plan). Non-food incentives will be used as the first choice as school rewards.
 11. Celebrations. The school will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day. Classroom celebrations should encourage healthy choices and portion control.

B. School Nutritional Services Personnel

1. The school will provide a healthy and safe school meal program that complies with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations.
2. The school will designate an appropriate person to be responsible for the school's food service program.
3. As part of the school's responsibility to operate a food service program, the school will provide continuing professional development for all Nutritional Services personnel.

C. Nutrition Education and Promotion

1. The school will encourage and support healthy eating by students and engage in nutrition promotion that is:
 - a. offered as part of a comprehensive program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health
 - b. integrated into other areas of the curriculum such as math, science, language arts, social sciences where appropriate: and
 - c. enjoyable and developmentally appropriate.
2. The school will encourage all students to make healthy selections of foods and beverages.
3. Staff Wellness. The school highly values the health and well being of staff and will support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

D. Physical Activity

1. Students need opportunities for physical activity and to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior. Toward that end, health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
2. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher.
3. Students will receive physical education at least twice a week for the entire school year.
4. Students will have supervised recess daily, preferably outdoors and encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity through the provision of space and equipment.

5. Physical Activity and Involvement - The goal of St. Mary HOC School is to have all students actively participate in any physical activity (recess, physical education) at all opportunities. However, student participation at recess may be withheld at the teacher/principal's discretion if issues such as safety or noncompliance with school rules/expectations apply.

E. Communications with Parents

1. The school recognizes that parents and guardians have the primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and well-being.
2. The school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
3. The school encourages parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and refrain from including beverages and food without nutritional value.

IV. Monitoring and Plan Review

A. Monitoring

1. The principal or designee will ensure compliance with these guidelines and will report on the school's compliance to the Board of Education.
2. School food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative.
3. The principal will report to the school community on school wide compliance with the established nutrition and physical activity wellness plan as needed.

B. Plan Review

1. The wellness plan will be reviewed at least every three years. As part of that review, the school will review our nutrition and physical activity plans; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity. The school will, as necessary, revise the wellness plan and develop work plans to facilitate its implementation.