

Agreement #: 02-150-p10
SAINT MARY’S SCHOOL WELLNESS PROGRAM
Updated: Summer 2024

Saint Mary’s School (SMS) recognizes the relationship between student well being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive wellness program. We believe that wellness is a multi-faceted concept that is best learned through practice and from modeling of healthy behaviors by adults in the school, family and community. We define wellness as a condition of health that is the result of proper nutrition, exercise and other personal habits that contribute to a sound mind and body. Therefore it is the practice of SMS to ensure that each student has equitable access to programs, activities and classes that promote physical, social-emotional and mental wellbeing. These programs will be consistent with, but not limited by the Massachusetts Department of Education (MA DOE) Health curriculum frameworks for content (www.mass.edu/frameworks) and the National Health & Physical Education Standards for skills (www.educationworld.com/standards/national).

Wellness Committee

SMS will establish a Wellness Committee that should involve parents, a nurse, food service representative, school board member, physical education teacher, additional teachers, school administrator and other community members as appropriate. The Wellness Committee will enact a plan, to be approved by the School Board, to oversee implementation and evaluation of the Wellness Program.

Nutrition Guidelines

It is the practice of the school that all foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day are consistent with School Lunch Program nutrition guidelines. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals will not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to law. The school will:

- Establish separate guidelines for foods and beverages in the following categories:
 - foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities
 - refreshments served at parties, celebrations and meetings during the school day
 - specify that its guidelines will be based on nutrition goals, not profit motives
- Participate, to the maximum extent possible, in federal school meals programs (National School Lunch Program – www.fns.usda.gov).
 - Provide to all children who participate in subsidized food programs the ability to obtain food in a non-stigmatizing manner.
 - Provide students with access to a variety of affordable nutritious, appealing and fresh foods that meet and exceed health and nutritional needs of students as outlined by the Nutrition Standards and U.S. Dietary Guidelines. (www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/dga)
 - Develop guidelines for maximizing nutritional value by decreasing fat and added sugars, increasing nutrition density and moderating portion size of each individual food or beverage sold within the school environment.
- Provide adequate time, with a minimum of 20 minutes sit down time, for students to eat lunch at appropriate times, no earlier than 10:45 and no later than 1:00 pm, in the school schedule in a clean, safe, and pleasant setting.

■ Refrain from using food as a reward/ punishment. This is not meant to exclude foods for celebration and special events.

Nutrition and Physical Education

The school will provide nutrition education and physical education aligned with the standards established by the MA DOE.

Nutrition Education

■ Provide sequential, interdisciplinary nutritional education to foster healthy lifelong habits and promote comprehensive wellness learning in each grade from preschool to grade 8.

■ Promote regional partnerships between health agencies, health education resources, food suppliers, school meal programs, and other community resources.

■ Send consistent nutrition messages from all aspects of the school program to students and families.

■ Encourage parents/guardians to support healthy food choices and habits for their children.

Civil Rights Policy / Meal Modifications:

- The Civil Rights Complaint procedures guidelines and template are available on the schools website at stmaryslee.org
- Students who need meal modifications will not be discriminated against

Physical Education Activities

• Provide sequential, interdisciplinary physical education to foster healthy lifelong habits and promote comprehensive wellness learning in each grade from pre-school to grade 8.

■ Refrain from using the denial and the imposition of physical activity as a punishment in all school related activities.

■ Give students opportunities for daily physical activity during the school day through physical education (PE) classes, daily recess periods, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.

■ Provide opportunities for physical activity through a range of before- and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, school based and community originated programs.

■ Provide opportunities, encouragement and support for all preschool to grade 8 students to be physically active on a daily basis and achieve the recommended health-related physical fitness standards.

■ Design curriculum that promotes the acquisition of lifelong physical activities, i.e. walking programs, yoga.

■ Encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.

Social/Emotional Activities

■ Students will be provided opportunities for social-emotional education to foster healthy lifelong habits and promote comprehensive wellness learning in each grade from preschool to grade 8.

■ Students will understand the benefit of adequate sleep as it relates to readiness for learning and overall health and will learn to identify patterns of behavior that promote healthy sleep cycles, including types and timing of activities prior to sleep and nutritional relationships to sleep.

■ Students shall learn to define relaxation and be able to understand its relationship to overall health and well-being. Additionally, students will be able to identify what type(s) of activities may encourage relaxation and will learn methods for promoting it in their own lives.

Other Wellness Activities

■ Communication with parents/guardians, staff and students is essential. We will seek opportunities to educate the school community on trends and information related to health and wellness. We will encourage community partnerships that assist the school in this effort.

■ We will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing school nutrition, nutrition education, physical activity and social-emotional programs and policies and other wellness initiatives.

■ We will consider and implement the use, when appropriate, of environmentally friendly practices such as the use of locally grown and seasonal foods, school gardens, non-disposable tableware, recycling and composting.

■ We will consider and implement when appropriate, physical activities and/or nutrition services or programs designed to benefit staff health.

Evaluation

The Wellness Committee will evaluate the wellness program annually for accuracy, completeness, balance, and consistency with the state and school's educational goals and standards. The principal will report to the School Board annually.

Leg Ref:

Section 204 of Public Law 108-265 Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act 2004

