

## **Wellness Policy**

### **I. BELIEFS**

St. Mary's High School community, in promoting health and wellness for its students, believes that:

1. As nationwide statistics show that approximately 30% of children and teens are overweight and numbers appear to be rising, our entire school community should be educated about good nutrition and physical activity and should participate in wellness policy initiatives;
2. Healthy children make better learners;
3. Every child wants to be healthy;
4. A relationship must be established between nutrition education and food choices offered in school;
5. Children need assistance in making healthy food choices.

### **II. CURRENT PRACTICES**

We further believe that our school community already evidences support for good health and wellness, as:

1. Our school's health curriculum includes important, consistent and accurate information about nutrition;
2. Our physical education curriculum emphasizes individual skill development and fitness, as well as team sports;
3. Opportunities to participate in physical activity are available through physical education classes, interscholastic sports, and fundraising activities for charitable organizations. Opportunities for physical activity are also available through the weight room that includes cardiovascular equipment, continuing education offerings, and Lancaster Town Recreation Department programs;
4. Adult athletic coaches, whether school employees or community volunteers, encourage health lifestyles;
5. Teachers are role models by participating in physical activities;
6. We allow no sale of soda during lunches;
7. Our school nurse is calculating each student's body mass index (BMI) and making information about healthy weight guidelines available to parents.

### III. **GOALS and OBJECTIVES**

We realize, however, that as a school community, we must continue our efforts to improve our children's health in the areas of nutrition and physical activity.

#### **Goal #1: To improve nutrition education/choices**

Objectives:

1. Inform parents through Currents about Food Service requirements: food choices, how food choices are categorized, minimum requirements;
2. Provide Food Service nutrition analyses to the community on the school website;
3. Promote Family meal hours at home, at least twice a week, where homemade food is served in Health Class and in Currents;
4. Use programs such as curriculum based activities in physical education classes to encourage students to make healthy choices in nutrition and physical activity;
5. Ensure that nutrition education in the health curriculum is current and accurate;
6. Purchase more nutritious food for cafeteria as vendors make it available;
7. Purchase healthier food choices and age-appropriate serving sizes for vending machines as they become available;
8. Encourage the researching of alternatives to in-school candy sales as fundraisers, considering physical activity instead;
9. Annual Nutrition section in the March issue of Currents encouraging healthy eating and activities ;
10. Wellness Week run by students to encourage healthy choices.

#### **Goal #2: To Increase Physical Activity**

Objectives:

1. Enlist parent help to ensure that children engage in 60 minutes per day of physical activity. Include safety education when promoting physical activity; i.e. Wearing helmets and proper footwear, avoiding hot sun;
2. Inform teachers that physical activity cannot be used as punishment: i.e. forcing physical activity on students as punishment;
3. Use physical activities for character building at our school.

#### **Implementation:**

Implementation of activities and responsibilities will be undertaken by committee members and other staff.

#### **Evaluation:**

This committee will meet annually to measure the success of its goals and to update objectives and activities.

#### **Assurance:**

Guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than applicable federal regulations and guidance issued pursuant to the Child Nutrition Act and the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, as those regulations and guidance apply to schools.

## **High School Cafeteria**

### **Goals**

To promote students wellness, the cafeteria will follow nutritional guidelines for all food and drinks available during the school lunches with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity. We provide assurance that the guidelines for school meals shall not be less restrictive than the guidelines issued by laws governing the school lunch program.

Snacks are replaced with more nutritional value: less Trans fats and calories, more fresh fruits, and vegetables are available including salad bar, and deli bar with whole grains. Healthy choices are available. Students are encouraged to choose these foods sensibly.

Nutrition labels are available upon request.

Parents are aware of the Eat Sensibly Wellness Program through articles in the school newsletter, Currents.

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