

ST. MARY'S HOME FOR CHILDREN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Regulation #: TS-012

SUBJECT: School Wellness

PHILOSOPHY / PURPOSE: St. Mary's Home for Children promotes healthy schools, by supporting wellness, good nutrition, counseling, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. St. Mary's supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. Schools contribute to the basic health status of children by facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity. Improved health optimizes student and staff performance potential.

POLICY:

A. Provide a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors. Entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned within healthy school goals to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular activity. A healthy school environment should not be sacrificed because of a dependence on revenue from high added fat, high added sugar, and low nutrient food to support school programs.

B. Support and promote proper dietary habits contributing to student's health status and academic performance. All food available on school grounds and at school sponsored activities during the instructional day should meet or exceed the district nutrition standards. Emphasis should be placed on foods that are nutrient dense per calorie. To ensure high quality, nutritious meals, foods should be served in consideration toward variety, appeal, taste, safety and packaging.

C. Provide more opportunities for students to engage in physical activity. A quality physical education program is an essential component for students to learn about and participate in physical activity. Physical activity should be included in a school's daily education program from grades pre-K thru 12. Physical activity should include regular instructional physical education, in accordance with the Rhode Island Physical Education Framework, as well as co-curricular activities and recess. The goal is to develop and enjoy a lifetime of healthy physical activity through exposure to many forms of movement and activities.

D. St. Mary's Home for Children is committed to improve academic performance in high-risk groups. Educators, administrators, parents, health practitioners and communities must consider the critical role student health plays in academic stamina and performance and adapt the school environment to ensure students' basic nourishment and activity are met. To ensure

widespread understanding of the benefits to school environment where nutritious foods are provided and where students have an opportunity for physical activity, a public awareness campaign that highlights research demonstrating the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity, and capacity of students to develop and learn should be conducted.

E. The School Breakfast/Lunch Programs: The full meal school breakfast and lunch programs will continue to follow the USDA Requirements for Federal School Meals Programs. The School Food Service Program provider will grant access to a free (at no cost to the student/family) breakfast and lunch.

F. Cafeteria Environment: A cafeteria environment that provides students with a relaxed, enjoyable climate shall be developed. The cafeteria environment is a place where students have adequate space to eat and clean, pleasant surroundings; adequate time to eat meals (The American School Food Service Association recommends at least 20 minutes for lunch from the time students are seated with their food); convenient access to hand washing or hand sanitizing facilities before meals; and School and/or Unit staff, shall foster, display and teach good manners and respect for fellow students and staff. All staff (those who dine with the children, are in the food service department or financial department) are required to take a Civil Liberties training annually.

G. Teacher-to- Student Incentive: The use of food items as part of a student incentive is discouraged. Should teachers feel compelled to utilize food items they are required to adhere to the District Nutrition Standards.

H. Student Nutrition Education: The St. Mary's Home for Children School has a comprehensive curriculum approach to nutrition in kindergarten thru the 12th grade. The benefits of good nutrition should be emphasized. These nutritional themes include but are not limited to:

Knowledge of the USDA My Plate	Healthy heart choices
Sources & variety of foods	Dietary Guidelines for Americans
Diet and disease	Understanding calories
Healthy snacks	Healthy breakfast
Healthy diet	Food labels
Major nutrients	Multicultural influences
Serving sizes	Proper food safety/sanitation
Identify & limit foods 1/ low nutrient density	M-F daily "Did You Know ?" board facts pertaining to food, diets, trivia, comic relief

I. Staff Nutrition & Physical Education: With the purpose of:

- Encouraging all school staff to improve their own personal health and wellness
- Improving staff morale
- Creating positive role modeling
- Building the commitment of staff to promote the health of students
- Building the commitment of staff to help improve the school nutrition and physical activity environment

Nutrition and physical activity education opportunities will be provided to all school staff. These educational opportunities may include but not limited to, the distribution of educational and informational materials and the arrangement of presentations and workshops that focus on nutritional value and healthy lifestyles, health assessments, fitness activities and other appropriate nutrition's and physical activity-related topics.

DISTRICT NUTRITION STANDARDS

J. Nutrition Standards Intent/Rationale: St. Mary's Home for Children encourages the distribution of nutrient dense foods for school functions and activities. Nutrient dense foods are those foods that provide students with calories rich in the nutrient content needed to be healthy. In an effort to support the consumption of nutrient dense foods in the school setting, St. Mary's has adopted the following nutrition standards governing the consumption of food, beverage, and candy on school grounds.

K. Food: Encourage consumption of nutrient dense foods, i.e. WHOLE GRAINS, FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, AND DAIRY PRODUCTS. There may be special occasions when the school may deviate from these Standards-however still taking into consideration any/all special diets (allergies, Dr. ordered diets, etc.). These occasions must be under-written orders from a licensed medical professional. St. Mary's Horticultural Therapy program emphasizes nutritional education with the students.

L. Beverages: Only milk, Water and beverages containing 50-100% fruit juices with no added artificial or natural sweeteners will be distributed/sold on school grounds. Only Milk and Water will be considered appropriate beverages for consumption in the dining room. Milk varieties (fat contents and flavors) will be offered in according with the guidelines set forth by the Department of Education.

In accordance with St. Mary's Policy R-041: Children's Caffeine Consumption, no resident, regardless of age, unit, or privileges, is allowed to consume beverages or foods containing caffeine.

STUDENT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

M. District Physical Activity Goal: St. Mary's Home for Children shall provide physical activity and physical education opportunities, aligned with the Rhode Island Physical Education Framework, that provide students with the knowledge and skills to lead a physically active lifestyle.

N. Implementation Strategies:

N1. Physical education classes and physical activity opportunities will be available for all students.

N2. Physical activity opportunities shall be offered daily during school (recess & physical education) or after school.

N3. As recommended by the National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASPE), school leaders of physical activity and physical education shall guide students through a process that will enable them to achieve and maintain a high level of personal fitness through the following:

- Expose youngsters to a wide variety of physical activities
- Teach physical skills to help maintain a lifetime of health and fitness
- Encourage self-monitoring so youngsters can see how active they are and set their own goals
- Individualize intensity of activities
- Focus feedback on process of doing your best rather than on product
- Be active role models

N4. Introduce developmentally appropriate components of a health-related fitness assessment (i.e. the President's Council) to the students at an early age to prepare them for future assessment.

N5. St. Mary's Horticultural Therapy program, aside from emphasizing the nutritional value of vegetables, emphasized the increase in fitness levels that gardening can obtain.

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