

Divine Mercy Catholic
School
Faribault, MN

Student Personnel
Series 500

Wellness
Policy No. 533

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure 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

- A. The school board recognizes that mental wellness and physical wellness are inseparable; that wellness is more than the absence of illness; that wellness is a resource and fosters student attendance and learning.
- B. The school environment should promote and protect students' health, well-being and ability to learn by encouraging caring relationships and positive routines and practices through, for example, healthy eating and physical activity.
- C. The school board encourages the involvement of students, parents, teachers, staff and other interested persons in implementing, monitoring and reviewing school district wellness policies.
- D. Students need access to healthy foods, positive relationships and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive.
- E. The school district encourages parents to be active participants in their child's wellness.
- F. The school district recognizes that staff wellbeing affects student wellness and school success.

III. GUIDELINES

A. Nutrition and Food Safety

1. Divine Mercy Catholic School shall designate an appropriate person to be responsible for the school district's food service program. The designee's duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available on campus to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
2. DMCS participates in US Department of Agriculture (USDA) child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and the Special Milk Program (SMP).
3. Food service personnel shall adhere to all federal, state and local food safety and security guidelines.
4. DMCS will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. This information is confidential.
5. DMCS will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
6. Qualified food service personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will try to accommodate the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

B. Promoting Healthy School Culture and Physical Activity

1. The school district is working toward providing opportunities for all school district personnel to support a healthy school culture.
2. The school district will provide safe and healthy environments that model caring relationships and promote positive practices and routines.

3. In order to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities to be active. Toward that end :
 - a. Health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities;
 - b. Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons, where appropriate; and classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.
4. DMCS will 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. Part of health education classes as well as classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects, where appropriate; and
 - c. Enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant and includes participatory activities such as contests, promotions, taste testing and field trips.
5. The school district will support healthy eating by students through :
 - a. Encouraging all students and families to make healthy selections of foods and beverages. This would include: classroom celebrations, a la carte [snack] lines, vending, fundraising events, concession stands and student stores.
6. Staff members are encouraged to use healthy activities as rewards for academic performance or good behavior.

C. District Wellness Committee

1. The District will convene a representative district wellness committee that meets biannually throughout the school year to establish goals for employee and student wellness initiatives.

2. This committee will seek representation from all school levels and include (to the extent possible): representatives of the food service vendor, teachers, school health professionals, student support staff, students, community professionals and advocates and the general public.
3. This committee will create regular communication regarding physical activity, nutrition, caring relationships and positive routines and practices to parents, students and staff.
4. DMCS recognizes the importance of nurturing parenting and caregiving skills from early childhood through graduation. As such, this committee will seek to develop opportunities for parents and caregivers to improve these skills.
5. This committee will seek to provide staff development opportunities to support personal wellness as well as healthy school culture. In addition, this committee will work with and support initiatives in the district that move toward healthy fundraising, healthy celebrations and integrating physical activity throughout the school day.

D. Communication with Parents

1. DMCS recognizes that parents and guardians have a primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and wellbeing. As such, the district has created several resources for parents/guardians regarding nutrition, physical activity and overall wellbeing.
2. DMCS will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school, refer to resources.
3. The Wellness Committee will create regular communication regarding physical activity, nutrition, caring relationships and positive routines and practices to parents and staff.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- A. After approval by the committee, the wellness policy will be implemented.

- B. School food service staff will ensure compliance within the school's food service areas and will report to the food service program administrator, the building principal, or the superintendent's designee, as appropriate.
- C. DMCS's food service program administrator will provide an annual report to the superintendent setting forth the nutrition guidelines and procedures for selection of all foods made available on campus.
- D. The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with the wellness policy and will provide an annual report of the school district's compliance with the policy to the school board.
- E. The school district will post this wellness policy on its website, to the extent it maintains a website.