

# WELLNESS AT ST. AGNES SCHOOL

Updated April 2026

## I. School Wellness Policy

A mission of St. Agnes School is to provide curriculum, instruction, and experiences in a health-promoting school environment to instill habits of lifelong learning and health. The Advisory Board adopts the following School Wellness Policy.

## II. School Wellness Committee

The St. Agnes School Wellness committee will be made up of the physical education teacher, school administrator, one member from the advisory council, school nurse, school physician, school lunch coordinator and a dietician and any parent who may desire to participate.

Current Committee:

Julie Brown – Administrator & physical education teacher

Elise Gurrola– advisory council member

Patrick Brown, MD – school physician

Teresa Swank – school nurse (volunteer)

Teresa Johnson – School Lunch coordinator

Mary Skiles – Dietician

Beth Merrigan – parent

Luiza Guzman - parent

## III. Wellness Policy Implementation

### ***Recordkeeping***

- The written wellness policy will be kept on file in the school office and can be viewed on the school website –[st-agnes-school.com](http://st-agnes-school.com)

### ***Revisions & Updating the Policy***

- The wellness policy will be assessed and updated at least every 3 years.
- The committee will work to communicate updates and revisions to the community and to improve wellness opportunities within our school community.

### ***Triennial Progress Assessments***

- At least once every 3 years, the wellness committee will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and make adaptations and progress toward set goals.
- The person responsible for managing the triennial assessment and contact information is the administrator for the school or the administrator's designee.

## **IV. Nutrition**

### ***School Meals***

- Our school is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fat-free and low fat milk, moderate sodium, low in fat and meet the nutritional needs of school children within their calorie requirements as established by the USDA requirements for school hot lunch programs.
- Applications for free/reduced priced meals are sent home to families at the beginning of the school year.
- The cafeteria is cashless- all students, regardless of the type of payment they make for school meals or other food being purchased make payment in the office.
- The school must serve students a reimbursable meal, regardless of whether the student has an unpaid balance.
- The school meal aims to improve the diet and health of school children, help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy eating to support the development of lifelong healthy eating patterns and support healthy choices while accommodating students with cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.
- Daily meals will include both fruits and vegetables.
- Seconds are not served.
- Menus are posted on the school website & provided to families weekly in the school newsletter. Menu is announced on daily announcements.
- Meals are provided by the Hampton Inn in Scottsbluff, Nebraska and menus are created/reviewed by a Registered Dietitian.
- Students will be allowed 25 minutes to eat lunch
- Lunch will follow a recess period to better support learning & healthy eating.
- Participation in Federal child nutrition programs will be promoted among students and families to help ensure that families know what programs are available in their children's school.
- Student surveys are used to inform menu development.
- Informational wall art provides suggestions for healthy eating to students.

### ***Water***

Water cups will be available in the cafeteria. Students may also bring personal water bottles to the cafeteria.

Water bottles are also allowed in the classroom during the day to encourage hydration. Water sources will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene standards. Bottle Filler Fountains were installed in 3 locations within the building summer of 2020.

### ***Other Food & Beverages***

The school is committed to ensuring that all foods and beverages available to students during the school day support healthy eating.

- During classroom parties, celebrations and/or meetings, our school will promote healthy food and snacks. The school will provide a list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards to parents. Parents will be notified of any food allergies that might cause issues.
- Exemptions for infrequent school-sponsored fundraisers/activities (Penny Carnival & kickball tournament)
- The use of food as a reward will be limited and other suggestions that include activity (recess, games) will be encouraged for individual and class rewards.
- The eating of food in the classroom will be limited to snack time. Students will be required to provide healthy choices from the Smart Snacks menu. Staff will be encouraged to follow these same guidelines and will be asked to eat only in designated areas and at designated times.
- St. Agnes School has an after school program that provides snack daily. The snacks are planned by a dietician and meet the guidelines of components from 2 food groups required by Health and Human Services guidelines.
- Students are allowed to bring their own lunch in lieu of eating hot lunch. Fast food is not allowed in the cafeteria during the serving of our federally funded lunch program.
- Parents will be provided information on healthy cold lunch food options and techniques for food safety.
- Soda is not allowed in the cafeteria during the serving of hot lunch.
- Milk is included with every hot lunch and is available for purchase to students who brought their own lunch.

### ***Nutrition Education***

- St. Agnes aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by students.
- Sequential nutrition education will be incorporated into our curriculum at all grade levels.

- Educational programs will be provided by nutritionists, UNMC medical students and other professionals on topics that include: healthy snacks and meals, smoking cessation, My Plate...
- Physical Education Classes will participate in the Jump Rope for Heart where information is provided on nutrition

#### **V. Physical Activity & Health Education**

Children should participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. Our school is committed to providing strong physical activity components during the school day including but not limited to recess, classroom physical activity breaks and physical education. The District strongly discourages staff from withholding these activities as punishment and will provide staff with a list of ideas or resources for alternative ways to discipline students.

##### **Physical Education**

Students will be provided physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with state standards for physical education.

- Pre-K students will attend PE classes 2 times / week for 30 min. each class
- K-5<sup>th</sup> grade students will attend PE classes 3 times/week for 30 min each class
- The teacher for physical education will at a minimum be certified in elementary education. Training for this educator will be available through online PD or attendance at the annual ESU mid-winter conference.
- All students will participate in exercises, and activities for developing gross motor skills and over-all physical health. Students will learn the rules and skills of various sporting games and are instructed on the importance of sportsmanship and life-time involvement in physical activity.
- Activities will include development in: cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength and flexibility
- Students will learn in physical education classes the importance of physically, psychologically and socially of participating in physical activity.
- Students will learn ways to overcome barriers to physical activity.
- Students will be encouraged to participate in the National Walk to School Day.
- Students will be encouraged to walk/bike to school.
- Students, staff and families will be encouraged to participate in Walking Wednesdays.
- Students will take part in the Jump Rope for Heart where they will learn about heart health, stroke risk, hands-only CPR, smoking cessation, healthy eating, and importance of exercise in maintaining overall health.
- Students in 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade will take part in annual kickball tournament
- K-5 students will participate in annual field day

- Students will participate in Kids Fitness and Nutrition fieldtrip sponsored by Panhandle Public Health. Activities include: nutrition education, physical activities, label reading and other healthy habits.

### **RECESS**

St. Agnes will offer outdoor recess when weather is feasible for outdoor play. In the event that the weather is not feasible, indoor recess will be conducted in the school gym. A total of 30-45 minutes of recess will be provided each day.

- Students in PK-5<sup>th</sup> grades will attend recess 2 times per day for 15 min each recess. Additional recesses may occur at teacher discretion.  
Activities available include: 2 up-to-date playground structures that are fitting to varying age levels. Each includes: slides, climbing walls, monkey bars, climbing poles. Also available are 2 swing sets and students have access to an open area for playing football, soccer, tag and other physically exerting games. A basketball court with 2 hoops along with two 4 square areas are also available. Students have access to a variety of balls for these various activities.

### **Physical Activity Breaks / Active Academics**

- The district recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. Therefore, students will be offered periodic opportunities to be active or to stretch throughout the day on all or most days during a typical school week.
- Teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning into “core” subject instruction when possible
- Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever possible

### **Before and After School Activities**

St. Agnes School provides a Morning Club opportunity for students who need to be dropped off before the school day begins.

- No breakfast or snacks are provided in this program.
- Activities including: games, walking, jump rope, etc will promote an active start to the day for students attending.

St. Agnes School does provide after school care on site.

- Snacks provided in this program will be planned by a dietician and will meet the guidelines of components from 2 food groups as required by DHHS.
- Included in the program will be activity time in which students may play outside on playground or in gymnasium.
- Students of all ages are encouraged to participate in outside sporting activities.

St. Agnes will distribute flyers for community sporting activities: AYSO soccer, 23 club Baseball/Softball, Bearcat volleyball & basketball, Lizard Track

**VI. Shared Use Agreements**

The school will encourage expanded physical activity opportunities for all students and community by offering shared use agreements with community partners.

**VII. Active Transport**

The school will support active transport to and from school such as walking or biking. We will encourage active transport to and from school by:

- Designating safe or preferred routes to school
- Promote participation in International walk / bike to school week.
- Provide storage for bicycles
- Encourage use crossing guards where provided at school crossings
- Use crosswalks on streets leading to our school
- Use walking school bus from bus drop off point at BMS

**VIII. Other Activities that Promote Student & Staff Wellness**

The district will integrate wellness activities across the entire school setting, not just in the cafeteria and physical activity facilities.

***Wellness Checks***

- Vision & Hearing Screenings will be provided by the local Lion's Club annually. Abnormalities will be noted by the school nurse and parents are notified.
- Annual health checks will be conducted by the school nurse: checks of height, weight, blood pressure and dental will be taken
- Dental health screenings that include checking for cavities, providing fluoride treatments and sealants are provided yearly by Panhandle Public Health.
- A vaccination clinic is sponsored each fall providing opportunity for staff, students & families to receive vaccines: flu, Covid, Pneumonia, RSV

***Social / Emotional Development***

- Students in K-5<sup>th</sup> grade will take part in the Base Education program which helps to develop healthy relationships with others and to develop individual self-esteem.
- Beginning the 2022 school year, students in PK-5<sup>th</sup> grade will take part in weekly social / emotional lessons provided by a licensed social worker. PK – K lessons will be 30 min and 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade will be 45 min.

- Individuals may meet with the social worker 1-1 at a time scheduled by the social worker.
- A calm corner was established in 2025 and provides a safe space for students who are struggling to regulate their emotions to be able to calm down using strategies learned in SEL lessons.

### ***Safe Environment***

- Each staff member and volunteer of St. Agnes School or anyone directly involved in working with students will be trained in the Safe Environment Program of the Grand Island Diocese. This program is reviewed and amended each year with specific guidelines and programming set to protect and guard the children in our care. Topics include: bully prevention, developing healthy relationships, engaging students, child abuse, sexual abuse etc.
- Students will be guided by teachers in an activity called “know the rules” in which discussions are held on: classroom rules, healthy friend relationships, safe touch etc.

### ***Spiritual Wellness***

- Students & staff participate in weekly Mass for development of spiritual wellness
- Prayer, meditation, music etc. are used to promote spiritual wellness

### ***Staff Training & Wellness***

- Teachers & staff are educated on the new requirements for school lunch/nutrition.
- Individually, teachers will be encouraged to take training on nutrition/wellness for both their students and self.
- Teachers will be provided training on active engagement in the classroom
- Teachers and staff will be provided with ideas for promoting a healthy school environment
- Staff is encouraged to maintain their health through supporting each other in eating healthy and providing healthy options in the lounge. Many are part of fitness programs at local health clubs, others support each other in the use of Fitbits to count steps taken daily.
- Teachers are trained yearly in medication distribution to prepare them for appropriate distribution of medications to students. This includes: prescribed medication, Epi-pen use, nebulizer use, and inhaler use.
- Teachers are trained yearly on the use of the AED, which is located on the premise.
- Teachers are trained in CPR every other year to ensure the safety and well-being of students, staff and visitors in our building.

- School kitchen supervisor and lunch vendors will meet hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA Professional Standards for Child Nutrition Professionals. Using the USDA's Professional Standards for School Nutrition Standards website, they will be responsible for finding training that meets their learning needs.

**IX. *Cleaning and proper hygiene to Promote Wellness***

- St. Agnes School is committed to the health and well-being of all students and staff who learn and work within our building. Routine cleaning of surfaces occurs daily in the classrooms to help maintain the health of all.
- Hand sanitizing stations are located at school entrances and in all classrooms to promote good hygiene habits and aid in prevention of germ spreading.
- Thermometers are located in all classrooms for use if a student is exhibiting signs of being ill.

**Wellness Plan Food Resources: Links to Guidelines**

[Meal\\_Pattern\\_Lunch2023-revised.pdf \(ne.gov\)](#)

[After-School-Snack-Meal\\_Pattern\\_23.pdf \(ne.gov\)](#)

[child-adult-snacktable-edited-030722.pdf \(azureedge.us\)](#)

[allfoods\\_flyer.pdf \(ne.gov\)](#)