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“The Catholic school is an environment uniquely designed for the formation of the whole human person. “

--excerpt from the Diocese of Greensburg Mission/Philosophy Statement

MARY QUEEN OF APOSTLES SCHOOL WELLNESS PROGRAM ACTION PLAN 2007-2008

Mary Queen of Apostles School recognizes that wellness including health education, physical education, and safety education, physical activity, and proper nutrition are related to students' well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. Research continues to support the inextricable links between student health, behavior and academic achievement. Links between nutrition, cognitive functioning, and performance are evident in the areas of language, concentration and attention.

Our vision is one where the environment of our school nurtures children physically, mentally, morally, spiritually, and socially. We want our children to feel loved, secured, and respected. We want our children to love and respect themselves as children of God and to love and care for one another. The environment ensures that children love coming to school while supporting learning, doing, and succeeding.

In our commitment to realizing our vision for the health and wellness of our school community, Mary Queen of Apostles School has established the following goals in nutrition education, physical activity education, and establishing nutrition standards in compliance with the Diocese of Greensburg Wellness Policy: The principal is responsible for ensuring that the school follows the Wellness policy and related guidelines.

NUTRITION EDUCATION GOALS

Nutrition Education: Any set of learning experiences designed to facilitate the voluntary adoption of eating and other nutrition-related behaviors conducive to health and well-being (ADA 1996), including:

- A. *Nutritional knowledge, including but not limited to the benefits of healthy eating, essential nutrients, nutritional deficiencies, principles of healthy weight management, the use and misuse of dietary supplements and safe food preparations, handling and storage*

- B. *Nutrition-related skills, including but not limited to planning a healthy meal, understanding and using food labels, and critically evaluating nutrition information, misinformation, and commercial food advertising; and*
- C. *How to assess one's personal eating habits, set goals for improvement, and achieve those goals.*

The primary goal of nutrition education is to influence students' eating behaviors, helping children become healthier and, in turn, better students.

GOAL N1: A unit on eating a balance of food based on the food pyramid will be presented to preschoolers.

GOAL N2: Units on nutrition with learning experiences and activities that focus on understanding labels, using the food pyramid for balanced meals, planning meals, preparing healthy snacks, and assessing eating habits will be provided at every grade level, K-8.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GOALS

Physical Activity Education: A comprehensive physical activity program encompassing a variety of opportunities for students to be physically active, including, but not limited to: planned physical education, recess, after-school physical activity programs, health education that includes physical activity as a main component, and physical activity breaks within regular classrooms.

Physical activity and physical education programs support and are key to (rather than compete with) common school priorities related to student learning achievement. According to the President's Council on Physical Fitness & Sports (1999), youth who spend less time on other subjects to allow for more regular physical education have been shown to do equally well or better in academic classes. The primary goal for a school's physical activity component is to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity, and understand the short- and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle.

GOAL P1: Preschool will have daily movement activities to song. In addition, morning exercise will be added to the opening activities to emphasize the importance of fitness.

GOAL P2: Jump Rope for Heart will be held annually to encourage jump rope exercise and conditioning while making students aware of exercise as an activity that benefits the body and reduces heart related illness.

GOAL P3: Along with recess games and jump rope activity, there will be an emphasis on walking during recess as a life-long activity that promotes wellness. On rainy days at FRS, where there is no gym, video fitness from Unitedstreaming will be used to provide variety.

GOAL P4: Students in Grades K-8 will participate in fitness activities to earn the National Fitness Award and/or the Presidential Fitness Award

NUTRITION STANDARDS FOR ALL FOODS AVAILABLE ON SCHOOL CAMPUS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Nutrition Standards: Schools must establish standards to address the nutrient content of all foods and beverages sold or served to students, including those available outside of school meal programs.

To practice what they learn about sound nutrition in the classroom, students need appealing and healthful food and beverage options in the school cafeteria and throughout the school day. Students' lifelong eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of foods and beverages available to them. The primary goal of establishing nutrition standards is increasing nutrient density, decreasing fat and added sugars, and moderating portion size. Meals served through the National School Lunch Program will comply with federal nutrition regulations.

GOAL NS1: Food and beverages provided to students during the school day, after school, and at any school event including school parties and sport concession stands will include healthy, nutritious choices with no school purchased candy or soda.

GOAL NS2: A list of healthy snack suggestions will be provided to all parents along with a party planning guide to help facilitate healthier options.

GOAL NS3: In compliance with Guidelines for Nutritional Standards for Competitive Foods in Pennsylvania Schools, no vending items will be sold to students in grades K-5. All vending for grades 6-8 will follow the guidelines for level 2.

OTHER SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO PROMOTE WELLNESS:

GOAL O1: Involve the members of the School Wellness Committee in planning and providing morning and evening meetings for the school community on health or nutrition topics. Include body mass index results when the district health report card is sent home.

GOAL O2: Staff and students participate in “Steptember”. Pedometers are provided to the students in a friendly competition with the YMCA and Alle-Kiski Health Centers in our area. This will be our second year participating in this program.

GOALS FOR MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

As required by law, each school must establish a plan for measuring implementation of the local wellness policy to ensure that the school is meeting the policy. A local assessment system tracks student progress on the Health, Safety and Physical Education standards.

A sustained effort is necessary to assure that new policies are faithfully implemented, including: periodically assess how well the policy is being managed and enforced; reinforce the policy goals with school staff if necessary; be prepared to update or amend the policy as the process moves on; document any financial impact to the school foodservice program, school stores, or vending revenues; and celebrate policy success milestones. Evaluation and feedback are very important in maintaining a local wellness policy. It is also important to assess student, parent, teacher, and administration satisfaction with the new policies.

GOAL ME 1: Monitor and assess the delivery of nutrition education in health class and physical activity education in physical education class to see that the goals and objectives have been met.

GOAL ME 2: Complete an evaluation of classroom party form to serve as a means to monitor and assess the success of the policy in the area of physical activity and nutrition standards.

GOAL ME 3: Monitor recess activity for all children using the recess walking program and Unitedstreaming video program.

We are confident that the enjoyable, healthful learning environment created through these efforts will reap many positive short-term and long-term benefits for our children, families, school, parishes and communities.

WELLNESS PLAN EVALUATION TOOL

The following serves as the evaluation tool for the Wellness Policy of Mary Queen of Apostles School.

- What changes to nutrition education, physical activity, the nutritional quality of foods available to students, and other aspects covered by the policy occurred in your school as a result of the district wellness policy?

Response:

Nutrition education has, since the inaugural year of the school in August 2002, and will continue to be, part of the Health curriculum for every grade level, Kindergarten to Grade 8. Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year, a unit was added for preschool in nutrition education.

Physical education has, since the inaugural year of the school in August 2002, and will continue to be, part of the Physical Education curriculum for every grade level, Kindergarten to Grade 8. Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year, in addition to movement in song, the preschool program will add exercise to the morning routine.

The cafeteria has suspended sales of ice cream, candy, and those beverages high in sugar content. There will not be any vending for students in grades K-5. Vending in grades 6-8 will follow the Competitive Food Guidelines.

- Did the number of students participating in nutrition education change?

Response: NO

- Did the students have a different number of minutes of physical activity?

Response: YES

Recess now offers a walking club in addition to jump rope and regular sports games. Everyone moves at recess. Video tapes from Unitedstreaming will provide variety for indoor recess at FRS where no gym is available to students for daily recess.

- Did your school change available food options?

Response: YES

Certain items were eliminated for student purchase, ice cream, candy, and beverages that were high in sugar. Menu items have also changed to include more homemade foods and less processed foods. Portion sizes for vegetables and fruits and salads were also increased to make for a filling meal and help provide a healthier balance nutritionally.

- Did participation in the National School Breakfast or Lunch Program change?

Response: YES

This year Mary Queen of Apostles School has instituted its own lunch program at both sites. It has quality food, healthy food, and is providing lunch for all students according to the guidelines set forth by the National School Lunch Program and the state's Child Nutrition PEARS requirements.

- Did the policy and implementation address the issues identified in the needs assessment?

Response: YES

All students are moving during recess. Parents are supporting the school's wellness policy and making changes to party plans. Planning forms are given to parents and an evaluation form of the parties and celebrations is given to the teacher then sent to the office. The sports' concession stands sell healthy options and have eliminated candy sale.

- Is it making a difference?

Response: Students earning the Presidential Fitness Award have risen. Students earning the National Fitness Award have risen, too.

- What's working?

Response: The recess plan is working. Children at the primary building, which does not have a gym, are walking the halls on days of inclement weather. Children who do not participate in sports games or jump rope at recess are walking as members of a walking club that earns rewards. This was designed and implemented using grant money.

- What's not working?

Response: Parents still pack lunches that include candy, soft drinks, etc. Children do not eat all of their lunch so as to provide a balance from the food pyramid.

- How can the impact of the policy be increased to enhance its effect on student health and academic learning?

Response: Continue to have parent education with experts in the field of nutrition, diet, fitness, and medicine. Consider offering food preparation as an adult evening class. Plan to collect health snack recipes and publish for the school community.

OTHER DIOCESAN & SCHOOL PROGRAMS **SUPPORTING WELLNESS**

Student Assistance Programs

Mary Queen of Apostles School participates in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Elementary Student Assistance Program (ESAP), which is designed to assist school personnel in identifying issues including alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, and mental health issues which pose a barrier to a student's success. The primary goal of the ESAP is to help students overcome these barriers in order that they may achieve, remain in school, and advance.

Mary Queen of Apostles School has a Knight's Elementary Student Assistance Program, or KESAP. The KESAP process uses techniques to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. The core of the program is a professionally trained team of school staff and a liaison from Family Services of Western Pennsylvania. A core team has been established at each site of Mary Queen of Apostles School. KESAP team members are trained to identify problems, determine whether or not the presenting problem lies within the responsibility of the school and to make recommendations to assist the student and the parent. When the problem lies beyond the scope of the school, the KESAP team will assist the parent and student so they may access services

within the community. The student assistance team members do not diagnose, treat or refer to treatment; but they may refer for a screening or an assessment for treatment.

There are four phases to the student assistance process:

Referral - Anyone can refer a student to KESAP when they are concerned about someone's behavior -- any school staff, a student's friend, a family member or community member. The students themselves can even go directly to the KESAP team to ask for help. The KESAP team contacts the parent for permission to proceed with the process.

Team Planning – The KESAP team gathers objective information about the student's performance in school from all school personnel who have contact with the student. Information is also collected from the parent. The team meets with the parent to discuss the data collected and also meets with the student. Together, a plan is developed that includes strategies for removing learning barriers and promoting the student's academic and personal success. These may include in-school and/or community-based services, activities, counseling, and monitoring.

Intervention and Recommendations – The plan is put into action. The team assists in linking the student to in-school and/or community-based services, activities, and counseling. The team might recommend a drug and alcohol or mental health assessment. The team may also recommend monitoring and accommodations.

Support and Follow-Up – The KESAP team continues to work with and support the student and their family. Follow-up includes monitoring, mentoring, and motivating for academic success.

It is the parent's right to be involved in the process and to have full access to all school records under the applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Involvement of parents in all phases of the student assistance program underscores the parents' role and responsibility in the decision-making process affecting their children's education and is key to the successful resolution of problems.

Diocese Of Greensburg Handbook Of Policies – Section 4000 Students

Section 4000 of the Diocese of Greensburg Handbook of Policies includes several policies related to student wellness including these topics: administration of medications; student health emergencies; child abuse; sexual harassment; suicide; missing children; alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use; AIDS; possession of weapons; recordkeeping on incidents of violence; and locker search. This policy and any subsequent policies can be found on the diocesan web page.

Mary Queen of Apostles School bases its Parent-Student Handbook and Preschool Parent Handbook on the Handbook of Policies of the Diocese of Greensburg.

Diocese Of Greensburg Policy 3600 – Protecting God’s Children

Educators and other professional employees are responsible for the welfare and safety of pupils in their charge. They are required to report suspected child abuse occurring within the home, community, or school to the building principal who in turn will notify the superintendent and Children and Youth Services.

Preventing child sexual abuse is the goal of the “Protecting God’s Children for Adults,” the program selected by the Diocese of Greensburg to educate clergy, staff, and volunteers who work with children about child sexual abuse and the ways to create safe environments for children. Adults learn how to recognize the signs and symptoms that signal an adult is a potential risk of harm to children and how to recognize the signs and symptoms that a child is being abused or exploited in some way. All clergy, staff, and volunteers who have regular contact with children and youth are required to have participated in the diocesan-provided program “Protecting God’s Children” as a condition of employment and volunteering.

The Protecting God’s Children mandate also includes assuring that all children in our schools and parish education programs receive training to help them protect themselves from persons who might inflict sexual abuse on a child. Each school must submit to the Diocese of Greensburg their plan for fulfilling this mandate, which includes partnering with the county agency that provides the required training. It is important to teach children about their dignity and rights and the importance of respecting others. It is important to teach them how to recognize potentially harmful behavior directed toward them and what to do when they feel threatened in some way.

Mary Queen of Apostles School participates in Protecting God’s Children policy by having all employees trained in the course workshop and being updated in their knowledge through annual training bulletins. Students participate annually in one or two curricular projects, the Hope Center curriculum and the Blackburn Center curriculum to fulfill the child education component of the policy.

Technology Resource Acceptable Use Policy

The Diocese of Greensburg Technology Resources Acceptable Use Plan was formally adopted at a public meeting in compliance with the Children’s Internet Protection Act. It is updated annually. The plan includes practices to ensure personal safety and the well-being of students and staff. Each family, student, and employee is annually required to sign user agreements, and the students also sign and agree to a code of conduct appropriate to their age and grade.

Mary Queen of Apostles School has an Acceptable Use Policy for faculty, staff, and students. The policy is summarized in the handbooks and is posted in its entirety on the school website. All families and students and staff who use technology must sign the appropriate forms. These are kept on file for the year. Use of MQA technology is denied if forms are not signed, returned, and filed for the current school year.

iSAFE Internet Safety Curriculum

- 80 percent of kids spend at least 1 hour per week on the Internet
- 11 percent of kids spend more than 1 ½ hours per day on the Internet
- 55 percent of kids have given their personal information (name, sex, age, etc.) over the Internet

i-SAFE is a non-profit foundation whose mission is to educate and empower youth to safely and responsibly take control of their Internet experience. i-SAFE incorporates classroom curriculum with dynamic community outreach to empower students, teachers, parents, law enforcement, and concerned adults to make the Internet a safer place, where students recognize and avoid dangerous, destructive, or unlawful online behavior and respond appropriately. Mary Queen of Apostles School has an iSafe-trained coordinator at each site and will implement a plan for using the curriculum and for partnering with parents, law enforcement, and the community.

Mary Queen of Apostles School will begin this program in the 2006-2007 school year by having key faculty trained so that total faculty training then student training can be planned for the following school year.

School Crisis Plan

Diocese Of Greensburg Schools Policy 2170 – Crisis Management Plan

School safety and security are important issues of concern for every school. To address this issue, all diocesan schools shall have a Safety Committee consisting of the building principal, pastor, custodian, representative from the faculty, and representative from the fire and police department. This committee shall review the building for safety issues and develop a plan for evacuation and lock-down situations.

The Crisis Management Plan designed by the diocese shall be available and accessible for all school employees.

The principal will conduct monthly fire drills one of which is an annual evacuation drill to a secure site. Lock-down drills will be conducted once each semester using code words.

All buildings must have an operational security system within the building limiting access by unauthorized persons.

The Crisis Management Plan for each building is to be approved by the Safety Committee and on file with the diocesan Office of Catholic Schools, the Church Office, and with the local fire and police departments. The principal is responsible for updating the plan annually and sharing the plan annually with faculty and students.

Mary Queen of Apostles School has an approved Crisis Management Plan. The plan is provided to the Diocese of Greensburg, the State Police, the local police

force, the local fire and emergency services, and the Board of Pastors. It is updated annually with changes sent to all parties. It is reviewed annually by staff at the opening in-services. It is reviewed annually by a member of the local police force. The MQA Crisis Management Plan is summarized in the Parent-Student Handbook and the Preschool Parent Handbook so all are aware of the protocol for emergencies of any kind. Mary Queen of Apostles School holds monthly fire drills, an annual evacuation drill, and a lock-down drill once a semester at both sites.

Diocese Of Greensburg School Policy 2172 – Severe Weather Drill

Severe weather drills are conducted annually in March when announced by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management System through the county offices. The purpose of this exercise is to test procedures in the event of such an emergency. When announced, students and staff are to move quickly to lower levels entering rooms or hallways where there are no or minimal windows. Students are to sit on the floor until the “all clear” is given. The principal submits a report to the Office of Catholic Schools on a form provided for the drill.

Mary Queen of Apostles School conducts this drill at both sites.