

**Wellness Policy on Nutrition and Physical Fitness**  
*St. Vincent's Villa Residential Services*  
*and Villa Maria School*

**Catholic Charities Family Services**  
**2600 Pot Spring Road**  
**Lutherville-Timonium, MD 21093**

**Last Revised: April 2021**

***Catholic Charities Family Services***  
**Wellness Policy**

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# ***Catholic Charities Family Services (CCFS)***

## **Wellness Policy on Nutrition and Physical Fitness**

### **I. Preamble**

The Children's Division of Catholic Charities is comprised of several programs within several departments including Villa Maria Community Resources Center for Family Services, Villa Maria School (VMS), and St. Vincent's Villa (SVV). The following document comprises the wellness policy for Villa Maria School and St. Vincent's Villa Residential Treatment Facility. One of the units, Genesis is incorporated into St. Vincent's Villa.

The mission, vision and values of Catholic Charities Family Services (CCFS) are as follows:

#### **Mission**

*Catholic Charities Family Services provides an integrated, state-of-the-art, comprehensive system of care that includes: child welfare; delinquency diversion; behavioral health; special education; and early-childhood and family-development services that assist children, adults and families to achieve their full potential.*

#### **Vision**

*Catholic Charities Family Services will be a National model of a fully-integrated system of innovative, effective, state-of-the-art programs that assists children, adults and families to achieve their full potential.*

#### **Values**

- *Respect* – Programs promote a respectful exchange of information that allow staff, individuals, families, and other stakeholders to build trust, learn from one another, and work together to achieve goals.
- *Partnership* – All services are provided through the development of meaningful, collaborative relationships with individuals, families, staff and other stakeholders. Programs develop opportunities for individuals, families and other stakeholders to be active participants in planning, problem-solving, decision-making, and evaluation of services.
- *Knowledge* – Programs actively provide individuals and families access to information about the resources available in the agency and in the community that respond to their identified needs.
- *Excellence* – Programs engage individuals, families, staff and other stakeholders as partners within the agency's continuous-performance-improvement process.
- *Diversity* – All services focus on the unique strengths, skills and expertise of the adults, children, family members, and others.
- *Data-driven*- Programs seek out evidence-based and experience-based best practices, and continuously monitor efficacy of services through the collection and evaluation of feedback and outcomes.

CCFS is committed to the optimal development of every student. We believe that for students to have the opportunity to achieve personal, academic, developmental and social success, we need to create positive, safe, and health-promoting learning environments at every level, in every setting, throughout the year.

Research shows that two components, good nutrition and physical activity before, during, and after the school day, are strongly correlated with positive student outcomes. For example, student participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) School Breakfast Program is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores, lower absenteeism, and better performance on cognitive tasks.<sup>i,ii,iii,iv,v,vi,vii</sup> Conversely, less-than-adequate consumption of specific foods including fruits, vegetables, and dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.<sup>viii,ix,x</sup> In addition, students who are physically active through active transport to and from school, recess, physical activity breaks, high-quality physical education, and extracurricular activities – do better academically.<sup>xi,xii,xiii,xiv</sup>

This policy outlines CCFS's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the day. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

- Students are provided healthy foods throughout the school day—both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school and residential campus—in accordance with Federal and State nutrition standards. Foods and beverages are purchased locally and regionally, whenever possible and economical.
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors.
- Students have opportunities to be physically active throughout the day. VMS has 30 minutes of recess daily. In addition, physical education is taught by a physical education teacher, one to two times per week.
- School and Residence engages in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness.
- Staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school/residence.
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of CCFS in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits.
- It is our goal to have children, families, and the community be as involved as possible in giving input to The Wellness Policy and in its implementation.
- CCFS establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about, and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

This policy applies to all students and staff within Catholic Charities Family Services.

*While CCFS strives to provide an environment that is wellness-focused based on the following policy, we also recognize that the population we serve requires a trauma-centered approach to care. St. Vincent's Villa (SVV) and Villa Maria School (VMS) provide Trauma-Informed Care,*

*and therefore we respond by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices so that our expectations are realistic.*

*The policies in this document outline our goals and vision for wellness, and are further supported and implemented (where needed) with the direction of our Wellness Committee.*

## **II. Wellness Committee (WC)**

### ***Committee Role and Membership***

Catholic Charities Child and Family Services has established a Wellness Committee that meets at least four times per year, to establish goals for and oversee school health and safety policies and programs, including development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this wellness policy.

The WC membership represents St. Vincent’s Villa Residential Treatment Center and Villa Maria School, and includes (to the extent possible), but not be limited to: parents and caregivers; students; representatives of the school nutrition program/dietary (Culinary Services Group); physical education teachers; school health professionals; mental health and social services staff; school administrators; health professionals; and the general public. To the extent possible, the WC includes representatives from each building and reflects the diversity of the community. Students participate and give their input on what foods they like, what activities they are interested in doing. Students participate in SURF (Safe Unity Respect Fun) meetings and decide what fun activities they would like to do.

### ***Leadership***

The designee(s) will convene the WC and facilitate development of and updates to the wellness policy, and will ensure each school’s compliance with the policy.

The name(s), title(s), and contact information (email address is sufficient) of this/these individual(s) are:

Chart A: Wellness Policy Coordinators

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Email address</b>	<b>Role</b>
Linda Taylor	Masters in the Science of Management, Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (MSM, RDN)	Ltaylor2@cc-md.org	SVV and VMS – works out of SVV residential facility (residential oversight)
Melissa Hamberg	Therapeutic and Wellness Manager	mhamberg@cc-md.org	VMS and SVV

## ***Objectives of the Wellness Committee***

The WC will support and further develop the policies and procedures outlined in this Wellness Policy.

- a. Encourage Participation - To engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing nutrition and physical activity policies.
- b. Education and Promotion - To provide nutrition and physical education to foster lifelong habits in healthy eating and physical activity, and establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community service.  
Physical Activity - To provide students with the opportunity, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis. All children have the opportunity for physical activity every day. VMS has 30 minutes of recess daily. In addition, physical education is taught by a physical education teacher, at least once a week.
- c. All foods available to children - All food is provided and no food is sold. To ensure all foods and beverages served at school meet the nutrition recommendations of the **USDA Smart Snack Standards**: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>, and are compliant with federal and state guidelines. Foods offered will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body.
- d. Other School-Based Activities – To integrate wellness activities across the entire school and residence setting.

## **III. Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability, and Community Engagement**

### ***Implementation Plan***

The Wellness Committee will maintain a plan for implementation to manage and coordinate the execution of this wellness policy. The plan delineates roles, responsibilities, actions, and timelines specific to each school, and includes information about who will be responsible to make what change, by how much, where, and when, as well as specific goals and objectives for nutrition standards for all foods and beverages available on the school campus, promotion and education, physical activity, physical education, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness.

This wellness policy and the assessments are available to the public as requested. St. Vincent's Villa and Genesis share the same website. The public is informed of the Wellness Policy and Assessments via our website:

For Villa Maria School: <https://www.catholiccharities-md.org/services/villa-maria-school/> and

For St. Vincent's Villa (which includes Genesis):

<https://www.catholiccharities-md.org/services/st-vincent-villa/>

<https://www.catholiccharities-md.org/services/st-vincent-villa/information-about-our-services/>

these go to the links:

<https://www.catholiccharities-md.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2021-SVV-VMS-Wellness-Policy.pdf>

<https://www.catholiccharities-md.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2020-21-Maryland-Wellness-Policies-and-Practices-Project.xlsx>

<https://www.catholiccharities-md.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2020-WellSAT3.0.pdf>

### ***Recordkeeping***

CCFS will retain records to document compliance with the requirements of the wellness policy, including:

- The written Wellness Policy and Assessments
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements
- Documentation of policy progress reports
- Documentation of the Triennial Assessment\* of the policy for the SVV and VMS
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with public notification requirements, including:  
(1) Methods by which the wellness policy, annual progress reports, and triennial assessments are made available to the public; and (2) Efforts to actively notify families about the availability of wellness policy

### ***Annual Progress Reports***

CCFS will compile and publish an annual report to share basic information about the wellness policy and report on the progress of the schools in meeting wellness goals. This annual report will be published around the same time each year and will include information from all sites. This report may include, but is not limited to:

- The website address for the wellness policy and/or how the public can receive/access a copy of the wellness policy
- A description of each school's progress in meeting the wellness policy goals
- A summary of each school's events or activities related to wellness policy implementation
- The name, position title, and contact information of the designated District policy leader(s) identified in Section I
- Information on how the public can get involved with the Wellness Committee

CCFS will actively notify households/families of the availability of the annual report.

The Wellness Committee will establish and monitor goals and objectives for all CCFS sites.

### ***Triennial Assessments***

At least once every three years, CCFS will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of the policy and include:

- The extent to which individual sites are in compliance with the wellness policy
- The extent to which the CCFS wellness policy compares to Wellness School Assessment Tool and The Maryland Wellness Policies and Practices Project
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the CCFS wellness policy

The position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment is Linda Taylor, Dietitian.

CCFS will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

### ***Revisions and Updating the Policy***

The CCFS WC will update or modify the wellness policy based on the results of the annual progress reports and triennial assessments, and/or as our priorities change; community needs change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information, and technology emerges; and new Federal or state guidance or standards are issued. The wellness policy will be assessed and updated as indicated at least every three years, following the triennial assessment.

### ***Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communications***

CCFS is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. CCFS will actively communicate ways in which representatives of the WC and others can participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy through a variety of means appropriate for that district. We will also inform parents of the improvements that have been made to school meals and compliance with school meal standards, availability of child nutrition programs and how to apply, and a description of and compliance with USDA child nutrition programs. CCFS will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on our website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents, or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of the content of, implementation of, and updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy. CCFS will ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the community, and accomplished through means similar to other ways that the district and individual schools are communicating other important school information with parents.

CCFS will actively notify the public about the content of or any updates to the wellness policy annually, at a minimum. CCFS will also use these mechanisms to inform the community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports.

## **IV. Nutrition**

### ***Food Served***

Catholic Charities Child and Family Services is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, and zero grams *trans* fat per serving; and to meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. The school meal programs aim 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 cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.

Our schools and residential treatment facility participates in USDA child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and the After School Snack Program (ASSP). CCFS is committed to offering school meals through these programs, that:

- Are appealing and attractive to children
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings
- Are given adequate time to eat meals (Seat time, given to children to eat at mealtime, is at a minimum of 10 minutes at breakfast and 20 at lunch)
- Meet or exceed current nutrition requirements established by Local, State, and Federal statutes and regulations

Additionally, we are working towards promoting healthy food and beverage choices using the Smarter Lunchroom Techniques. Current techniques CCFS has started to use/move towards include:

- Whole fruit options are displayed in bowls or baskets in residential care
- Sliced or cut fruit to be made available daily
- All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal
- Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu/snack development, to provide students input for the Wellness Committee
- Menus will be posted for children to see in a kid-friendly format
- Menus are reviewed by a Registered Dietitian
- The District child nutrition program accommodates students with special dietary needs

CCFS recognizes the psychological and physical significance of food in the development and maturation of our clients. In order to provide the most appropriate and nutritional meals to our clients and to meet the special dietary needs of individual clients, CCFS contracts with Culinary Services Group (CSG) for nutritional services and employs a Clinical Registered Dietitian. The goal is to prepare the most appetizing and nutritious food possible and to serve this food in a way that is consistent with the psychological and physical needs of our clients and staff.

The contracted Director of Nutritional Services in consultation with the Clinical Registered Dietitian has overall responsibility for dietary services including supervising the purchasing of food, the planning of menus and the preparation of food. The Director of Nutritional Services is responsible for monitoring the quality of services being provided by the department and supervising dietary personnel.

The Clinical Dietitian is responsible for the assessment and development of special diets in consultation with the client, families and treatment team members. He/she may also assist in the provision of nutritional education programs in collaboration with the Director of Nutritional Services and the Director of Health Services.

### ***The Menu***

- The Director of Nutritional Services develops and utilizes a four-week cycle menu which is carefully planned two times per year. These menus comply with the nutrition and health standards established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Maryland Department of Health. The menus allow for nutritional and caloric adequacy, variety, creativity and appeal. The menus are reviewed regularly by the CSG Consulting Dietitian to ensure that they meet the requirements that have been established by the various regulatory departments. The menus are changed due to holidays, special events, changes in the availability of USDA donated foods, and when opportunities arise for especially good buys. Menus are also changed if vendors are out of a particular item. Appropriate substitutions are made under these circumstances and the Units are made aware of the changes. The Dietitian is consulted if necessary for these changes. All menus are kept on file for one year and all changes in menus are recorded. The menus are developed to accommodate the diverse culture of the student body, and include foods and preparation methods from various ethnicities and cultures. One percent white milk and skim flavored milk is available. The Dietary Department takes advantage of opportunities to utilize seasonal fruits and vegetables, as well as other foods at reasonable prices. Food is purchased locally and regionally whenever possible and economical.

#### ***a. Snacks***

In between meals, snacks are served to children once per day in the Villa Maria School program and twice per day in the residential program.

Mid-morning snacks are sent to the Villa Maria Schools along with the day students' breakfasts each day. On non-school days, the mid-morning snacks are placed on the carts in the residence along with dinner for the previous day, and to be picked up at dinner time the day before.

Afterschool snacks are picked up in the kitchen by staff and/or child representative. CCFS participates in the Afterschool Snack Program, a federally assisted snack program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. The Afterschool Snack Program is administered at the Federal level by the Food and Nutrition Service. Culinary

Services Group provides afterschool snacks per federal guidelines, which states that the snack must contain at least two different components of the following four: a serving of fluid milk; a serving of meat or meat alternate; a serving of vegetables or fruits or full strength vegetable or fruit juice; a serving of whole grain or enriched bread or cereal.

Staff from each unit are responsible for picking up the bed time, snack placed on carts with the dinner meal.

### ***b. Water/Hydration***

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water is available to all students throughout the school day and in the residence. Drinking water is available where meals are served during mealtimes. Such sources may include drinking fountains, water jugs, hydration stations, water jets, and other methods for delivering drinking water.

### ***c. Quality of Foods and Beverages Served***

Foods prepared and served are appealing and meet standards for wholesomeness, variety, nutrient and calorie contents. The Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) plan is enforced to ensure the safety of the foods served at the programs. The HACCP plan is available in the residential kitchen at Dulaney Valley and in each school kitchen and is titled “Catholic Charities Food Safety Plan – HACCP Manuel.” Foods are stored, prepared, and served under appropriate conditions. There is a well-developed system of purchasing foods to ensure timely delivery and high quality of freshness. The cycle menu affords a variety of foods from all food groups. Meals meet the percent of the recommended dietary allowance (RDA) established by the United States Department of Agriculture.

Food vending machines are available only for staff use – children do not have access to vending machines.

## ***Special Considerations***

### ***a. Special Diets***

All children admitted to CCFS residential and school programs will be screened by the admitting Registered Nurse (RN) to determine, if a child has nutritional risk. Factors such as age, height, weight, BMI, recent weight changes, prescribed or non-prescribed medication regimen, allergies, food restrictions/intolerances, mental status, medical conditions requiring dietary education or diet modification, and daily eating patterns will be considered.

Children determined to be at risk will be referred to the Registered Dietitian (RD) for further assessment and evaluation. The RD will develop an appropriate nutritional care plan which will be documented in the clinical record.

Recommendations by the RD will be reviewed promptly with the pediatrician, team psychiatrist, child and legal guardian. The RD will assume responsibility with the aid of the child’s treatment team RN to educate the child, family and treatment team members regarding the child’s nutritional status, recommendations made, risks if the plan is not adopted, benefits, timeframes, methods of implementation and expected outcomes.

Prior to developing the diet plan, the RD or the treatment team RN meets with the child (as appropriate) to discuss the special diet with him/her. Efforts are made to solicit the child's food preferences and to help the child to understand the new diet and its objectives. Documentation

of this meeting with the child is placed in the clinical record in the dietary section of the chart. In the event the recommendations are not adopted, the treatment team will document the rationale and all parties will be made aware.

Special diets are only initiated upon a physician's order, typically with input from the RD. When a dietary order is altered, a member of the Health Services staff notifies dietary by scanning a copy of the order directly to the food service director, dietary liaison, and the Clinical RD. This is documented in a client's clinical record.

Special diet plans are posted in the kitchen as a reference for the cooks who are responsible for preparing each diet meal. CCFS does not assume responsibility for providing special diet meals for children when they are on home visits. However, the RD is available for consultation with clients and/or their parents or guardians regarding any aspect of menu planning or food preparation.

To support compliance with special diets, education is provided to residential and school staff as necessary.

A diet book is kept in the kitchen that includes all dietary orders, with special attention taken to special diets. This book is kept in the kitchen office, and is used to track all diet and allergy information, residence and schools the children attend, as well as any other pertinent information regarding the children's special dietary needs. These books are updated daily to reflect any prescribed diet changes, new admissions, or discharges.

At times it may be medically necessary to alter a child's diet for a very brief period of time. In the case of short-term acute illness, the pediatrician or nurse may alter a child's diet for a 24-72 hour period.

For children in the residential treatment program who are on a special diet and attend *public* school, the treatment team has the option of providing the public school with the order, which the school is required to follow for children with disabilities. The school may require documentation of the child's behavioral/emotional disability. This procedure is intended for children who could have significant, near term medical consequences if the diet is not followed at school.

If requested by the physician or nurse, the RD will provide individual dietary instructions in writing to a client who is being discharged and/or his parents or guardians. These instructions may also be forwarded to another facility based on the physician's or nurse's directions. Documentation is placed in the client's clinical record whenever dietary instructions are provided for discharge purposes.

### **b. *Food Allergies/Intolerance***

All students admitted to the residential or school programs undergo an initial nutrition screening as described above. The screening instrument is an interviewer-administered questionnaire which includes questions about food allergies and intolerances. A log is maintained on students identified as having food allergies or intolerances and the dietary, residential and school staffs and the health staff are promptly informed. Offending foods are eliminated from the diet of the respective student.

Dietary staff have a process in place to verify that meals prepared for children with allergies/intolerances, specifically those with serious allergic reactions that require an EPI pen, have been prepared according to the physician's order.

Food Allergy Procedures are as follows:

1. Special diet orders are scanned to and reviewed by the Director of Nutritional Services/CSG and are placed in the special dietary orders book. A separate spreadsheet with food allergies, sorted by Unit and School is kept for easy reference by the kitchen staff/cooks.
2. Food allergies and restrictions are verified with the physician, RD, or health services staff as needed if kitchen staff have any questions regarding foods a child can or cannot have.
3. Individual sticker labels are made for all children with allergies, which includes the child's name, apartment or classroom, and restricted foods. Labels are placed on all foods served to the child.

**c. *Competitive Foods and Beverages*** – *does not apply, as no food/beverages are sold.*

**d. *Celebrations, Rewards, ...***

We strive to meet the USDA School Nutrition Standards with all foods offered on campus in our schools. However, as SVV is residential facility, we recognize that children should not be sheltered from 'social norms', and therefore CCFS will occasionally allow reasonable exceptions on a limited basis. These exceptions must be granted permission through the program director (PD) in residence and may include:

1. **Celebrations and parties.** This may include birthday parties, discharge parties, or special dinners/holiday celebrations for our children in residence. Any food and beverages provided at celebrations during school time, will comply with **USDA Smart Snack Standards:**

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>

2. **Visitation with Parent/Guardians.** Parents/guardians are permitted to bring snacks or meals for their children on occasion, to replace the meal or snack provided by CSG. These snacks/meals must be consumed during visitation only, and cannot be left on the Unit for consumption by the child at another time. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to bring healthy food items.

3. **Rewards and incentives.** Foods and beverages should not be used as rewards and incentives. Caregivers will be provided with a list of alternative ways to reward children, and this list should be exhausted. If all other options have been exhausted, only the treatment team in cooperation with the dietitian can approve of food reinforcements. If these are used, they will be in small quantities and will comply with **USDA Smart Snack Standards:**

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>

4. **Punishments.** Foods and beverages will not be withheld as punishments for any reason.

**e. *Fundraising*** – *does not apply, as no food is sold*

**f. *Religious Preferences***

Religious preferences are noted upon admission to St. Vincent's Villa and honored. The RD, Dietary Department/CSG, Health Services and the residence/school are notified and a log is maintained on such student. Religious preferences are reflected in the child's diet.

## ***Nutrition Promotion/Education***

CCFS recognizes that nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors when using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices. We strive to make sure students and staff alike receive consistent nutrition messages throughout schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, cafeterias and in the residence.

CCFS aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. VM schools and SVV residence aim to provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- Include enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, and healthy food preparation methods;
- Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (promotes physical activity/exercise);
- Link with school meal programs, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- Teach media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and
- Include nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

### ***a. Curriculum Enhancement/ Ecology/Science Program***

St. Vincent's Villa and Villa Maria Schools operate an ecology/science program that provides healthy life-time skills through hands-on activities with children. The program's curriculum includes nutrition education and hands-on training to promote healthy life-long food and physical activity habits (i.e gardening and exposure to nature). As part of the nutrition education component, students will learn about foods, food groups, healthy food choices, meal planning and preparation, and safe food handling. The ecology/science program has a completely equipped kitchen with small and large tools for hands-on learning. The students use local produce or produce grown on campus whenever possible to make healthy meals and snacks. They learn to read & understand the nutritional labeling on foods to make informed choices. The program emphasizes the use of math, reading & science while working with foods.

The curriculum will be revised and enhanced periodically to reflect current changes in dietary guidelines and nutrition assessment tools. Volunteers can conduct cooking classes for children at the Pre-Vocational Center, supervised by Volunteer Services staff in collaboration with Dietary Staff.

The staff leading this program, coordinates and implements science lessons and ecologically-oriented enrichment activities for children and adolescents attending Villa Maria School. They work collaboratively with classroom teachers and related arts teachers to develop a vision for the increased implementation of hands-on, student-centered activities that empower students to be active members of their school community.

Staff also develops and implements lesson plans focusing on ecologically-oriented material, specifically “seed to table” and horticulture. This program manages and operates the “seed to table” process with students, for Villa Maria School. This includes but is not limited to; the seed planting and maintenance in the Gallagher greenhouse, the planting of the seedlings in the vegetable and therapeutic school gardens, the watering/weeding/basic cultivation/harvesting of plants within the gardens.

### ***b. Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education***

CCFS aims to include the following essential topics on healthy eating in the health curriculum:

- The relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention
- Food guidance from [MyPlate.gov](https://www.myplate.gov)
- Reading and using USDA's food labels
- Eating a variety of foods every day
- Balancing food intake and physical activity
- Eating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grain products
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain *trans* fat
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars
- Eating more calcium-rich foods
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices
- Accepting body size differences
- Food safety
- Importance of water consumption
- Importance of eating breakfast
- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants
- Eating disorders
- The Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Reducing sodium intake
- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers, and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior
- How to develop a plan and track progress toward achieving a personal goal to eat healthfully
- Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior
- Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior

### ***c. Food and Beverage Marketing***

CCFS is committed to providing a school environment that ensures opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. CCFS strives to teach students how to make informed choices about nutrition, health, and physical activity. These efforts will be weakened if students are subjected to advertising on our property that contains messages inconsistent with

the health information the District is imparting through nutrition education and health promotion efforts. It is the intent of CCFS to protect and promote student's health by permitting advertising and marketing for only those foods and beverages that are permitted to be sold on the school campus, consistent with the this wellness policy.

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students in VM schools or in SVV residence will meet or exceed the **USDA Smart Snack Standards**: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>

Food advertising and marketing is defined<sup>xv</sup> as an oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller, or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product. This term includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Brand names, trademarks, logos or tags, except when placed on a physically present food or beverage product or its container.
- Displays, such as on vending machine exteriors.
- Corporate brand, logo, name, or trademark on school equipment, such as marquees, message boards, scoreboards, or backboards (Note: immediate replacement of these items are not required; however, districts will consider replacing or updating scoreboards or other durable equipment over time so that decisions about the replacement include compliance with the marketing policy.)
- Corporate brand, logo, name, or trademark on cups used for beverage dispensing, menu boards, coolers, trash cans, and other food service equipment; as well as on posters, book covers, pupil assignment books, or school supplies displayed, distributed, offered, or sold by the District.
- Advertisements in school publications or school mailings.
- Free product samples, taste tests, or coupons of a product, or free samples displaying advertising of a product.

#### ***d. Individualized Nutrition Counseling/Education***

Nutrition screening is performed on all students, upon admission to the residential program, to determine, if a child is at nutritional risk. Those students identified with risk factors are referred to the Clinical Dietitian, who conducts a thorough nutrition assessment. Special dietary or physical activity needs are identified and discussed in individualized nutrition counseling session(s). The parents/guardians are usually included, to the extent possible.

#### ***e. Nutrition Staff Qualifications and Professional Development***

All school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals. These school nutrition personnel will refer to USDA's Professional

Standards for School Nutrition Standards website to search for training that meets their learning needs.

## **V. Physical Activity**

Students will have the opportunity to participate in **physical activity breaks** during school time and should participate in 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of students' physical activity can be provided through a **comprehensive, school-based physical activity program (CSPAP)** that includes these components: physical education, recess, classroom-based physical activity, walk and bicycle to school (for day students only, on a case-by-case basis), and out-of-school time activities. Due to the need of constant supervision and the nature for the reasons children are admitted to SVV, children at SVV may not walk or bicycle to school. CCFS may not be able to incorporate all of these components on a regular basis, due to the population of children we serve. We are committed to providing physical activity opportunities to our children at a minimum of 60 minutes per day, and more whenever possible.

### **Villa Maria School (VMS)**

#### ***Physical Education***

VMS will provide students with physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education. The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help students develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts (discussed in the "*Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education*" subsection).

All students will be provided equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes. VMS will make appropriate accommodations to allow for equitable participation for all students and will adapt physical education classes and equipment as necessary.

Elementary students in each grade will receive physical education for at least 60-120 minutes (one to two 60 minute sessions) per week throughout the school year. VMS physical education program will promote student physical fitness through individualized fitness and activity assessments.

#### ***Essential Physical Activity Topics in Health Education***

VMS will strive to include some of the following essential topics on physical activity in the health education curriculum:

- The physical, psychological, or social benefits of physical activity
- How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight
- How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process
- How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease
- Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition

- Differences between physical activity, exercise, and fitness
- Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout, and cool down
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity
- Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community
- Preventing injury during physical activity
- Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia, and sunburn while being physically active
- How much physical activity is enough, that is, determining frequency, intensity, time, and type of physical activity
- Developing an individualized physical activity and fitness plan
- Monitoring progress toward reaching goals in an individualized physical activity plan
- Dangers of using performance-enhancing drugs, such as steroids
- Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers, and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to physical activity and fitness
- How to influence, support, or advocate for others to engage in physical activity
- How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activity

### ***Recess (Elementary)***

All elementary schools will offer at least 20-30 minutes of recess on all or most days during the school year. If recess is offered before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms located just inside/outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built in to the recess transition period/timeframe before students enter the cafeteria.

Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. In the event that the school or district must conduct indoor recess, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable. *Recess will complement, not substitute, for physical education class.* Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

### ***Active Academics***

Teachers will be encouraged to incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when possible (e.g., science, math, language arts, social studies, and others) and do their part to limit sedentary behavior during the school day.

Teachers will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

### **St. Vincent’s Villa Residence (SVV)**

The residential programs of St. Vincent’s Villa provide a variety of physical activities after the school day and on the weekends. The facility has a full size gym, numerous playgrounds, basketball courts, access to a swimming pool, tennis court, bike path, and nature trail. Plans are in place for seasonal activities. On the weekends, bimonthly sports group is held, during which children may participate in soccer or basketball clinics.

In the summer, the children have at least one, hour-long period of swimming, often multiple times per week. The bike path, basketball courts, tennis court, playgrounds, and fields are accessible to the units at any time. The recreation department also plans intramurals for the children and off-grounds activities that include a variety of physical activities such as hiking, miniature golf, amusement parks, batting cages, climbing walls, etc. Some of the residential staff will bring in yoga or other types of exercise videos for the children to enjoy. Recess monitors will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

### **Both St. Vincent's Villa Residence (SVV) and Villa Maria School (VMS)**

#### **Physical Education Teacher Qualifications & Professional Development**

The Physical Education Teacher/Teachers will meet or exceed hiring qualifications. Every 5 years each Physical Education Teacher does at least 90 hours of continuing education to become recertified. Each Physical Education Teacher also has a Special Education Teaching Certificate.

#### **Physical Activity as a Punishment / Reward**

St. Vincent's Villa and Villa Maria School recognize the need for children to engage in physical activities. Physical Activity will not be used as a punishment. Non-participation in physical activities as a form of consequences is not permitted, except in cases where the behavior is such that engaging in physical activity would be unsafe for the child and others. In the case, that children are medically unable to participate, an exemption for physical education will be given. There are also cases where goals to participate in physical education are included in a child's IEP. The staff determine alternative opportunities, if needed. Physical Activity also will not be used as a reward.

*To the extent practicable, CCFS will ensure that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. The District will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.*

## **VI. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness**

CCFS will strive to integrate wellness activities across the entire school and residence setting. CCFS will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition, and other wellness components so all efforts are complementary, not duplicative, and work towards the same set of goals and objectives promoting student well-being, optimal development, and strong educational outcomes.

#### ***Community Health Promotion and Engagement***

CCFS will promote to parents/caregivers, families, and the general community the benefits of and approaches for healthy eating and physical activity throughout the year. Families will be informed and invited to participate in school-sponsored activities and will receive information about health promotion efforts via newsletters, emails, and on the CCFS website for SVV and VMS.

### ***Staff Wellness and Health Promotion***

CCFS will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. Staff wellness will be a sub-group of the Wellness Committee.

### ***Professional Learning***

When feasible, the CCFS will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and schools.

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