

Mt. Scott Learning Center Wellness Policy

At Mt. Scott Learning Center (MSLC) we value student health and wellness. “Healthy” is one of our four core values. We strive to provide an environment that is conducive to learning and that allows students to succeed. This policy outlines Mt. Scott’s approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day. Mt. Scott will adhere to this policy and all requirements as directed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE).

Wellness Committee

The Wellness Committee consists of committed school and community stakeholders, and is open to participation by parents and students, along with representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education and health classes, and school administrators.

The Wellness Committee members include:

Laura Thompson, food program director, laura.thompson@mtscott.org, chairperson
Regina Miranda, business manager, regina.miranda@mtscott.org, member
Phil Johnson, PE teacher, phil.johnson@mtscott.org, member
Amanda Morris, health teacher, amanda.morris@mtscott.org, member

1) Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement

Mt. Scott will retain records demonstrating compliance with the federal requirements for a local wellness policy, including copies of periodic assessment reports, Wellness Committee meeting information, and how interested parties can become involved. Mt. Scott will actively inform families and the public annually about this policy, updates to the policy and implementation status. The Mt. Scott Wellness Policy and information can be found at www.mtscott.org.

At least once every three years, Mt. Scott will conduct a triennial progress assessment. The assessment will determine:

- The extent to which Mt. Scott is in compliance with the wellness policy;
- The extent to which Mt. Scott’s policy compares to a model wellness policy; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals listed in the policy.

Mt. Scott will actively notify households/families and the public of the availability of the triennial progress report.

2) Nutrition Promotion and Nutrition Education

Healthy eating has been linked in studies to improved learning outcomes, and helps ensure that students are able to reach their potential. The school nutrition environment provides students with opportunities to learn about and practice healthy eating. This can be accomplished through the available foods and beverages, nutrition education, and messages about food in the cafeteria and throughout the school.

Nutrition promotion goals: Mt. Scott offers free breakfast and lunch to all students through its participation in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). We have a vended meal agreement with Fresh 'n' Local foods, and we promote the monthly menu by posting it in various locations on the campus as well as on our website, www.mtscott.org.

We are a closed campus at lunch, and staff encourage all students to eat, whether that is the Fresh 'n' Local meal or something they have brought from home. We promote eating as a way to fuel up for classes, whether at breakfast or lunch, but the cafeteria is spacious enough to also accommodate two pool tables and a ping-pong table, so students can also enjoy social and physical activity in that space. And we offer an outdoor eating and social area in our backyard space at lunch, weather permitting.

Nutrition education goals: Nutrition education is part of several course offerings at Mt. Scott.

Financial literacy: Students in this Economics course budget for a week of meals for two people. Every food group must be included in their menu, with a minimal number of repeat meals. They must create a shopping list that ensures they are buying sufficient quantities of ingredients to prepare meals in the proper portion sizes while staying within their budget limitations, and there are nutrition discussions about fresh vs. frozen fruits and vegetables, and healthier food preparation techniques.

Human Sexuality & Healthy Relationships: Nutrition and physical activity are covered in this course as part of a holistic health model, and special attention is given to how what we eat and how we exercise our bodies can affect mental health and, by extension, our relationships with other people.

Human Development: Nutrition is discussed in terms of evolutionary change in our food intake variety and the resulting benefits.

3) Standards for Food and Beverages

At the minimum, Mt. Scott will ensure that:

- All reimbursable meals served as part of the school nutrition program will meet or exceed USDA meal pattern standards.
- All foods and beverages available for sale during the school day outside of reimbursable meals must meet Oregon Smart Snack nutrition standards. (Mt. Scott does not currently offer any food or beverages for sale.)
- All foods given away free of charge – snacks, rewards, classroom celebrations – are encouraged to meet Oregon Smart Snack nutrition standards.
- Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day will meet or exceed the nutrition standards set by the USDA.

4) Physical Education and Physical Activity

Schools can create an environment that offers many opportunities for students to be physically active throughout the school day. A comprehensive school physical activity program (CSPAP) is the national framework for physical education and youth physical activity. A CSPAP reflects strong coordination across five components: physical education; physical activity during school; physical activity before and after school; staff involvement; and family and community engagement.

Physical activity goals: Mt. Scott is a small program (up to 160 students) in a non-traditional school setting – we're housed in a former church that was built in the 1920s. We have never had the physical education facilities of a large, comprehensive high school, but in addition to our PE classes we do offer students physical activities throughout the day, including ping-pong indoors and basketball outdoors. We link physical activity to fun in two annual events: Feats of Strength, which is a friendly competition among our eight Advisory groups each spring, and our Staff vs. Students Kickball game, which is one of our year-end activities.

Pre-Covid we took our PE students on foot to nearby parks or by bus to Mt. Scott Community Center, a Portland Parks & Recreation facility, for PE classes. Since resuming in-person instruction in the 2021-22 school year, with some Covid-related restrictions and cautions still in place, we have tailored our PE classes to a smaller physical footprint, with an added focus on the links between physical activity and mental health. We currently offer Urban Hiking and Mindfulness classes for either a PE or Health credit, and Yoga for a PE credit.

Urban Hiking: In this class students walk, rain or shine, through the neighborhoods surrounding the school, frequently venturing to local parks and playgrounds. In addition

to building relationships with each other while participating in generally non-competitive physical activities, students familiarize themselves with the neighborhood, and sometimes contribute to its health – going out with buckets and grabbers to pick up litter as they walk.

Mindfulness: Students learn a variety of mindfulness techniques and tools and understand how they work to activate the parasympathetic nervous system. They also learn which tools work best for them in a given situation, and apply them to relieve symptoms of anxiety and stress. Students use mindful movement as well as other mindfulness techniques — including meditation, mindful eating, breathwork, yoga, “mindful stopping” and journaling – to enhance physical and mental well-being.

Yoga for Wellness: Students learn basic yoga postures and breathing techniques, and how yoga postures combined with breathwork and mindfulness can increase flexibility and strength while also providing stress relief and relaxation. Students learn how yoga works as a tool for physical and mental health and well-being, and how it can be of benefit to reducing stress and creating a better relationship with one’s self and others.

At a minimum, Mt. Scott will ensure that student performance standards and program minute requirements are developed and assessed in order to meet the Oregon Department of Education’s physical education content standards and state law.

5) Other Activities That Promote Student Wellness

Mt. Scott will integrate wellness activities throughout the entire school environment, not just in the cafeteria and physical activity facilities. Mt. Scott will coordinate and integrate other initiatives related to physical activity, physical education, nutrition and other wellness components so all efforts are complimentary.

Other School-Based Wellness Activities Goals:

Healthy. Citizens. Prepared. Scholars.

These four concepts represent Mt. Scott’s core values and speak to our mission of holistically developing students as both learners and individuals. Our core values are central to the spirit of Mt. Scott and are embedded in every aspect of the academic and social program. They are living concepts that we practice, nourish, explore and reflect on each day so that we can model the community that we want to see in the world.

Each academic quarter, the lessons in our Period 1 Advisory classes focus on a different core value. Topics covered in the quarter devoted to the Healthy core value include:

- Physical well-being
- Mental well-being
- Social well-being

During this quarter we also explore definitions of health and well-being, and teach that health and well-being is: .

- Caring for your mind, body and soul
- Usually affected by your culture and your life experiences
- Self-defined and dynamic
- Not only the absence of illness or stress. You can still strive for wellness even if you are experiencing these challenges in your life

Adopted June 2023