



First State Montessori Academy

Deep Roots, New Branches

First State Montessori Academy Charter is committed to 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 school 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. This policy outlines our school's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goal and procedures to ensure that:

- Students at FSMA have access to healthy foods throughout the school day---both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus—in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;
- Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- Students have the opportunities to be physically active before, during, and after school;
- School engages in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- School staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- The community is engaged in supporting the work of FSMA in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- FSMA will establish and maintain 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, staff, and PTO.

I. **School Wellness Committee**

Committee Role and Membership

FSMA will convene a wellness committee **FSMA WC**, that will meet 4 or more 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 FSMA WC.

Our Wellness Committee membership will be assembled to incorporate at this point in time; the principal Courtney Fox, the nursing staff Christine Jacobs and Tara Weaver, PE teacher Kerry Smith. To our extent possible we will include representatives from the community and reflect the diversity of FSMA. Our membership will represent all school levels and include (to the extent possible), but not limited to: parents and caregivers; students; physical education teachers; health education teachers; school health professionals; and mental health and social services staff; school board members; and general public.

Leadership

A school wellness policy coordinator will ensure compliance with the policy by ensuring that the committee convenes to discuss and initiate/facilitate goals to be addressed in a development of a wellness policy; as well as ensure school compliance. Those in the committee will convene, to facilitate development of and update FSMA Wellness policy as needed.

Name	Title	Email Address	Role
Tara Weaver	RN	Tara.weaver@fsma.k12.de.us	Coordinator PTO compliance/ minutes
Kerry Smith	Physical Education Health Education	Kerry.Smith@fsma.k12.de.us	Fitness Advising/Health Education/ Adequate recess time
Courtney Fox	Principal	Courtney.fox@fsma.k12.de.us	Director of annual reports and ensure compliance of school.
Christine Jacobs	RN	Christine.jacobs@fsma.k12.de.us	School/teacher compliance within classrooms.

II. Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability, and Community Engagement

Implementation Plan:

Roles- as listed above and variable to change as needed or as WC grows.

1. Responsibilities: Each role has specific areas to address and ensure that the school, classrooms, teachers/staff, and community respond positively to policies and implement goals where needed.
2. Actions and timelines: Teachers will compile a marking period progress report and give to committee in order to communicate lesson plans and field trips that correlate with policy goals. We will regroup and discuss plans, and current implementation to ensure goals are being met within the classrooms. In addition, physical education instructor and nurses will deliberate to make sure that activity and nutritional needs are met on an ongoing and consistent basis according to state and federal guidelines.

Specific to school and who will make what change, by how much, where and when for goals specific to nutritional standards, physical education and school-based activities to that promote student wellness. The wellness policy and progress reports can be found at <https://firststatemontessori.org/>

Record Keeping

FSMA will retain records to document compliance with requirements of the wellness policy. These documents will be held within the nursing office and/or on FSMA's central computer network. Documentation will include:

1. The written wellness policy.
2. Efforts for community involvements requirements. (1) Active solicitation of members, (2) participation of development, implementation and periodic review and update policy by these group members.
3. Annual progress reports: In addition to teacher logs used to make progress reports throughout the year.
4. Triennial assessment of the policy
5. Compliance with public notification requirements: how they are made known to public and efforts to notify families of its availability.

Annual Progress Reports

FSMA will draft and release an annual progress report that will allow the community and school members to be aware of our current policies, changes, and ongoing commitments to healthy nutrition and physical activity. This annual report will be published in **June** of each year. It will be included on FSMA's website for the public to view and will describe our policy goals, events and activities specific to our wellness policy implementation as well as positions and titles and how to best get involved.

FSMA will establish and monitor goals and objectives for our school as appropriate and actively notify households/families with written and electronic awareness that our progress report is up on the website to view and additionally throughout the academic year as needed.

Triennial Progress Assessments

Every three years or more often as needed, FSMA will evaluate compliance with the wellness policy to assess the implementation of this policy and include:

- The extent to which FSMA's wellness policy compares to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's model wellness policy; and
- A description in the progress made in attaining the goals of our school wellness policy.

The position/person responsible for managing the triennial assessment will be the Wellness Committee. They will notify households and families of the availability of the triennial progress report with the same methods as described above for our Annual Progress notification.

Revisions and Updating the Policy

FSMA WC will update or modify the wellness policy based on results of the annual progress reports and triennial assessments, school priority changes, community needs change, wellness goals are met, new health and science classes or programs available, and technology emerges; and lastly as new Federal and state guidance or standards are issued. Any updates to the policy will be available on the school's website.

Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communication

FSMA is committed to being responsive to our community input. Our Wellness Committee in marriage with FSMA will actively communicate ways others may participate in the development, implementation, and reviews, as well as updates. FSMA will also provide progress and improvements made to the school meals and compliance with school meal standards with Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. We will use technology in the form of emails, website, and presentations or newsletters to encourage participation and updated changes to the policy so that families and the community can be actively notified. We will also make communication culturally and linguistically appropriate for the community at FSMA. We will do this at least once a year if not more often depending on the changes and implementation of policy needed. FSMA will also use these methods mentioned above to notify families and community about the availability of the annual and triennial reports. PTO meetings will be a valuable resource to present our information to FSMA's family community and open discussion and ideas presented by our parents/family members/caregivers.

NUTRITION

School Meals

FSMA is committed to serving healthy meals to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat milk; moderated in sodium, low in saturated fat, and zero grams *trans* fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification); and to meet nutritional needs of school children within their caloric requirements. The school meal programs aim to improve the diet and health of our 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. FSMA also operates additional nutritional related programs and activities such as Breakfast in the Classroom ready for children when they come to school within their own classroom. We offer school meals that:

- Are accessible to students.
- Are served in clean and pleasant settings
- Meet or exceed current nutritional requirements established by local, state and federal statutes and regulations.
- Accommodate students with special dietary needs documented by a physician
- FSMA will implement at least four of the following five Farm to School activities:
 - Messages about agriculture and nutrition are reinforced throughout the learning environment.
 - School hosts field trips to local farms.
 - FSMA will utilize promotions or special events, such as tastings that highlight local/regional products.
 - At times available local agricultural products are incorporated into school meal program or classroom health activities that promote nutritional education.
 - Host a school garden if applicable to do so.
- Promote healthy food and beverage choices as they apply to our Montessori setting by following Smarter Lunchroom techniques:
 - Sliced or cut fruit is available daily or as often as possible.
 - A daily vegetable and fruit option is bundled into all grab and go meals available to students. (Packaged and delivered foods to classroom)
 - Student surveys and taste testing opportunities are used to inform menu development.
 - Students are allowed at least 10 minutes or more to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, starting when they receive their meal and sit.
 - Students are served lunch at a reasonable part of the day.
 - White milk is promoted over other beverages.

- Menus are posted on the FSMA website.

Water

To promote hydration, free, safe, unflavored drinking water will be available to all students throughout the day. This includes being available at meal times. In addition, students will be allowed to bring and carry (approved) water bottles filled with only water with them throughout the day.

- Water pitchers are available for each classroom in which students may help themselves to pouring a glass of water at any point throughout the day.
- Water fountains or bottle-less water coolers are found on each floor of the building.
- All water sources and containers will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure good hygiene standards. Such sources include drinking fountains, water jets, sinks, and pitchers served in classrooms.

Celebrations and Rewards

All foods offered on the school campus intended for child related activities are to meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutritional standard, including:

1. Celebrations and parties. FSMA will provide a list of healthy party ideas to teachers, including non-food celebration ideas. (From the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and USDA)
2. Classroom snacks brought in by parents (A list of foods and beverages that meet Smart Snack nutrition standards).
3. Rewards and incentives (FSMA will provide teachers and other relevant school staff a list of other ways to reward children).

Fundraising

Foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snack in Schools nutrition standards may be sold through fundraisers on the school campus during the school day. FSMA WC will make a list available to parents, teachers and PTO for healthy fundraising ideas:

- Healthy fundraiser options include but are not limited to:
 - Non-food fundraisers, fundraisers that encourage physical activity (such as, walk-a-thons, jump rope for heart, fun runs)
 - Fundraising during school hours will sell only non-food items or food and beverages that meet or exceed the Smart Snack nutrition standards.

Nutritional Promotion

Nutritional promotion and education positively influences lifelong eating behaviors by using evidenced-based techniques and nutritional messages. FSMA will promote healthy food and beverage choices for all students throughout the school's campus, as well as encourage participation in school meal programs.

- Respect for our bodies and how to best care for them with healthy nutrition options
- Confidence in our decisions.
- Be open and engaging in healthy nutrition conversations with students.
- USDA approved breakfast options available communally within classroom.
- Include nutritional education within classrooms for both practical life, and educational tools.
- Promote USDA snacks and beverages.

Nutrition Education

The school aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating habits by students. Montessori values educational efforts in both the classroom and through hands on manipulation of material, life practice skills, field trips and excursions, curriculum related outings such as gardening, games and song. FSMA will provide nutritional education and engage in nutritional promotion that:

- Designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also integrated into other classroom instruction through subjects such as math, science, language arts, social studies, life practice and specials;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally relevant, and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, taste-testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- Teach media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing; and
- Include nutrition education training for teachers and other staff.

Essential Healthy Eating Topics in Health Education

FSMA will include in the health education curriculum the following essential topics on healthy eating:

- The relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention
- Food guidance from MyPlate
- Reading and using USDA's food labels
- Eating a variety of foods everyday
- Balancing food intake with physical activity

- Eating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grain products
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol and do not contain *trans* fat
- Eating more calcium rich food
- 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

Physical Activity

Children and adolescents should participate in 60 minutes of physical activity every day. A substantial percentage of this can be obtained through school-based physical activity program that includes: physical education, recess, classroom-based physical activity, walking to school, and out of school time activities that FSMA is committed to providing such opportunities.

Physical activity such as recess or physical education will not be withheld as punishment for any reason, however does not include clubs or sports. A list of alternatives may be provided.

FSMA is committed and will ensure to the extent possible, that its grounds and facilities are safe and that equipment is available to students to be active. FSMA will conduct necessary inspections and repairs.

Physical Education

FSMA 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 lifelong healthy habits, as well as incorporate essential health education concepts.

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

Individualized fitness and activity assessments via Fitness Gram will use criterion- based recording for students.

Essential Physical Activity Topic in Health Education

FSMA will include in the health education curriculum the following essential topics on physical activity when health education is taught and/or when classroom topics are relevant. Montessori curriculum develops a multitude of activities that are added to the classroom experience that strengthen the Body-Kinesthetic union. Physical activity topics discussed within the classroom are then also followed up by experiences such as field trips, curriculum outings, outdoor play, games, performing arts; drama, dancing and role play; athletic games and musical concerts. Specific topics below will be introduced in these manners within and outside of the classroom:

- 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 inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease.
- Differences between physical activity, exercise, and fitness.
- Phases of exercise session: warm up, workout, warm down.
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity.
- Health related fitness: cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition.
- They physical, psychological, or social benefits to physical activity.
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community.
- Decreasing sedentary activities such as video games and TV.
- Preventing injury during physical activity.
- Weather related safety: sunburn, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia.
- 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 grades will offer at least **20 minutes of recess** on all or most days during the school year (two 20 minute recesses are offered for students in grades K-3). FSMA recognizes the need for elementary students to engage in active movement during the academic day. However, this policy may be waived on early dismissal or late arrival days. If recess is offered prior to lunch, hand- washing time as well as time to put away coats/hats/scarves must be allotted and be built into the recess transition period timeframe prior to eating. Sinks are available to the students to use prior to eating lunch and/or snacks.

Outdoor recess (open air) will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. Students will be allowed outside play except when temperatures are below school set temperatures including wind chill factors, and storms.

In the event that the school must conduct indoor recess, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students to the extent practicable.

Recess is to complement, not substitute, physical education class.

Classroom Physical Activity Breaks

FSMA recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided with periodic breaks. Opportunities to be active or to stretch throughout the day are offered to students often and as needed. This is included in stretching opportunities, yoga within the classrooms, and movement about the building. FSMA recognizes that students are more attentive and ready to learn if provided periodic breaks when they can be physically active or stretch. At times, when applicable, sensory breaks for movement will also be promoted.

Active Academics

Within the Montessori ideals, it is common that teachers will incorporate movement and kinesthetic learning approaches into “core” subject instruction when applicable. Walking to field

trips for example is also encouraged when able to do so. FSMA staff does their part to limit sedentary behaviors during the day when applicable.

FSMA supports classroom teachers incorporating physical activity and employing kinesthetic learning approaches into core subjects and supplies resources, opportunities, and material needed in order to make the connection between learning and movement.

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

Before and After School Activities

FSMA offers opportunities for students to participate in physical activity after the school day through a variety of methods. FSMA will encourage students to be physically active before and after school by providing the following:

- Girls on the Run in which community and staff volunteer to run alongside each other and students to raise physical activity and confidence for female students.
- After school clubs that incorporate physical education and activity.
- After school clubs that provide nutritional education and hands on learning within the USDA guidelines.
- After school clubs that promote social and emotional wellness such as yoga, drama, and Odyssey of the Mind.

Active Transport

FSMA will support active transport at school grounds to commute between buildings during the academic school day. Including, upon arrival to school and dismissal. FSMA will encourage this behavior by engaging in these proactive activities:

- Designated safety staff for crosswalk; crossing guard.
- Use crosswalks on streets leading to school.
- Educate students on travel safety between buildings.

Community Health and Promotion and Engagement

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

As described in the “Community Involvement, Outreach, and Communication” subsection, FSMA will use electronic mechanisms as well as non-electric mechanisms (such as presentations,

newsletters, and sending written material home), to ensure that all families are actively notified of opportunities to participate in school-sponsored activities and receive information about health promotion efforts.

Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

FSMA will implement strategies to support staff in actively promoting and modeling healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. FSMA promotes staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management that are accessible and free or low-cost.

Professional Learning

When feasible, FSMA will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and school (such as increasing the use of kinesthetic teaching approaches or including nutrition lessons into math class). The concrete Montessori classroom already focuses and encompasses the idea and value of varied learning and bodily kinesthetic intelligence. Our staff is excited to continue professional learning that helps develop understanding the connections between academics and health and the ways in which health and wellness are integrated into ongoing school reform and academic improvements and efforts.