



Bloomington Montessori School Wellness Policy

Bloomington Montessori School believes that good nutrition and regular physical activity are essential to children's health and well-being. Good health contributes significantly to educational success, and BMS is committed to supporting each student's success.

BMS utilizes NutriKids /Six Cents Certification for the creation of balanced, healthy meals in accordance with state and federal guidelines. All USDA nutritional guidelines are followed, with a focus on incorporating fresh fruit and vegetables into daily meals and snacks. Additionally, vegetarian options are offered to students.

Physical education and organized activities during recess daily promote wellness and movement to prevent childhood obesity.

BMS also encourages parents to discuss the menu and food choices with their children, providing them with additional education on good nutrition.

Below is a list of guidelines that frame our Wellness Program's policies and practices.

- BMS Health Advisory Council: Wellness Coordinator:
 - The current BMS School Health Advisory Council includes the Head of School, Kitchen Manager, Accountant, and Office Assistant, with the Head of School being BMS's Wellness Coordinator.
- Stakeholder Participation:
 - BMS students, families, teachers, staff, administrators, and board members may participate in the implementation, evaluation, and updating of the school's wellness policy.
- USDA Requirements for School Meals:

- School meals meet USDA requirements through the use of NutriKids/Six Cents Certification, which ensures the creation of balanced, healthy meals in accordance with state and federal guidelines.
- Nutritional Guidelines for All Foods and Beverages Sold:
 - No food is sold on the school campus during the school day, except for the school meals, which meet USDA requirements.
 - Meals served through the NSLP will be appealing and attractive to children, provided in clean and pleasant settings, and will offer a variety of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. They will also serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk, as well as nutritionally equivalent non-dairy alternatives. Students will have a minimum of 20 minutes to eat lunch.
 - Fundraisers in which food is sold will be limited to twice a year and will occur outside of school hours.
- Nutritional Guidelines for Non-Sold Foods and Beverages:
 - All foods offered to students while in class, during the school day, will meet or exceed the USDA nutrition standards, including:
 - Celebrations and parties. Classrooms will provide parents with a list of healthy snack options.
- Food and Beverage Marketing:
 - No foods are overtly marketed on the school campus, and marketing of unhealthy foods is prohibited. Staff and others who enter are encouraged to model healthy and sustainable choices when eating or drinking within view of the students.
- Nutrition Education:
 - Nutrition education is integrated throughout our curriculum, ensuring instruction is sequential and benchmark-based, which provides our students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to lead healthy lives.
 - Nutrition education shall provide opportunities for students to undertake appropriate projects related to nutrition, involving, when possible, community agencies and organizations.
- Nutrition Promotion:
 - Nutrition promotion is featured throughout our parent handbooks and is an integral part of our school culture.
 - Staff members will model healthy eating habits by dining with students in the school dining areas.

- Foods of minimal nutritional value, including brands and illustrations, shall not be advertised or marketed.
- Physical Activity:
 - Movement is encouraged throughout the day, as Montessori classrooms incorporate movement into students' daily work.
 - Students in every classroom will have a minimum of one outdoor recess daily, weather permitting.
 - If outdoor recess is not possible due to inclement weather, teachers will provide an indoor physical activity break in the classroom.
 - Upper Elementary students will participate in physical education weekly.
 - Taking away recess as a form of punishment is prohibited and enforced.
- Student Wellness:
 - Students will have access to free palatable drinking water during the day and have the option to bring their own water bottle from home.
 - Snacks served in after care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, emphasizing fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and the importance of water as a beverage.
 - A weekly Run Club, held by the Monroe County Health Department School Liaison and BMS Parent Volunteers, is offered every spring to our elementary students.
 - Annual vision screening is provided to students in first, third, and fifth grades; hearing screening is provided to students in kindergarten, first, and fourth; and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire is provided to preschool and kindergarten families.
- Wellness Policy Evaluation:
 - Evaluation of the school Wellness Policy will occur every three years, with a summary of the results published for public view on the school website. The evaluation will assess the extent to which this policy aligns with model school wellness policies and also evaluate the progress made in achieving established goals. The evaluation will include the name of the evaluation tool used within the school wellness policy. (Ex. Local School Wellness Policy: Triennial Assessment Template).

- Communication:
 - The Head of School will distribute information at the beginning of the school year to families of school children, include it in the Parent, Policy, and Staff Handbooks, and post the wellness policy on the school's website, including an assessment of its implementation.

Link to our Nutrition Programs information on our BMS website:

<https://bloomingtonmontessori.org/resources/nutrition-programs/>