

School Board Executive Summary

Topic: Student Wellness Annual Progress Report (2025-2026)

Date: May 11, 2026

Presented by: Mark Weichel, Asst. Supt., Teaching & Learning
Erin Vik, Director of Nutrition Services



Recommended Action: ☒ Information Only
☐ Presentation/Discussion
☐ Discussion/Action by Board of Education
☐ Presentation/Action Next Meeting

Recommendation: None at this time. Informational progress report on student wellness and wellbeing.

Background: This written report includes the annual activities taking place during the 2025-2026 school year in each of the six goal areas described in Board Policy #5660 - Student Wellness. There are many opportunities for parents, businesses, and community members to become involved in student wellness, including volunteering.

Health and Nutrition Education:	<p>Elementary: Students can participate in the Kids Heart Challenge, which is a fun, active program in partnership with the American Heart Association. K–6 students learn about heart health, build healthy habits, and have the option to raise funds in support of a worthy cause. Elementary schools take part in the challenge on an every-other-year rotation.</p> <p>WMS: In 8th-grade Health, students explore physical, mental, and social health while learning how to make informed decisions and avoid risky behaviors. They study the dangers of vaping through a recorded presentation from the Douglas County Sheriff's Office and examine how to choose healthier meals using the MyPlate model. Students also discuss different types of relationships, including healthy, unhealthy, and abusive ones, with a focus on recognizing and preventing dating violence.</p> <p>Students complete a research project on communicable diseases, giving them the opportunity to explore specific illnesses and how they spread.</p> <p>Both 7th and 8th-grade students learn about the proper use and potential misuse of social media. Additional topics covered include the reproductive systems and strategies for making positive choices and delaying risky behaviors.</p> <p>WHS: The Freshman Healthy Living course continues to include mindfulness in the mental health unit. A new system helps students better understand portion sizes by using their hands as a visual guide.</p>
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Health and Nutrition Education continued:	<p>During the drug and alcohol unit, students hear from approved guest speakers who include individuals in recovery and addiction specialists who answer student questions. Healthy Living also features presentations on suicide prevention and sexual assault, including topics related to sex trafficking.</p> <p>Students receive instruction on sport-specific nutrition, which highlights the importance of timing post-workout meals and proper hydration for peak performance.</p> <p>Most guest speakers have Westside connections, including alumni, local law enforcement, attorneys, and health and fitness professionals. In addition, Garet Moravec, a Sports Psychologist now on staff, works individually with referred students and leads sessions with both male and female Sports Performance classes.</p>
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Physical Activities & Education:	<p>K-12: Health and Physical Education are taught at every grade level. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that instruction reflects current best practices and meets the needs of all students.</p> <p>5th and 6th grade: Students participate in FitnessGram testing each fall and spring. This includes a series of assessments focused on the five components of health-related physical fitness: cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition. Students complete the following tests: push-ups, sit-ups, trunk lift, sit-and-reach, PACER (a cardiovascular endurance run), and height/weight measurements.</p> <p>Middle School: Middle school PE classes continue to meet every other day. Students stay active while building skills and habits that support lifelong fitness. Classes include games, competitions, and instruction focused on proper form and technique. Our Unified PE/Health program also continues to grow, pairing students with peer partners who support them in class and throughout the school day.</p> <p>High School: Westside High School's Health and Physical Education program is committed to providing an inclusive curriculum that equips all students with the skills and knowledge to lead healthy, active lives.</p> <p>Most health and PE classes now meet daily in shorter "mod" periods, giving students regular opportunities to move, manage stress, and stay engaged. Cross Training/Aerobics and Lifetime Fitness include a yoga unit that introduces students to the physical and mental benefits of the practice. Strength and Conditioning 1 and 2 use iPads and the Rack Coach App, allowing students to access and track their workouts anytime, anywhere.</p> <p>Cross Training also features a social dance unit where students learn Salsa, country swing, Polka, and line dancing, giving them skills they can use at social events and in the community.</p>
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Physical Activities & Education continued:	The WHS Unified (Adaptive) PE class, in partnership with Special Olympics Nebraska, continues to grow. Enrollment is up, and the course has expanded with new activities, lessons, and materials to enhance the experience for all students.
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School-Based Activities to Promote Student Wellness:	<p>Schools across the district host a wide variety of building-led activities that promote wellness, movement, and connection. These include:</p> <p>Field Day, monthly Unified athletic events, wellness open gym nights, Fun Run, Girls on the Run, Walk and Bike to School Day, Triple B Field Day, Turkey Trot, kickball tournament, Walking Club, Running Club, Try a Bite, Taco Ride, Screen-Free Week, Striders Club, Fall Jammie Jog, Earth Day activities, Sock Hop, Soccer Club, Calm Kids, dance, and open gym opportunities with activities like basketball and kickball.</p>
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Nutrition Services:	<p>Westside Nutrition Services continues to expand the concept of raw-ingredient menu items across the district and beyond. We have expanded the selection of fresh fruit and vegetables at all grade levels, and we have expanded the product base for farm-to-school options beyond apples and melons. This now includes local poultry and dairy, as well as continued growth in local vegetable sourcing. Westside Nutrition Services continues to look for opportunities to engage in classroom and other learning activities, whether in nutritional education or otherwise. While governed by federal and state mandates, WCS holds itself to a higher standard, ensuring creative, tasty, safe, and healthy foods throughout the district.</p> <p>Product sourcing remains a challenge. Westside Nutrition Services continues to work with our suppliers, buying in bulk and directly from some distributors, helping ensure we continue to supply consistent meals to WCS students while maintaining menu integrity and variety.</p>
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Counseling, Psychological & Health/Social Services:	<p>As a supplement to the comprehensive mental and behavioral health supports delivered by classroom teachers, special educators, school psychologists, counselors, and social workers in Westside Community Schools partners with Children's Behavioral Health and One World to offer students/families access to high-quality care provided by licensed clinical psychologists within the middle and high schools, as well as at the Children's Behavioral Health clinic on 90th and Western.</p> <p>The Elementary i66 program, housed at Westbrook (the former Boys & Girls Club on the north side), continues to grow. Enhancing and expanding the program, both in personnel and space, has allowed the District to address the individual behavioral challenges of approximately 20 students, who are/have been placed in i66. Further expansions slated for the 2026/27 school year will increase student capacity to up to 40 students. This increased capacity will allow us to continue responding more promptly to our schools when they are challenged by significant student behaviors. In addition, we are reducing overall elementary contract tuition expenditures and are committed to providing high-quality educational and behavioral support in an alternate setting.</p>
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Counseling, Psychological & Health/Social Services continued:	<p>The One World Health mobile clinic continues to offer routine health checks and screenings for physical and mental/emotional health and wellness, provide vaccinations, and deliver treatment to students. The One World Mobile Clinic for ADHD, Depression, or other similar concerns provides an intake with a licensed clinician who can do medication management and refer for further evaluation to the Children's Behavioral Health psychiatrist, regardless of the family's ability to pay. If the family has insurance, the bill will be sent to the insurance provider. If they do not have insurance or established medical care, then OneWorld will cover the cost of the visit and, sometimes, prescriptions at no cost to the family. Families who are bilingual can access this resource through One World Health bilingual staff and interpreters. The One World Mobile Health Clinic partnership is available four times a month at three Westside buildings. Locations for these visits are Westgate, WMS, and WHS.</p> <p>Westside's partnership with One World Health has also expanded to a stand-alone Student Health-Based Center located in the new Hillside Elementary. Doors opened to students and staff in January 2026.</p> <p>Additionally, following teacher feedback from the HR Stay Survey, the district will offer multiple professional learning opportunities to provide practical behavioral and social-emotional prevention and intervention strategies to both new and veteran teachers.</p>
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Safe School Environment:	<p>The 2025-2026 school year marked a significant evolution in our district's commitment to student wellness through enhanced physical security and emergency preparedness. By integrating cutting-edge technology with proactive human response protocols, we have created a layered defense system designed to protect our students, staff, and visitors.</p> <p><u>Emergency Preparedness & Response Protocols</u></p> <p>Our district has moved beyond static planning to a dynamic, technology-driven response:</p> <p>Full Raptor Emergency Management Rollout: Successfully deployed across all 14 buildings, this system allows staff to initiate Standard Response Protocols (SRP) instantly. During drills this year, staff demonstrated excellence in student accountability and real-time communication.</p> <p>ALICE Implementation: We have incorporated ALICE protocols district-wide. This shift empowers staff with proactive, flexible options (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) to maximize survival through adaptability when seconds count.</p> <p>Standardized Threat Protocols: We implemented rigorous, district-wide protocols to address swatting, bomb threats, and door propping, ensuring a uniform response to modern security challenges.</p>
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<p>Safe School Environment continued:</p>	<p><u>Advanced Threat Detection & Integration</u></p> <p>We have achieved a "best-in-class" response time by bridging the gap between detection and action:</p> <p>ZeroEyes AI & Raptor Integration: ZeroEyes AI weapon detection is now active on all district cameras. Critically, we have linked this to Raptor; a verified lethal weapon detection now triggers an automatic lockdown within 10 seconds, removing human delay from the equation.</p> <p>Axon FUSUS Pilot: We are concluding a successful pilot at the high school and middle school. This allows the Police Department's Real-Time Operation Center (ROC) direct access to our camera feeds during emergencies. In recent drills, ROC operators successfully guided SROs to "intruders" without the latency of traditional 911 dispatch.</p> <p><u>Visitor Management & Facility Hardening</u></p> <p>Securing the perimeter and vetting those who enter remains a top priority:</p> <p>Raptor Visitor Management: Traditional paper logs have been replaced with digital screening. All visitors must present ID, allowing for instant checks against sex offender registries and internal custom alerts.</p> <p>OneSource Background Checks: We implemented a standardized protocol through OneSource for all visitors, volunteers, and contractors, ensuring that everyone working near students has undergone a thorough, professional background screening.</p> <p>High School Security Enhancements: We are nearing completion of a project to add door-position sensors and sirens to prevent unauthorized entry. New biometric (fingerprint) authentication secures after-school access, while digital ID integration at the front vestibule ensures students are thoroughly vetted before entering the interior "safe zone" of the building.</p> <p><u>Compliance & Continuous Improvement</u></p> <p>LB757 & ALICAP Inspections: The LB757 committee has implemented new ALICAP (All Lines Interlocal Cooperative Aggregate Pool) inspections for every building. These specialized risk-assessment audits ensure our facilities meet the highest safety standards for insurance and operational excellence.</p>
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Attachment(s): Policy 5660 and Regulation 5660-R

TOPIC CATEGORY: STUDENTS
NUMBER CATEGORY: 5000
TITLE: STUDENT WELLNESS
NUMBER: 5660

The District provides curriculum, instruction and experiences in an environment that promotes student wellness and that seeks to promote habits of lifelong learning and health. This policy represents a systematic approach to improving the health of all students so they can fully participate and be successful in school. The wellness process involves bringing together school administrators, staff members, students, families, and the community to set priorities to promote lifelong healthy habits. Health promotion efforts shall be across various interrelated components, which include health education, physical education, nutrition services, counseling, psychological and social services, healthy and safe school environments, staff wellness, and family and community involvement.

A. Goals of the District to Promote Student Wellness

1. **Health and Nutrition Education:** To provide students with the opportunities to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for making health-promoting decisions, achieve health literacy, and adopt and maintain healthy behaviors. District curriculum shall meet or exceed the health and nutrition education objectives established by the Nebraska Department of Education.
2. **Physical Activities and Education:** To provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge for lifelong participation in physical activities. District curriculum shall meet or exceed the health and physical education objectives established by the Nebraska Department of Education.
3. **School-Based Activities to Promote Student Wellness:** School-based activities may include wellness programs specifically directed to students at that building.
4. **Nutrition Services:** To provide access to a variety of appealing and nutritious foods and beverages and in conformity with state and federal requirements.
5. **Counseling, Psychological, and Health/Social Services:** To promote and improve student's mental, emotional and social health and provide students with access to school counselors, psychologists, and social workers.
6. **Safe School Environment:** To maintain a healthy and safe school environment that includes both the physical surroundings and the psychosocial climate and culture of the school, which includes the physical, emotional and social conditions that affect the well-being of students and staff.

B. Nutrition Requirements for Foods Sold on School Grounds

The food and beverages sold by the District's Nutrition Services Department shall meet or exceed the requirements of state and federal laws and regulations.

In accordance with state law, no competitive food shall be sold to students at any time prior to or during the school day up through 30 minutes after the conclusion of lunch service. "Competitive food"

means food and beverages sold to students at school other than by the Nutrition Services Department and includes food and beverages sold to students in connection with fundraising activities.

1. Fundraising and Other Food Sales During the School Day

- a. No sale of competitive food for fundraising (or any other purpose) may occur prior to or during the school day up through one-half hour after lunch service.
- b. At times that are at least 30 minutes after the end of lunch service up through 30 minutes after the end of the school day, the sale of competitive food is allowed only if:
 1. It is approved in advance by the building principal; and
 2. The food item is commercially prepared and meets USDA Smart Snacks in Schools nutritional requirements.

“Sale of competitive food” does not include fundraisers where items are ordered for later delivery and consumption at home, such as frozen food items, Girl Scout cookies, etc.

2. Fundraisers and other food sales after school hours

Food sales at concession stands, fun nights, fundraisers, etc. that occur more than 30 minutes after the end of the school day are not subject to federal nutrition requirements. Nevertheless, the District encourages the offering of healthy snacks at such events.

3. Homemade Food Sales

Home-prepared or homemade items are not permitted to be sold on school grounds or at school-sponsored events.

C. Snacks and Celebrations

The District’s commitment to child wellness, food safety and allergy awareness includes not only food provided through the District’s Nutrition Services program, but also to food provided by parents and staff to students, such as during snack time or during classroom events / celebrations. The following requirements apply only to food shared with other students, and not to food provided by parents to their own child(ren):

1. Elementary Classrooms

Food distributed to students during the school day in the elementary buildings must appear on the District-Approved Classroom Treat Options List. The District shall communicate that list, and updates to the list, to parents through a variety of platforms.

A list of District-approved candies for class Valentine’s Day and Halloween parties will be provided to parents prior to those events.

Home prepared or homemade foods are not permitted to be distributed or shared.

2. Middle School and High School Classrooms

Food provided to students during the school day in the classroom must be commercially prepared. Home prepared or homemade items are not permitted to be distributed or shared.

D. Use of Food by Staff as Incentives or Rewards

The District discourages the use of food as an incentive or reward for students. If food items are distributed by staff, such food must be from a District-approved list

E. Assurance for Reimbursable School Meals

The District gives the assurance that the District's guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of section 10 of the Child Nutrition Act (42 U.S.C. 1779) and section 9(f)(1) and 17(a) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758(f)(1), 1766(a)), as those regulations and guidance apply to the District.

F. Policy Implementation

The superintendent or his or her designee(s) shall be responsible for monitoring district programs and curriculum to ensure compliance with this policy and with any regulations established by the administration to carry out the requirements of this policy, and shall establish a plan for measuring the implementation of the wellness policy.

G. Community Participation

Parents, students, representatives of the Nutrition Services Department, physical education staff members, school health professionals, school board members, administrators, and the community have had and shall have the opportunity to develop, implement and be involved in periodic review and update of this policy. The District Student Wellness Policy committee included the Director of Nutrition Services, a VNA school nurse, a school board member, a school counselor, a student, a principal, two physical education staff members, and two district administrators.

H. Measuring Implementation of Student Wellness Policy

1. Annual Progress Report to Board

The Superintendent or designee(s) shall report at least annually to the Board the District's progress toward meeting the goals contained in this policy, the progress in meeting the goals of this policy during the previous school year, and shall include:

- The web address where this policy may be accessed by the public;
- A description of the District's progress in meeting wellness goals;

- A summary of District events or activities related to implementation of this student wellness policy;
- The name, position title, and contact information of the Superintendent's designee(s) in charge of leading/coordinating the student wellness policy;
- Information on how the public can get involved in student wellness in the District.

2. Triennial Assessment

At least once every three years, the District shall assess compliance with this student wellness policy. The assessment must measure the implementation of this policy, and include:

- The extent to which the schools are in compliance with this student wellness policy;
- The extent to which this student wellness policy compares to model local wellness policies, if any; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of this policy.

The District shall recommend to the board any appropriate updates or modifications to this policy based on the triennial assessment and annual progress reports.

I. Recordkeeping Requirement

The District must retain records to document compliance with the requirements of this policy. These records shall include, but not be limited to a copy of this policy, plus documentation:

- demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including requirements to make this policy, annual progress reports, and triennial assessments available to the public;
- of the triennial assessment; and
- of annual progress reports.

Legal Reference: Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, 42 USC 1751; Regulations and Procedures for Accreditation of Schools, NDE Rule 10; NDE Coordinated School Health Policy; National School Lunch Program, 42 USC §§1751-1760; 1770; 7 CFR § 210

POLICY ADOPTED: May 1, 2006

POLICY AMENDED: March 23, 2015

POLICY AMENDED: July 17, 2017

TOPIC CATEGORY: STUDENTS
NUMBER CATEGORY: 5000
TITLE: STUDENT WELLNESS - REGULATION
NUMBER: 5660R

Implementation Plan

Policy 5660 contains goals to promote student wellness and instill habits of lifelong learning and health. This regulation establishes various procedures for implementation of those goals.

1. Health and Nutrition Education

- a. Curriculum: Nutrition education will be integrated into other subjects to complement, but not replace, the health and nutrition education curriculum that is provided in accordance with NDE Rule 10. Educators will incorporate the promotion of healthy lifestyles and good nutrition in all subject areas as appropriate.
- b. Display Nutrition Education Materials: School buildings shall display educational materials to promote healthy nutritional habits. Educators are encouraged to incorporate such materials in their classrooms as well. Posting of advertisements in school buildings for foods of minimal nutritional value is not permitted.
- c. Nutrition Health Events: Staff members are encouraged to seek out and take advantage of events that promote nutrition education. Activities may include:
 - Health fairs;
 - Traveling health exhibits;
 - Field trips to farms or food production facilities;
 - Community garden activities; and
 - Health speakers (school assemblies, class speakers, community-wide events, etc.)
- d. Parents: School communications to parents will periodically include information on health and nutrition, such as information about healthy snacks for children as well as an annual summary of information on the District's progress in implementing the student wellness policy.
- e. Staff: Students are more likely to internalize healthy habits when the adults around them are healthy role models; therefore, staff members are encouraged, where appropriate, to:
 - Model consumption of healthful foods and beverages; and
 - Allow students to bring water bottles to classes.

2. Physical Activities and Education

a. Curriculum: Health and physical education will be integrated into other subjects to complement, but not replace, the health and physical education curriculum provided in accordance with NDE Rule 10. Teachers should incorporate physical activity promotion of active lifestyles in all subject areas as appropriate.

b. Physical Activity: Research demonstrates a strong correlation between physical activity and mental alertness. Teachers are encouraged to institute regular, routine physical activity breaks of short duration and moderate vigor during class periods in order to promote an optimal academic environment.

Elementary students will have the opportunity for daily recess. Secondary students will have the opportunity to participate in intramural sports.

Teachers are encouraged to seek out and take advantage of events that promote physical activity education. Activities may include:

- health fairs
- traveling health exhibits
- field trips that promote physical activity
- physical activity speakers (school assemblies, class speakers, community events)

3. School-Based Activities to Promote Student Wellness

a. Student Wellness Programs: Student Wellness programs have been established at the elementary, middle, and high school levels in the District. At the elementary level, the activities are coordinated by Physical Education teachers in each building, who oversee participation in the Fuel Up to Play 60 Program founded by the National Dairy Council and the NFL. At the middle and high school levels, the Educators Health Alliance Program activities that all Westside employees are invited to participate in has now been expanded to include students.

b. Extracurricular Programs: The District will offer athletic and other activity programs, subject to and in compliance with the bylaws of the Nebraska School Activities Association.

c. Advertising: The District will monitor advertising that occurs in the school to limit messages that promote foods of minimal nutritional value.

d. Professional Growth: Staff members will be provided with professional development and guidance by the school's student wellness teams.

4. Nutrition Services

The Director of Nutrition Services is designated as the administrator responsible for overseeing the District's compliance with federal and state nutrition requirements.

a. Classroom Celebrations: Westside Community Schools promotes student wellness and safety by allowing for the distribution of safe and healthy foods for student consumption and by taking precautions to prevent exposure of any student to known allergens.

Any classroom celebrations that include food must meet the following requirements:

Elementary School Classroom Celebrations: Food provided to students during the school day in the classroom must be commercially prepared and individually packaged (except in kindergarten) and must meet USDA Smart Snack Guidelines. The District will make its list of approved Smart Snack items available to parents and staff. Home prepared or homemade foods are not permitted.

Smart Snack guidelines are not required for a limited number of holiday celebrations in the elementary schools such as Valentine's Day and Halloween parties; however such food must be commercially prepared and packaged.

Middle School and High School Classroom Celebrations: Food provided to students during the school day in the classroom must be commercially prepared. Home prepared or homemade items are not permitted.

b. Use of Food by Staff as Incentives or Rewards: Staff are encouraged to use non-food items if incentives or rewards for students are utilized. If food items are used, staff are permitted to distribute only food items from the approved list provided by the District. Distribution of non-approved food items by staff is prohibited.

5. Counseling, Psychological, and Health/Social Services

The District promotes and improves student's mental, emotional, and social health by providing access to qualified counselors, psychologists, and social workers.

6. Safe School Environment

The District maintains a healthy and safe school environment that includes both the physical surroundings and the psychosocial climate and culture of the school.

REGULATION ADOPTED: May 1, 2006

REGULATION AMENDED: March 23, 2015

REGULATION AMENDED: July 17, 2017