

2022 Wellness Triennial Policy and Implementation Review Suffield Public Schools

The District must conduct a Triennial Review of Wellness Policies and Implementation. This includes a review of how the District's policies meet federal requirements and guidelines in five key areas: Nutrition Education (NE), Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals (SM), Nutrition standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages (NS), Physical Education and Physical Activity (PEPA), and Wellness Promotion and Marketing (WPM).

This process began with a structured review of the District's Wellness policies including:

- Wellness Policy (P6142.101)
- Food Service Menus and Services: Sale of Beverages During Non-School Hours (3542.34)
- Student Discipline: Physical Education and Discipline of Students (5144.4)
- Food Services Operation: Charging Policy (3542.43)

All policies can be found on the Board of Education page at www.suffield.org.

First, a detailed review of policies was conducted and then an interview of relevant staff members, including Assistant Principals Jack Ferraro (AWS), Melissa Todd (MIS), Tim Malley (Food Service Director), Dan Gatto, PE/Health teacher (SHS), Heather Casinghino, PE/Health teacher (SMS), and Denise Raymond, PE/Health teacher (MIS).

Section 1: Nutrition Education

Strong Policies and Aligned Practices (2/8 standards)

A review of the policies reveals that the district has strong and specific goals for nutrition education "consistent with applicable federal and state requirements and guidelines" (P6142.101). This is reflected in an education program that uses a variety of means, to incorporate nutritional education into interactive lessons and skills-based learning at the high school level in both Life Education I and II.

Need to Create Practice Implementation Plan (1/8 standards)

The Board should create more specific policies guiding sequential and comprehensive nutrition education program at all levels (elementary, middle and high school levels). Nutrition education is not currently a part of the K-8 Health curriculum.

Update Policies (1/8 standards)

Though Nutrition Education is taught at the high school level, it is not specified in Board policy.

Opportunities for Growth (4/8 standards)

The Suffield School system has an opportunity to grow in integrating nutrition education into other subjects beyond health education. It exists in pockets (Agriculture Education and Family and Consumer Sciences), but exposure to these courses is student dependent and some students will not experience nutrition education beyond the Life Education class.

Section 2: Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals

Strong Policies and Aligned Practices (5/10 standards)

The District provides a breakfast program daily to all students that meets the regulations for the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act. The District also has strong policy and implementation of procedures to protect the privacy of families participating in Free/Reduced Lunch (FRL) programs. Families are universally offered the opportunity to participate in FRL at the beginning of each school year through the school website. Families may upload payment onto their accounts, and these accounts are accessed by students through their student IDs. These student IDs are used by all students universally, regardless of whether they participate in the FRL lunch program in order to safeguard student privacy. Students owing money may charge up to three lunches before a letter is sent to families to obtain payment. And students owing money will get a basic lunch regardless of their families' ability to pay. Food Service Staff members are also provided training that meets and exceeds standards set by the USDA, including training in maintaining student privacy.

Need to Create Practice Implementation Plan (0/10 standards)

None

Update Policies (4/10 standards)

Though practices to ensure student privacy regarding access to FRL lunch programs are in place, the policy does not specifically describe the practices used to ensure privacy.

Further policies outlining increased participation in the school meal programs is recommended. For instance, though every student has a lunch period at all levels K-12, this is not specifically articulated in policy. The USDA requires that water be available at no cost to students in the lunchroom. Though the practice is followed (either with a water fountain, bottle filler or water pitcher), this is not specifically articulated in policy.

A time allotment for breakfast and lunch (25 minutes) programs is also not articulated in policy, but is clearly in place in schools.

Opportunities for Growth (1/10 standards)

The district has an opportunity for growth in policy and practice in the area of farm to school programs to procure locally grown and produced food from local producers.

Section 3: Nutrition standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages

Strong Policies and Aligned Practices (9/13)

The USDA regulates the nutritional standards of foods offered in school. All foods offered in the school lunch program meet these USDA standards. Where competitive foods are offered in the a la cart menu or vending machines, they continue to meet the standards for Smart Snacks. If classrooms have celebrations, they obtain food from the school lunch program, and homemade food is restricted for classroom celebration, in order to ensure nutritional standards. This expectation is communicated to families at the beginning of the year by all teachers. The wellness policy articulates alternatives to food options for families.

The school lunch program also provides Smart Snacks for the after school care programs. Fundraisers selling food not meeting standards may not occur during school hours. Vending machines are present in the high school lunchroom, but operate on a timer that does not allow for the competitive sale of snacks during lunch hours.

Water fountains are universally available to students in the lunch rooms.

Need to Create Practice Implementation Plan (0/13)

None

Update Policies (2/13)

The Board should consider two policy updates. The first is regarding the sale of caffeinated, which is not done in practice, but is not reflected in the policy. Access to free water throughout the day is also a part of practice, but not articulated in the policies.

Opportunities for Growth (0/13)

Section 4: Physical Education and Physical Activity (PEPA)

Strong Policies and Aligned Practices (14/16)

The Policies and Practices are aligned. The district promotes physical activity and breaks throughout the day. Each school has physical activity as part of their core curriculum. New courtyards, open gym and access to outdoor eating at lunch has promoted additional physical activity opportunities. Students at the elementary schools participate in the “Ride to School Day” and “ Funky Foot Challenge” each spring and the new Outdoor Learning Lab located across from the high school. Additionally, the town just completed the sidewalk project which now connects all four schools and will increase the potential for walking field trips.

Need to Create Practice Implementation Plan (0/16)

None

Update Policies (0/16)

None

Opportunities for Growth (0/16)

None

Section 5: Wellness Promotion and Marketing (WPM)

Strong Policies and Aligned Practices (12/12)

Need to Create Practice Implementation Plan (0/12)

Update Policies (0/12)

Opportunities for Growth (0/12)