

# TRIENNIAL WELLNESS POLICY ASSESSMENT

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The triennial assessment requirement for USDA Local School Wellness Policies requires school districts to comprehensively evaluate their wellness policies and initiatives every three years. This assessment serves as a systematic review to gauge the policies' effectiveness, impact, and compliance in promoting the health and well-being of students and staff.

## Facts about this assessment

- The assessment covered 36 nutrition, health and physical education items from the WellSat 3.0 tool
- NSD's Nutrition, Health, and Physical Education Policy (3700) was last update in February of 2023
- NSD's Nutrition and Physical Fitness Procedure (3700P) was last updated in February of 2017
- 94% of schools responded to the onsite implementation assessment questionnaire

## Assessment Recommendations Key

### Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation

Policy language is not specific enough or missing. Implementation is inconsistent.

### Create practice implementation

Policy language is present, but implementation is inconsistent.

### Update policy or procedure

Implementation is present, but policy language is not specific enough or is missing.

## Assessment Recommendations by Topic

### Nutrition Education

1. Nutrition education teaches skills that are behavior-focused, interactive, and/or participatory.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
2. All elementary school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education.  
**Recommendation:** Create practice implementation
3. Links nutrition education with the school food environment.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
4. Nutrition education addresses agriculture and the food system.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation

### Standards for School Meals

1. Access to USDA School Breakfast Program.

- Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
2. Strategies to increase participation in school meal programs.  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure
  3. Amount of 'seat time' students have to eat school meals.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
  4. Annual training for food and nutrition services staff that aligns with USDA Professional Standards.  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure

## Competitive Foods & Beverages

1. Food not used as reward.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
2. Compliance with USDA Smart Snacks for all food and beverages sold during the school day.  
**Recommendation:** Create practice implementation
3. Regulates food and beverages served at class parties and other school celebrations.  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure
4. Nutrition Standards for all foods and beverages served to students after the school day, including before/after care on school grounds, clubs, and after-school programming.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
5. Nutrition Standards for all foods and beverages sold to students after the school day, including before/after care on school grounds, clubs, and after-school programming.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
6. Availability of free drinking water throughout the school day.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
7. Addresses fundraising with food to be consumed during the school day.  
**Recommendation:** Create practice implementation
8. Exemptions for infrequent school-sponsored fundraisers.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation

## Physical Education and Activity

1. Written physical education curriculum aligned with national and/or state standards.  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure
2. Time per week of physical education instruction for all elementary school students.  
**Recommendation:** Create practice implementation
3. Qualifications for physical education teachers for grades K-12.  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure

4. Physical education training for physical education teachers.  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure
5. Physical education exemption requirements for all students.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
6. Before and after school physical activity, including clubs, intramural, and interscholastic opportunities.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
7. Recess for all elementary school students.  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure
8. Physical activity breaks during school.  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure
9. Joint or shared-use agreements for physical activity participation at all schools.  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure
10. Active transport (Safe Routes to School).  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure

## Wellness Promotion and Marketing

1. Encourages staff to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
2. Physical activity not being used as a punishment.  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure
3. Physical activity not being withheld as a punishment.  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure
4. Marketing on the school campus during the school day.  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure

## Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

1. Relevant stakeholders will participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the wellness policy.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
2. Officials responsible for the implementation and compliance of the wellness policy are identified.  
**Recommendation:** Update policy or procedure
3. Wellness policy is made available to the public.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
4. Implementation of the policy will be assessed at least once every 3 years.  
**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation
5. Triennial assessment results will be made available to the public.

**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation

6. Plans for updating policy based on results of the triennial assessment.

**Recommendation:** Opportunity for growth in policy and implementation

## Summary of Stakeholder Input

### Most common principal reported barriers to implementation of wellness policies

33% said insufficient time

13% said that physical & nutrition education resources NOT integrated into curricula

13% said a lack of knowledge about district Nutrition & Fitness policies and procedures

10% said insufficient funding

10% said insufficient staffing personnel to devote to wellness programming

3% said lack of enthusiasm, support, and/or understanding from parents, students, and/or staff

### Principals were asked an open-ended question about what additional resources would be helpful in order to implement and comply with the district wellness policy.

17% said more information and/or training on the policy & procedure would be helpful

13% said professional development opportunities on relevant wellness topics for staff would be helpful

## ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

NSD's Nutrition & Physical Fitness plan lacks concrete language and specific goals for areas covered under the wellness policy and should be revised with input and engagement with stakeholders.

### Top areas for growth in both policy and implementation

- Nutrition Education
- Professional development opportunities for staff in the areas of nutrition, health & physical activity
- Implementation, evaluation, and communication about the district Nutrition and Physical Fitness Plan
- School meal accessibility

### Top areas for growth in implementation

- All Foods Sold in Schools (i.e., Smart Snacks) compliance

### Top areas for growth in policy development

- Physical Education & Activity reflected in policy language