

Triennial Assessment Report

Richmond County Schools

Policy 6140 Student Wellness

April 2024

Background Information

The Richmond County Schools Board of Education recognizes that it is important for students to maintain their physical health and receive proper nutrition in order to fully participate in all aspects of the school environment. The board further recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are key areas when considering the *Whole Child* as part of the WSCC model. The board is committed to providing a school environment that promotes student wellness, proper nutrition, nutrition education and physical activity as part of the total school program and learning experience.

Our local policy mandates that the school district assess their student wellness policy at least every three years. The Triennial Assessment must be shared with the board and members of the community. The assessment shall measure and report the following: 1) the extent to which individual schools are in compliance with the policy, 2) the extent to which the board's wellness policy compares to model local school wellness policies and meets state and federal requirements and 3) a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the Student Wellness Policy.

Assessment Information

Area 1: Compliance

Richmond County Schools has a School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) that meets three times per calendar year with high participation from our stakeholders at each meeting. Our SHAC plans, updates, implements, promotes and monitors all aspects of the School Wellness Policy, and works diligently to unify efforts that benefit students and families. Members of our SHAC committee include representatives from the following stakeholder groups: school board, school system administrators, child nutrition department, physical education teachers, school nurses, school social workers, health care professionals, local mental health providers, Richmond County Department of Social Services, Richmond County Health Department, Richmond County Partnership for Children, local judicial officials, Division of Juvenile Justice, DHHS Dental Health Unit, First Health of the Carolinas and parents. We are working to add students to our committee as well, but understand that transportation and scheduling may be barriers.

SHAC meetings evaluate and monitor compliance with the Local Wellness Policy (LWP). We rank our priorities annual based on feedback from the group and those goals are typically aligned across all stakeholder settings. Mental health support for students has been a top priority for several years. We routinely discuss Child Nutrition guidelines as imposed by the federal government and our adherence to those guidelines in the schools.

All Richmond County Schools are compliance with the directives outlined in the policy.

Area 2: Comparison of Richmond County Schools 6140 Student Wellness Policy to Model Policy

Richmond County Schools Policy 6140 Student Wellness is reviewed by the School Health Advisory Council periodically for compliance. The last policy update was December 8, 2022. This is our second triennial assessment involving the Director of Child Nutrition, the Director of K – 12 Science and Math and the Director of Student Services.

Items evaluated reflect federal law and best practices. The assessment and scoring process helps to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement in the policy. The assessment evaluates six sections and each of those have individual scores. The section scores are averaged together for the district score.

The ***Comprehensiveness Score*** is a reflection of how well the recommended topics are covered in the policy overall, and the ***Strength Score*** is a reflection of how strongly the content was stated. As a result of this assessment, several policy changes will be submitted to the local Board of Education for approval. Those changes will increase the ***strength score*** on future assessments.

Richmond County Schools	
Comprehensiveness Score 86	Strength Score 55

Section 1	Nutrition Education	
	Comprehensiveness Score 88	Strength Score 50
Summary of RCS Policy	- Promoting student health and nutrition enhances readiness for learning and increases student achievement - Students should learn to address nutrition-related health concerns through age-appropriate nutrition education lessons and activities - Nutrition education and promotion should extend beyond the school environment by engaging and involving families and communities	
Strengths	- Includes all federal language and goals - All elementary and middle school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education	
Opportunities	- More integration of nutrition education into other subjects beyond health education - Better linkage of nutrition education with the school food environment - Connecting nutrition education to agriculture (which our community embraces) and the food system	

Section 2	Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals	
	Comprehensiveness Score 60	Strength Score 50
Summary of RCS Policy	• All foods available in schools during the school day that are offered to students should help promote student health, reduce childhood obesity, provide a variety of nutritional meals, and promote lifelong healthy eating habits • Foods provided through the National School Lunch, School Breakfast, or After School Snack Programs must comply with federal and state nutrition standards	
Strengths	• Strategies to increase participation • Addresses “seat time” for meal consumption • Our Child Nutrition Dept. has been very intentional about promoting the School Breakfast Program, and has met much success with varying strategies to increase participation • Specific time allotments are suggested in policy for both breakfast and lunch. • Access to water throughout the day is referenced in our policy	
Opportunities	• Since our district is a CEP (Community Eligibility Program) and has been for nearly a decade, our policy does not address privacy safeguards for those students receiving free or reduced priced meals • Since our district is a CEP (Community Eligibility Program) and has been for nearly a decade, our policy does not address unpaid lunch balances • Since our district is a CEP (Community Eligibility Program) and has been for nearly a decade, our policy does not address how families are provided information about free or reduced priced meals	

Section 3	Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages	
	Comprehensiveness Score 100	Strength Score 62
Summary of RCS Policy	• All foods and beverages sold at school must meet nutrition standards and comply with <i>Smart Snack</i> Standards • No competitive foods are to be sold • School principals shall establish rules for outside foods and beverages for class events or parties. • Rules that are consistent with <i>Smart Snack</i> Standards are encouraged	
Strengths	• Includes all state and federal language addressing compliance with <i>Smart Snack</i> regulations for food and beverages sold during the school day • Very specific guidance is outlined for school fundraisers and competitive food sales during the school day	
Opportunities	• Policy does not address drinks containing caffeine being sold at the high school level • Address nutritional standards for foods and beverages sold <u>after</u> the school day • Include language to discourage food being used as a reward for students	

Section 4	Physical Education and Physical Activity	
	Comprehensiveness Score 94	Strength Score 63
Summary of RCS Policy	• The goal of the physical education program is to promote lifelong physical activity and provide instruction in the skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong participation in physical activity • The physical education course should be designed to foster support and guidance for being physically active, help students know and understand the value of being physically fit, and teach students the types of activities that contribute to total fitness • School personnel should strive to provide opportunities for age- and developmentally-appropriate physical activity during the day for all students so that students can learn how to maintain a physically active lifestyle • Structured/unstructured recess and other physical activity may not be taken away from students as a form of punishment • Severe and inappropriate exercise may not be used as a form of punishment	
Strengths	• Written plan addresses curriculum and qualifications for physical education teachers • Curriculum is aligned with state and/or national standards and promotes a physically active lifestyle • Addresses time per week for physical education and recess for elementary school students • Addresses time per week for physical education for middle school students • Community use agreement is established and publicized	
Opportunities	• Does not address physical education exemption or substitution for students • Does not address high school physical education activity outside of PE classes • Does not address training for physical education teachers • Does not address active transport (walking and biking to school)	

Section 5	Wellness Promotion and Marketing	
	Comprehensiveness Score 83	Strength Score 42
Summary of RCS Policy	- Food and beverage marketing on school campuses during the school day must meet federal and state standards - Only foods and beverages that meet <i>Smart Snack</i> standards may be marketed or advertised on school campuses during the school day	
Strengths	- Includes all federal language to restrict marketing during the school day - Addresses physical activity for rewards and punishment - Addresses marketing where food is purchased during the school day	
Opportunities	- Include specific strategies employed by the district to support employee wellness - Encourage staff to use physical activity as a reward for students (ie. More recess time or structured games) - Include specific language about marketing during the school day	

Section 6	Implementation, Evaluation & Communication	
	Comprehensiveness Score 88	Strength Score 63
Summary of RCS Policy	- The lead wellness official (LWO), in conjunction with the SHAC, shall oversee the implementation of this policy and monitor schools, programs, and curricula to ensure compliance, to assess annual progress under this policy, update related policies, and established guidelines or administrative regulations - The lead wellness official shall work with members of the SHAC to periodically review and update this policy based on the triennial assessment of the school system's compliance with the policy, progress toward meeting the policy goals, and other relevant factors - The lead wellness official shall prepare annual reports - At least once every three years, the superintendent or designee shall report to the board and public on the system's compliance with laws and policies related to student wellness, the implementation of this policy, and progress toward meeting the goals of the policy	
Strengths	- Established Student Health Advisory Council (SHAC) that includes all stakeholders - Addresses how stakeholders participate in the development, implementation, review, and update of the policy - Addresses plan for triennial results to be shared with the public	
Opportunities	- Specify frequency of SHAC meetings and how the LWO will recruit membership - Identify who the designee of the superintendent is for LWO and publicize on district website - Promote and encourage active school-level wellness committees	

Area 3: Progress Toward Meeting Goals of the Policy

Richmond County Schools has made progress toward meeting the goals of the wellness policy. Our Child Nutrition Department works continuously to meet the rigorous standards set to encourage student health and nutrition goals. All administrators are very familiar with the Student Wellness Policy and work to implement all goals as fully as possible. Students are physically active and learning how to establish healthy eating and exercise habits now that will influence their adult life. Our district routinely has discussions around what we teach in public school and their relationship to the social determinants of health in our community.

Richmond County Schools is committed to meeting all goals of the policy involving all stakeholders along the way. Addressing the needs of the **whole child** is something that we are all committed to. Our School Health Advisory Council will continue to discuss, monitor and edit our policy compliance progress to meet all state and federal regulations.