

Vaughn Next Century Learning Center
Triennial Assessment
Completed SY 23-24

In accordance with the [2016 Final Rule](#), schools must complete an assessment of their Local School Wellness Policy every three years, at minimum. The assessment must include several components:

1. Comparison of the Local School Wellness Policy to a model policy;
2. Measurement of the extent to which the schools are in compliance with the policy;
3. Description of progress toward achieving the goals described in the policy.

Vaughn Next Century Learning Center used the WellSAT Triennial Assessment tools and worksheets to fulfill the requirements of the Triennial Assessment. Results are detailed below.

PART 1: Comparison to a model School Wellness Policy

- The WellSAT 3.0 was used to compare the written policy to model standards. See the WellSAT 3.0 scores in the "Combined WellSAT-I Scorecard" (attached).

PART 2: Local measurement of compliance with School Wellness Policy

- The WellSAT-I was used to assess the implementation of the Local School Wellness Policy via interviews with district and school-level personnel. See the WellSAT-I scores in the "Combined WellSAT 3.0 and WellSAT-I Scorecard" (attached).

PART 3: Description of the school's progress toward achieving goals described in the policy

- The results of the WellSAT 3.0 and WellSAT-I were analyzed and linked to one of four outcomes, detailed in the "Combined WellSAT 3.0 and WellSAT-I Scorecard" (attached). Outcomes and progress have been summarized in Worksheet #4 (attached).

WORKSHEET 4: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS



SECTION 1: STRONG POLICIES AND ALIGNED PRACTICES

Our schools have made significant progress in aligning with health and wellness regulations. Key successes include not only the availability of water and food services but also the frequent revision and marketing of wellness materials that adhere to guidelines such as the Smart Snacks standards. Furthermore, there is a commitment to continuous improvement, with regular training provided for food and nutrition staff to ensure high standards are maintained.

There is a strong emphasis on providing free, clean drinking water for all students, which is one of our key successes. We also ensure that wellness policies are publicly accessible on our school websites, offering transparency to the community.

Overall, Vaughn is dedicated to meeting health and wellness regulations, with policies and practices in place that prioritize student well-being and community engagement.



SECTION 2: CREATE PRACTICE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Vaughn Next Century Learning Center recognizes the importance of integrating nutrition education into subjects beyond health education to enhance students' understanding and appreciation of healthy eating. One potential approach is to incorporate nutrition lessons into other relevant curricula, such as physical education (PE), where nutrition can be linked to fitness and overall well-being. For instance, in the 6th grade health curriculum, government resources are utilized to teach students about healthy eating habits, which serves as an effective model for broader implementation across various subjects.

To ensure compliance with health and wellness standards, Vaughn aims to strengthen our policies and practices by making them more specific and less general. This could be achieved through the development of a comprehensive physical education curriculum that spans all schools, alongside the creation of a dedicated nutrition curriculum. An important step in this process will be updating existing policies to reflect these changes, ensuring that they are shared effectively with all stakeholders.

For elementary education, one recommendation is to integrate nutrition education with PE classes, making it a mandatory part of the curriculum once a week. This approach would help reinforce the importance of nutrition in the context of physical activity. Additionally, in line with NS13, students are provided with consistent access to water, encouraged to carry water bottles throughout the day, and have access to hydration stations and water fountains across the campus.

Finally, as part of our efforts to improve wellness education, a wellness curriculum could be introduced at the end of the school day, focusing on activities such as sports, stretching, and general fitness. To further enhance physical education, Vaughn could consider making PE minutes mandatory on a weekly and monthly basis, ensuring that students receive regular, structured opportunities for physical activity.



SECTION 3: UPDATE POLICIES

Vaughn is taking steps to improve student access to hydration and physical activity. While some students are already carrying water bottles, it is important to encourage all students to do so. To support this initiative, Vaughn will ensure there are accessible water stations available for refills throughout the campus. Additionally, efforts are being made to provide students in need with free reusable water bottles to further promote hydration.

In terms of policy updates, Vaughn Next Century Learning Center recognizes the need to revise and strengthen certain areas. It is essential to verify that Smart Snacks guidelines are being adhered to, ensuring only compliant snacks are sold to students. A key focus is also on ensuring all schools have daily recess, which will be incorporated into updated policies. Further, Vaughn aims to host more events that promote both physical wellness and nutrition, such as BMX shows and Healthy Plates events.

At the high school level, there is a need to update policies to reflect recent curriculum changes, such as the inclusion of brain breaks, which are already being implemented across Vaughn. As part of the Vaughn's commitment to integrating physical activity into the classroom, all teachers are encouraged to conduct brain breaks and use physical activity throughout the day. Our schools plan to enhance water availability on campus by adding more hydration stations. Additionally, to improve overall wellness, Vaughn is considering providing free reusable water bottles to students in need.

Finally, our school wellness policies will be updated to ensure physical education (PE) is emphasized across all grade levels (K-12), aligning with state and national standards. The revised policy will also emphasize the importance of using physical activity as a reward or brain break, either inside or outside the classroom. These updates will further strengthen our commitment to promoting student health and well-being.



SECTION 4: OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

Vaughn Next Century Learning Center recognizes the importance of implementing nutrition education designed to promote student wellness, with a focus on ensuring the curriculum is standards-based. Currently, wellness or health education is offered as an elective only for 6th grade at MIT, which limits broader access to essential wellness education. To address this, our organization aims to develop a comprehensive, standards-based nutrition curriculum that can be integrated across grade levels, with a designated time slot for students to learn about healthy eating habits.

In terms of wellness management, Vaughn acknowledges the need for clearer leadership and accountability. One potential improvement is to designate a specific person at each school site responsible for overseeing wellness-related initiatives and ensuring compliance with policies. This could include managing birthday items brought in by students and overseeing wellness activities across the school. Designating a point person for wellness at each site would streamline communication and improve the effectiveness of wellness programs.


Moreover, the classroom remains a primary opportunity for growth in nutrition education. By expanding the focus on food education in the classroom, Vaughn could further reinforce healthy eating habits among students, ensuring that these lessons are integrated into their daily learning experiences. Through these initiatives, Vaughn Next Century Learning Center is committed to fostering a healthier, more informed student body.


Your District's Combined WellSAT 3.0 and WellSAT-I Scorecard


Close window


Policy Name: SY 2023-2024 Triennial Assessment


















Below, you will see your written policy scores [WellSAT 3.0] and implementation scores [WellSAT-I] for every item. Each pair of responses is compared and linked to an outcome, listed below:
























 **Strong Policies and Aligned Practices** – District has a strong policy and is fully implementing practices that align with the policy
























 **Create Practice Implementation Plan** – District has a strong or weak policy, but practice implementation is either absent or limited





















 **Update Policies** – District is fully implementing a practice but there is no or only weak language in the written policy, or the district is partially implementing practices and there is no language in the policy


 **Opportunities for Growth** – District has either not addressed the topic in policy or practice; or has only addressed the topic in a very limited way

		WellSAT 3.0 Score	WellSAT-I Score	
Strong Policies and Aligned Practices – District has a strong policy and is fully implementing practices that align with the policy				
SM8	 Is free (i.e., no cost to students) drinking water available to students during meals (i.e., do not include water for sale). Follow up questions can include: Does the cafeteria have water fountains? Are there a sufficient number of working water fountains? Can students take water back to the table or do they need to drink at the fountain? Do students perceive the water and fountains to be clean and safe?	2	2	
SM9	 What is the frequency and amount of training provided to the food and nutrition staff? Does it meet the USDA Professional standards? (see below).	2	2	
NS1	 Are there any foods that are not part of the school meals (known as competitive foods) that are sold to students during the school day? If yes, how confident are you that all of these items meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards?	2	2	
IEC4	 How is the wellness policy made available to the public? Is it available online? How often is the public informed where to find the policy?	2	2	
IEC5	 How does the committee assess implementation of the wellness policy? How often does this assessment occur? [Examples of evaluation tools are: the CDC's School Health Index, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation checklist, local or state policy implementation checklists, or the current interview.]	2	2	
IEC7	 Has the wellness policy been revised based on the triennial assessment? If yes, what process did the committee use to decide what to revise?	2	2	
SM2	Does the district offer breakfast? If yes, is breakfast offered every day? Is breakfast offered to all students? [Examples include: breakfast is only offered on testing days; only offered Monday, Wednesday and Friday; only offered in some schools.]	2	2	
SM7	How long are the breakfast (if applicable) and lunch periods? Within that time, how much time do students typically have to sit down and eat their meals.	2	2	
NS2	Do you know where to access the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards to check and see if an item can be sold in school during the school day? Can you tell me how you do this?	2	2	
WPM4	Do teachers ever use physical activity as a punishment? [Examples include: telling students to run extra laps or do other physical activities as behavioral consequence.]	2	2	
WPM9	Is there food or beverage marketing on educational materials (e.g., curricula, textbooks, or other printed or electronic educational materials)? If yes, do the marketed items meet Smart Snacks criteria?	2	2	
WPM10	Is there food or beverage marketing where food is purchased (e.g., logos on exteriors of vending machines, food or beverage cups or containers, food display racks, coolers, or trash and recycling containers)? If yes, do the marketed items meet Smart Snacks criteria?	2	2	

WPM11	Is there food or beverage marketing in school publications and media (e.g., advertisements in school publications, school radio stations, in-school television, computer screen savers, school-sponsored Internet sites, and announcements on the public announcement (PA) system)? If yes, do the marketed items meet Smart Snacks criteria?	2	2	
IEC1	Is there an active district level wellness committee? Note: This may also be called a health advisory committee or other similar name. If yes, how frequently does the committee meet?	2	2	
Create Practice Implementation Plan – District has a strong or weak policy, but practice implementation is either absent or limited				
NE2	How would you describe the nutrition education you provide? Are didactic methods used to increase student knowledge? Are skills-based, behavior focused, and interactive/participatory methods used to develop student skills?	1	0	
NE6	Is nutrition education integrated into other subjects beyond health education? If yes, what are some examples? [Examples include: using nutrition facts labels to learn percentages; using a vegetable garden to learn plant biology.]	1	0	
NE7	Is nutrition education linked with the school food environment? If yes, what are some examples? [Examples include: teachers and food service staff collaborate in connecting nutrition education with the foods and beverages that are in school.]	1	0	
NS12	Do teachers use food as a reward in the classroom for good student behavior (e.g., giving out candy for a right answer; having a pizza party when students finish a unit).	2	1	
PEPA1	 Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is implemented consistently for every grade?	1	0	
PEPA2	Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is aligned with national and/or state standards?	1	0	
WPM3	Are teachers encouraged to use physical activity as a reward for students? For example, providing extra recess, taking a walk around the school, or playing an active game in the classroom.	2	0	
WPM5	Do teachers ever withhold physical activity as a classroom management tool? [Examples include: taking away recess, taking away PE, or requiring students to sit in one place for an extended period of time.]	2	1	
Update Policies – District is fully implementing a practice but there is no or only weak language in the written policy, or the district is partially implementing practices and there is no language in the policy				
SM1	 Have there been parts of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) regulations for breakfast or lunch that have been challenging to implement? If yes, are there features of the district's meal program that are not yet in compliance?	1	2	
NS3	 Are there competitive foods/beverages sold a la carte in the cafeteria during the school day? If yes, how confident are you that all of these items meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards?	1	2	
NS8	Are foods or beverages containing caffeine sold at the high school level?	0	2	
NS13	Do students have consistent and easy access to water throughout the school day? If yes, how? Follow up questions: Are students are permitted to carry water bottles with them throughout the school day? Are there water fountains or free water filling stations throughout the school? Is bottled water is for sale during the school day?	0	2	
PEPA3	How does your physical education program promote a physically active lifestyle? [Examples include: follows NASPE standards; focuses on self-assessment through a "Fitnessgram" or "Activitygram"; teaches skills needed for lifelong physical fitness.]	1	2	
PEPA9	A PE exemption is when students are permitted to not take PE because of enrollment in other courses such as math, science or vocational training. This does not include exemptions due to disability, religious or medical reasons. What percentage of students do you estimate do not take PE each year due to exemptions?	0	2	
PEPA10	A PE substitution is when students are permitted to not take PE because they are engaged in another physical activity such as JORTC or other school sports. What percentage of students do you estimate do not take PE each year due to substitutions?	0	2	
PEPA12	 Are there opportunities for all students to engage in physical activity before and after school? If yes, please describe. How frequently does this occur?	0	2	
PEPA13	Is there daily recess for all grades in elementary school? If no, how many days per week is recess offered, and for which grades? How long is recess when it is offered? Note: Best practices for recess: a) it is at least 20 minutes per day; b) it is supervised by trained teachers or staff encouraging students to be active; and c) students have access to safe and appropriate physical activity equipment.	1	2	

PEPA14	 Do teachers provide regular physical activity breaks for students in the classroom? If yes, please describe. How frequently do they occur? Do all teachers conduct physical activity breaks with their students?	1	2	
WPM6	Are marketing strategies used to promote healthy food and beverage choices in school? If yes, what foods and beverages are promoted, and how is it done? (Examples of promotion include advertisements, better pricing, and more accessible placement of the healthier items).	1	2	
WPM12	Is there food or beverage marketing through fundraisers and corporate-incentive programs? Examples include: fundraising programs encourage students and their families to sell, purchase, or consume products, and corporate incentive programs provide funds to schools in exchange for proof of purchase of company products, such as Box Tops for Education. If the school participates in food or beverage fundraisers, do they occur on or off campus, and during or outside the school day? Do all products for sale meet Smart Snacks criteria?	0	2	
Opportunities for Growth – District has either not addressed the topic in policy or practice; or has only addressed the topic in a very limited way				
NE1	 Does the school district have specific goals for nutrition education designed to promote student wellness? Does this include a standards-based nutrition education curriculum?	1	1	
NS4	 Are there food or beverage vending machines on school property accessible to students during the school day? If yes, how confident are you that all of these items meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards? (Optional follow up questions - Who receives the money from the vending machines? Who is responsible for ensuring all items in the vending machines meet Smart Snacks regulations?)	1	1	
NS5	 Are there food or beverages sold in school stores during the school day? If yes, how confident are you that all of these items meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards? (Optional follow up questions - Who receives the money from the school stores? Who is responsible for ensuring all items for ensuring all items in the school stores meet Smart Snacks regulations?)	1	1	
NS6	 Are there food or beverage fundraisers that sell items to be consumed during the school day? If yes, who is in charge of approving in-school fundraising activities? How confident are you that the people conducting fundraisers understand Smart Snacks nutrition standards? How confident are you that items sold in fundraisers meet Smart Snacks standards? (Note: Some states have passed regulation permitting exemptions from the federal law prohibiting non-Smart Snack fundraisers during the school day – this is addressed in the next question).	1	1	
NS9	 How often do food-based celebrations occur during the school day in elementary schools (e.g., birthday parties, holiday parties)? Does the district have nutrition standards (such as Smart Snacks) that regulate what can be served? How are these regulations communicated? How confident are you that the regulations are followed consistently? If food-based celebrations are not permitted, how confident are you that they do not occur?	1	1	
IEC2	 Which groups are represented on the district level wellness committee? (check all that apply). Note an individual can represent more than one role. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents • Students • School Food Authority representative • PE Teacher • School Health Professional (nurse, social worker, school psychologist) • School Board Member • School Administrator • Community member 	1	1	
IEC3	 Is there an official who is responsible for the implementation and compliance with the wellness policy at the building level for each school? If yes, who are those individuals? How do they ensure compliance?	1	1	
IEC6	 What is included in the triennial assessment report to the public? Ask to see documentation if available. Note: the requirement is to include: 1. The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the LEA are in compliance with the local school wellness policy; 2. The extent to which the LEA's local school wellness policy compares to model local school wellness policies; 3. A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the local school wellness policy.	1	1	
NE3	Do all elementary school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	0	0	
NE4	Do all middle school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	0	1	
NE5	Do all high school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	0	1	

NE8	 Does nutrition education address agriculture and the food system?	0	1	
SM6	Are specific strategies used to increase participation in the school meal programs? If yes, please describe. [Examples include: Smarter Lunchroom strategies; limiting competitive foods; requiring high school students have a scheduled lunch period; taste tests and student input; Grab-and-Go or Breakfast in the Classroom]	1	1	
SM10	 Are you familiar with the farm to school program? In your district, is it a priority to procure locally produced foods for school meals and snacks? If yes, what efforts are made to increase local procurement? Are strategies used in the cafeterias to promote them?	0	1	
NS7	(Before asking this question look up the state policy on fundraiser exemptions at the bottom of this page: https://www.ihrp.uic.edu/content/research-products-national-wellness-policy-study . If 0 exemptions, item is n/a). Your state [fill in] has adopted an exemption policy that allows for [fill in] school-sponsored fundraisers during which foods and beverages sold do not have to meet Smart Snacks. Are you familiar with this state law?	1	1	
NS10	Are foods or beverages served (not sold) to students after the school day on school grounds, including before/after care, clubs, and afterschool programming? If yes, does the district have nutrition standards (such as Smart Snacks or CACFP) that regulate what can be served? How are these regulations communicated to the adults running the activities? How confident are you that the regulations are followed consistently?	0	1	
NS11	Addresses nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold (not served) to students after the school day, including before/after care on school grounds, clubs, and after school programming	0	0	
PEPA4	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in elementary school receive? Note: NASPE recommends that schools provide 150 minutes of instructional PE for elementary school children per week for the entire school year.	0	1	
PEPA7	Are all physical education classes taught by state certified/licensed teachers who are endorsed to teach physical education?	0	0	
PEPA8	Is ongoing professional development offered every year for PE teachers that is relevant and specific to physical education?	0	0	
PEPA11	 Are there opportunities for families and community members to engage in physical activity at school? If yes, please describe. How frequently does this occur?	1	1	
PEPA15	When school is not in session, do community members use indoor and outdoor school building and grounds facilities? Does the district have a "joint-use" or "shared-use" agreements? (Note if answer is yes or no).	0	0	
PEPA16	What proportion of students walk or bike to school? How frequently do they do that?	0	1	
WPM1	Are school staff encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors in front of students? If yes, how does the school encourage this behavior? [Examples include: Provides staff with opportunities to eat healthfully such as subsidized fruits, vegetables, and water in the cafeteria or lounge; Advises staff not to consume sugary drinks at school; Encourages teachers to be active with students.]	0	0	
WPM2	 Are there strategies used by the school to support employee wellness? Please describe. Examples: "Health and wellness classes are offered to staff." "School physical activity equipment is available for use by staff before or after school to support employee wellness." "Free water and healthy snacks are available in the staff break room."	0	1	
IEC8	Is there an active school level wellness committee? (Note: This may also be called a school health team, school health advisory committee, or similar name) If yes, how frequently does the committee meet?	0	0	
Section 2. Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals				
SM3	 How does your school ensure that children who are receiving free/reduced meals cannot be identified? How confident are you that it is not possible for the students to identify those who qualify for free or reduced lunch?	NA	2	
SM4	How does the district handle unpaid balances? Follow up questions to determine if student is stigmatized: How are the student and parents notified? Is the student identified in the cafeteria? Is the student refused a meal, given a different meal, or given the regular meal?	NA	NA	
SM5	How are families provided information about eligibility for free/reduced priced meals? (If district provides universal free meals, score 2)	NA	NA	
Section 4. Physical Education and Physical Activity				

PEPA5	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in middle school receive? Note: NASPE recommends that schools provide 225 minutes of instructional physical education for middle school students per week for the entire school year.	0	NA	
PEPA6	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in high school receive? Note: NASPE recommends that schools provide 225 minutes of instructional physical education for middle school students per week for the entire school year.	0	NA	
Section 5. Wellness Promotion and Marketing				
WPM7	 Is there food or beverage marketing on the school campus during the school day? If yes, do the marketed items meet Smart Snacks criteria?	2	NA	
WPM8	Is there food or beverage marketing on school property (e.g., signs, scoreboards, or sports equipment)? If yes, do the marketed items meet Smart Snacks criteria? If they do not meet Smart Snacks criteria, will this change when there is a renewal of the sponsorship agreement?	2	NA	



Federal Requirement



Farm to School



CSPAP

- NE** Nutrition Education
- SM** Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals
- NS** Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages
- PEPA** Physical Education and Physical Activity
- WPM** Wellness Promotion and Marketing
- IEC** Implementation, Evaluation & Communication

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