

Triennial Assessment Report: New Hartford 2025 Triennial Assessment 2025 (2/2025)

District: NEW HARTFORD

Introduction

New Hartford Public Schools staff members worked collaboratively to complete the required WellSAT Triennial Assessment. The assessment reviewed the nutrition environment & services, nutrition education, physical education & physical activity, and employee wellness. Overall, New Hartford Public Schools scored very well on the assessment which highlights strong policies and aligned practices. We also found some areas of focus in which the District Wellness Committee can work on creating practice implementation plans, updating policies, and other opportunities for growth.

The WellSAT was completed in the spring of 2025 under the direction of the Director of Student Services, in collaboration with building principals, physical education staff members, and food service workers and supervisors.

Strong Policies and Aligned Practices

The WellSAT evaluation illustrates a robust and well-aligned set of policies and practices that support student wellness, nutritional equity, and physical activity.

Compliance and Standards: All school meals under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program meet or exceed federal standards for meal patterns, nutrients, and calorie requirements. This adherence extends to competitive and à la carte foods, fundraisers, and marketing, all of which align with USDA Smart Snacks standards.

Equity and Access: The district demonstrates a strong commitment to equity by ensuring free drinking water is readily available during meals and throughout the day, safeguarding the privacy of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals, and employing non-stigmatizing practices for students with unpaid meal balances. Information about meal eligibility is also actively communicated to families.

Training and Professionalism: Nutrition program staff consistently meet or exceed USDA continuing education requirements, ensuring a knowledgeable workforce that supports effective implementation of school nutrition policies.

Wellness Policy Implementation: The wellness policy is accessible to the public, undergoes a triennial review, and is revised based on those assessments—showcasing transparency and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Promotion and Participation: Schools actively use marketing strategies to promote healthy choices and maximize participation in meal programs, including daily breakfast offerings and efforts to procure local foods through Farm to School initiatives.

Physical Education and Activity: Physical education is guided by a written curriculum aligned with standards and is delivered by certified educators. Daily recess, joint-use agreements, and encouragement of physical activity as a reward (rather than as punishment) underscore the district's commitment to an active school culture.

Together, these responses reflect a strong, coherent approach to student wellness—characterized by comprehensive policy implementation, regular evaluation, and consistent practices that prioritize student health, equity, and engagement.

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		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR2	Do your National School Lunch Program meals (and, if applicable, School Breakfast Program meals) meet all federal standards for meal patterns, nutrient levels, and calorie requirements for the grade levels served?	2	2	☆
FR3	Does your school take steps to protect the privacy of students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals?	2	2	☆
FR4	Is free (i.e., no cost to students) drinking water available to students during meals?	2	2	☆
FR5	Do all school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff meet or exceed the annual continuing education/training hours required by the USDA's Professional Standards requirements?	2	2	☆
FR6	Do all competitive foods and beverages sold to students during the school day meet or exceed the USDA's nutrition standards, commonly called Smart Snacks?	2	2	☆
FR7	Do all a la carte foods and beverages sold in the cafeteria meet Smart Snacks standards?	2	2	☆
FR10	Are there fundraisers that sell foods or beverages to be consumed during the school day? If yes, do the foods and beverages sold meet Smart Snacks standards?	2	2	☆
FR12	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	2	☆
FR15	How is the wellness policy made available to the public?	2	2	☆

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FR16	Is wellness policy implementation evaluated every three years?	2	2	☆
FR17	What is included in the triennial assessment report to the public?	2	2	☆
FR18	Has the wellness policy been revised based on the previous triennial assessment?	2	2	☆
NES1	Does the district offer breakfast every day to all students?	2	2	☆
NES2	Does your school take steps to address feeding students with unpaid meal balances without stigmatizing them?	2	2	☆
NES3	Does your school or district provide information to families about eligibility for free or reduced-price meals?	2	2	☆
NES4	Does your school use strategies to maximize participation in the school breakfast program and/or school lunch program?	2	2	☆
NES5	Are marketing strategies used to promote healthy food and beverage choices in school?	2	2	☆
NES7	 In your district, is it a priority to procure locally produced foods for school meals?	2	2	☆
NES8	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?	2	2	☆
NES9	Are you familiar with any state laws allowing exemptions for school-sponsored fundraisers during which foods and beverages do not have to meet Smart Snacks?	2	2	☆

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NES11	Do all foods or beverages SERVED (not sold) to students after the school day on school grounds (including aftercare, clubs, and afterschool programming) meet federal nutrition standards (e.g., CACFP or Smart Snacks)?	2	2	☆
NES13	Do teachers or school staff give students food as a reward?	2	2	☆
NES14	Do students have consistent and easy access to free drinking water throughout the school day?	2	2	☆
PEPA2	Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is aligned with national and/or state standards?	2	2	☆
PEPA3	How does your physical education program promote a physically active lifestyle?	2	2	☆
PEPA7	Are all physical education classes taught by state certified/licensed teachers who are endorsed to teach physical education?	2	2	☆
PEPA13	Is there daily recess for all grades in elementary school?	2	2	☆
PEPA15	Does the district have "joint-use" or "shared-use" agreements?	2	2	☆
PEPA17	 Are teachers encouraged to use physical activity as a reward for students?	2	2	☆
PEPA18	Do teachers ever use physical activity as a punishment?	2	2	☆
PEPA19	Do teachers ever withhold physical activity as a classroom management tool?	2	2	☆

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Create Practice Implementation Plan

The Wellness Committee will be reviewing a number of key concerns related to student health and wellness. These include whether all foods and beverages sold to students after the school day on school grounds—including those available through aftercare, clubs, and other afterschool programming—meet federal nutrition standards such as CACFP or Smart Snacks. The committee will also consider how school nutrition services staff currently collaborate with teachers to support and reinforce nutrition education lessons taught in the classroom.

In addition, the committee will examine how many minutes of physical education are provided each week at each grade level in elementary school, and exploring ongoing professional development opportunities annually for PE teachers that are both relevant and specific to their subject area. Finally, the committee will explore the extent to which families and community members have opportunities to engage in physical activity at school as part of a Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP).

Next steps related to each of these topics will be determined through the committee's continued discussions and evaluations.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
NES12	Do all foods or beverages SOLD (not served) to students after the school day on school grounds (including aftercare, clubs, and afterschool programming) meet federal nutrition standards (e.g., CACFP or Smart Snacks)?	2	1	
NE6	Do school nutrition services staff members use the following methods to collaborate with teachers to reinforce nutrition education lessons taught in the classroom?	1	0	
PEPA4	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in elementary school receive?	1	0	
PEPA8	Is ongoing professional development offered every year for PE teachers that is relevant and specific to physical education?	2	1	

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PEPA11	 Are there opportunities for families and community members to engage in physical activity at school?	1	0	
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Update Policies

The district will review and update its wellness policies to address several important practices. These include identifying the groups represented on the district-level wellness committee and ensuring there is a designated official responsible for implementing and complying with the wellness policy at the building level in each school. Additionally, the district should clarify whether students are provided adequate time to eat meals—specifically, at least 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch after being seated. Other areas requiring attention include the provision of sequential and comprehensive nutrition education for all elementary students, the consistent implementation of a written physical education curriculum across all grades, and the inclusion of regular physical activity breaks in classrooms. These updates are essential to align district practices with wellness policy standards and best support student health and well-being.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR13	Which groups are represented on the district-level wellness committee?	1	2	
FR14	Is there an official who is responsible for the implementation and compliance with the wellness policy at the building level for each school?	1	2	
NES6	Do students have at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they are seated?	1	2	
NE2	Do all elementary school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	1	2	
PEPA1	 Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is implemented consistently for every grade?	1	2	

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PEPA14	 Do teachers provide regular physical activity breaks for students in the classroom?	1	2	
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Opportunities for Growth

The following points present important areas of growth that the Wellness Committee will explore as part of its ongoing efforts to support a healthier school environment. One key area of focus is whether the district has clearly defined goals for nutrition education that are designed to promote overall student wellness. The committee will also examine whether the district regulates the types of foods and beverages served during class parties and other school celebrations.

Another area of inquiry will be the instructional methods used in nutrition education—specifically, whether they are skills-based, behavior-focused, and interactive in ways that help students develop lifelong healthy habits. The committee will consider whether nutrition education is integrated across various subjects beyond health education, and whether it includes components related to agriculture and the broader food system, such as those found in Farm to School programs.

In terms of physical activity and staff engagement, the committee will review what strategies are currently in place to support employee wellness and whether school staff are encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors for students. Finally, the reestablished Wellness Committee will begin meeting again in the fall of 2025.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR1	Does the district have specific goals for nutrition education designed to promote student wellness?	1	1	
FR11	Does your district regulate foods and beverages served at class parties and other school celebrations in elementary schools?	1	1	
NE1	Are skills-based, behavior-focused, and interactive/participatory methods used in nutrition education to develop student skills?	1	1	
NE5	Is nutrition education integrated into other subjects beyond health education?	0	1	

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NE7	 Does nutrition education address agriculture and the food system?	0	0	
EW1	 Are there strategies used by the school to support employee wellness?	0	0	
EW2	Are school staff encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors in front of students?	0	0	
IC1	Is there an active district-level wellness committee?	1	1	

Conclusion

Overall, New Hartford Public Schools scored very well on the Triennial WellSAT Assessment, highlighting the district's commitment to health and wellness. The district Wellness Committee will be reestablished in the fall of 2025 and begin to explore what improvements can be made based on this current assessment.

Key

 **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 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

For more resources, visit: wellsat.org/resources