

Triennial Assessment Report: NPS Triennial 2025 (5/2025)
District: NORWICH

Introduction

Norwich Public Schools remain in full compliance with all federal requirements regulating school meals and competitive foods. All schools provide both breakfast and lunch daily. Breakfast, served in the classroom, includes a 30-minute meal period, and lunch periods are also 30 minutes in length.

Compared to previous assessments, Norwich Public Schools continue to maintain consistent wellness practices. However, there is still room for improvement, particularly in setting specific goals to enhance student wellness education, regulating classroom celebrations, and increasing representation of staff and families on the Wellness Committee.

The triennial assessment was conducted by the Norwich Public Schools Wellness Committee, which included school principals, the head of food services, the nursing supervisor, and the Assistant Superintendent. The review of practices and policies was completed in April 2025.

Strong Policies and Aligned Practices

Norwich Public Schools have demonstrated continued success in meeting wellness goals, as evidenced by our adherence to federal requirements related to school meals and competitive foods. These requirements include ensuring that all students have access to nutritious meals that meet USDA standards and regulating the availability of competitive foods sold outside of the school meal programs.

All schools in the district offer both breakfast and lunch daily. Breakfast is served in the classroom, allowing students a full 30 minutes to eat, which supports both nutritional needs and a calm start to the school day. Lunch periods are also 30 minutes, ensuring adequate time for students to eat without rushing. These practices reflect our commitment to providing a healthy school environment where students can focus on learning.

During our last triennial assessment, some areas—such as class party guidelines, goal setting for student wellness education, and stakeholder involvement in the wellness committee—were identified as needing improvement. Since then, Norwich Public Schools have made progress in addressing these issues. While we continue to work toward clearer policies around classroom celebrations, we have improved our internal communication around wellness goals and have begun efforts to involve more staff and families in wellness planning through outreach and committee invitations.

The 2025 triennial assessment was completed with the collaboration of principals, the head of food services, the nursing supervisor, and the Assistant Superintendent, which strengthened our evaluation process and demonstrated district-level commitment to wellness policy implementation and continuous improvement.

	Policy Score	Practice Score	
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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	☆
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	☆
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	☆

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NES1	Does the district offer breakfast every day to all students?	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	☆
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?	2	2	☆
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	☆
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	2	☆
NES14	Do students have consistent and easy access to free drinking water throughout the school day?	2	2	☆
NE3	Do all middle school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	2	2	☆
NE6	Do school nutrition services staff members use the following methods to collaborate with teachers to reinforce nutrition education lessons taught in the classroom?	2	2	☆
NE7	 Does nutrition education address agriculture and the food system?	2	2	☆

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PEPA1	 Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is implemented consistently for every grade?	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	☆
PEPA9	What percentage of students do you estimate do not take PE each year due to exemptions?	2	2	☆
PEPA10	What percentage of students do you estimate do not take PE each year due to substitutions?	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	☆
EW1	 Are there strategies used by the school to support employee wellness?	2	2	☆

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IC1	Is there an active district-level wellness committee?	2	2	☆
IC2	Is there an active school-level wellness committee?	2	2	☆

Create Practice Implementation Plan

Norwich Public Schools are committed to ensuring full compliance with all elements of the Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP), including federal requirements related to school meals, competitive foods, nutrition education, physical activity, and stakeholder engagement. This section focuses on strengthening the implementation of practices that align with USDA guidelines and federal mandates under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act.

To improve the implementation of the practices outlined in this section, the district will develop a comprehensive practice implementation plan that ensures consistency across all schools. This includes formalizing classroom celebration guidelines, creating measurable wellness goals, and expanding the diversity and involvement of the Wellness Committee to include more staff, families, and community partners.

The responsibility for creating the implementation plan will be shared among key district stakeholders, including the Assistant Superintendent, school principals, the head of food services, the nursing supervisor, and Wellness Committee members. Their combined expertise will ensure that the plan is both practical and aligned with district-wide priorities.

The timeline for this initiative is as follows:

Plan Development: The practice implementation plan will be developed by Fall of 2025.

Implementation Start Date: The plan will begin to be implemented district-wide by Winter of 2025.

Monitoring and Assessment: The district will assess the success of implementation through regular monitoring, including feedback from school staff and families, meeting logs from the Wellness Committee, and follow-up surveys or self-assessments. Progress will be reviewed quarterly, with adjustments made as needed to support full compliance and effective practice.

By taking a structured, collaborative approach to implementation, Norwich Public Schools will ensure that wellness policies are not only compliant but also meaningful and beneficial to the health and well-being of all students.

	Policy Score	Practice Score	
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FR13	Which groups are represented on the district-level wellness committee?	2	1	
FR14	Is there an official who is responsible for the implementation and compliance with the wellness policy at the building level for each school?	2	1	
NES7	 In your district, is it a priority to procure locally produced foods for school meals?	2	1	
NES13	Do teachers or school staff give students food as a reward?	1	0	
NE1	Are skills-based, behavior-focused, and interactive/participatory methods used in nutrition education to develop student skills?	2	1	
NE2	Do all elementary school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	2	1	
PEPA4	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in elementary school receive?	1	0	
PEPA5	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in middle 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	
PEPA11	 Are there opportunities for families and community members to engage in physical activity at school?	2	1	
PEPA12	 Are there opportunities for all students to engage in physical activity before and after school?	2	1	

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PEPA16	What proportion of students walk or bike to school?	2	1	
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Update Policies

Norwich Public Schools are committed to updating the Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP) to ensure full compliance with all federally required components, as outlined in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. These requirements include, but are not limited to, guidelines for nutrition education, school meals, competitive foods, physical education and activity, promotion of healthy food and beverage choices, and involvement of stakeholders in policy development and review.

In addition to meeting federal requirements, Norwich Public Schools have identified the following priority areas for policy enhancement:

Clearly defined goals for student wellness education.

Written standards for classroom celebrations and food-related fundraising.

Increased family and community involvement in the Wellness Committee.

Regular public updates on policy implementation and progress.

The responsibility for updating the LSWP policy language will rest with a designated subcommittee of the district Wellness Committee. This subcommittee will include the Assistant Superintendent, a representative from food services, school administrators, the nursing supervisor, and select educators and parent representatives.

The timeline for updating the policy is as follows:

Policy Review and Draft Revisions: By Fall, 2025

Stakeholder Review and Feedback: By Fall, 2025

Final Approval by the Board of Education: By Winter 2026

Policy Implementation Begins: Spring, 2026

For any practices that received a score of '1' on the WellSAT assessment—indicating partial implementation—the district will focus on strengthening policy language to be more specific and enforceable. In parallel, training and support will be provided to staff to improve consistency in practice across all schools. Clear guidance documents and monitoring tools will be developed and distributed by January 2026 to support implementation.

By following this plan, Norwich Public Schools will ensure that its wellness policy is not only compliant with federal law but also reflective of the district's broader commitment to fostering a healthy school environment for all students.

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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?	1	2	
NE5	Is nutrition education integrated into other subjects beyond health education?	1	2	
PEPA14	 Do teachers provide regular physical activity breaks for students in the classroom?	1	2	

Opportunities for Growth

Norwich Public Schools are dedicated to aligning all wellness policies and practices with federal requirements outlined under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. This includes ensuring compliance with regulations governing school meals, competitive foods, nutrition education, physical activity, marketing of food and beverages, and stakeholder engagement in the development and review of wellness policies.

In addition to these federal requirements, our district has identified several priority areas for improvement:

Establishing specific goals for student wellness education across all grade levels.

Formalizing policies for classroom celebrations and food-related fundraising activities.

Increasing family and staff participation on the Wellness Committee.

Improving the frequency and transparency of public reporting on wellness initiatives and progress.

To ensure these practices are fully implemented, the district will develop a detailed practice implementation plan. This plan will provide clear guidance to schools on how to carry out wellness-related activities, ensure consistent compliance across the district, and embed wellness into school culture.

Implementation Plan

Responsible Team: The practice implementation plan will be created by a team composed of the Assistant Superintendent, food services director, nursing supervisor, school principals, and Wellness Committee members, including parent and staff representatives.

Timeline:

Plan Development: By Fall, 2025

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District-Wide Rollout: By Fall 2026

Assessment of Success: Implementation will be assessed through school-based progress reports, meeting documentation, and biannual surveys of students, staff, and families. Feedback will inform mid-year adjustments to ensure ongoing improvement and accountability.

Policy Language Updates

To reinforce the improved practices, the district will also update the official Local School Wellness Policy to include all federally required elements and district priority goals.

Responsible Party: A policy review subcommittee within the Wellness Committee will be charged with drafting updated policy language. This group will collaborate with the district's legal and administrative teams to ensure accuracy and clarity.

Timeline:

Draft Policy Updates: By August 30, 2025

Stakeholder Review: By September 30, 2025

School Board Approval: By October 31, 2025

Policy Effective Date: November 1, 2025

By aligning our practices and policy language with federal standards—and expanding our goals to better meet student wellness needs—Norwich Public Schools will continue to foster a safe, supportive, and health-focused learning environment for all students.

		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	
EW2	Are school staff encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors in front of students?	0	1	

Conclusion

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Norwich Public Schools is committed to ensuring the health and well-being of all students through compliance with federal wellness requirements and continuous improvement in our practices. After reviewing our current wellness policies and practices, we identified key areas of success, such as meeting federal standards for school meals and providing adequate time for students to eat. However, we also recognize opportunities for growth, such as refining classroom celebration policies, increasing stakeholder engagement, and enhancing wellness education goals.

To address these areas, we will update both our practices and policies to ensure full compliance and further promote student wellness. This includes creating a clear plan for implementation, involving key stakeholders in policy updates, and setting specific goals for wellness education. With a timeline in place to update our policies and practices by Fall of 2025, we are confident these efforts will create a healthier, more supportive environment for students, families, and staff alike.

We are committed to working closely with families and the community to ensure these changes are effective and meaningful, and we look forward to continuing our shared work to promote wellness across the district.

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