

Triennial Assessment Report: East Haddam Board of Education (5/2025)

District: EAST HADDAM

Introduction

Our district is in full compliance with all federal requirements regarding the standards for USDA child nutrition programs and meals. The National School Breakfast Program is offered daily at each school. All foods and beverages sold in the district (via vending machines, school stores, a la carte items) meet the Smart Snack guidelines. Specific marketing of foods is restricted to those that meet the Smart Snack guidelines. USDA Professional standards for training of all foodservice staff is being implemented. Physical Education across the district is in compliance with state physical education standards following the age appropriate curriculum. The district has strong policies on the implementation, evaluation and communication of the local school wellness policy.


Participants in the Wellstat Assessment included the Director of Food Services, Business Manager, Administration and Wellness Committee.

Strong Policies and Aligned Practices



Our district is in full compliance with all federal requirements regarding the standards for USDA child nutrition programs and meals. The National School Breakfast Program is offered daily at each school. All foods and beverages sold in the district (via vending machines, school stores, a la carte items) meet the Smart Snack guidelines. Specific marketing of foods is restricted to those that meet the Smart Snack guidelines. USDA Professional standards for training of all foodservice staff is being implemented. Physical Education across the district is in compliance with state physical education standards following the age appropriate curriculum. The district has strong policies on the implementation, evaluation and communication of the local school wellness policy.

		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	★

Triennial Assessment Report: East Haddam Board of Education (5/2025)
District: EAST HADDAM

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	☆
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	☆
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	☆
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	☆
NES7	 In your district, is it a priority to procure locally produced foods for school meals?	2	2	☆
NES14	Do students have consistent and easy access to free drinking water throughout the school day?	2	2	☆

Triennial Assessment Report: East Haddam Board of Education (5/2025)
District: EAST HADDAM







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	☆
PEPA7	Are all physical education classes taught by state certified/licensed teachers who are endorsed to teach physical education?	2	2	☆
PEPA8	Is ongoing professional development offered every year for PE teachers that is relevant and specific to physical education?	2	2	☆
PEPA13	Is there daily recess for all grades in elementary school?	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	☆

Create Practice Implementation Plan

We have identified through our assessment that the current wellness committee has room for improvement in the number of groups represented. The committee is currently comprised of many different stakeholders such as the food service director, PE teachers, school health professionals, and school administrators. We can improve upon this by adding in additional groups to be represented such as board members, parents, students and members from the community. To obtain more variety in participants the committee will seek to include a new member from one of the areas listed that is not currently represented.


	Policy	Practice	
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Triennial Assessment Report: East Haddam Board of Education (5/2025)
District: EAST HADDAM





		Score	Score	
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	1	
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	
NESS	Are marketing strategies used to promote healthy food and beverage choices in school?	2	1	
PEPA16	What proportion of students walk or bike to school?	1	0	
IC1	Is there an active district-level wellness committee?	2	1	

Update Policies

We have identified through our assessment that there are areas being implemented in our district that are lacking or can be approved upon in our current wellness policy. All schools refrain from using physical activity or withholding physical activity as means of correcting student behaviors. This is a practice that is fully implemented at each school but not specifically addressed in our current wellness policy. Another policy to consider adding is regarding the sale of caffeine in schools. We are not currently selling any beverage containing caffeine (in line with Smart Snacks Standards) but this is a policy that should be addressed in our current wellness policy. The wellness committee will consider these additions to our policy in future meetings. The Board of Education annually reviews the policy and updates and needed based on Regulatory and Compliance. The last revision was 2021, with a planned review and update in 2025.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR1	Does the district have specific goals for nutrition education designed to promote student wellness?	1	2	

Triennial Assessment Report: East Haddam Board of Education (5/2025)
District: EAST HADDAM





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?	1	2	
NE7	 Does nutrition education address agriculture and the food system?	1	2	
PEPA3	How does your physical education program promote a physically active lifestyle?	1	2	

Opportunities for Growth











Overall, our school wellness policy compared favorably to the model policies in the assessment but has some areas that can be improved upon. These include incorporating nutrition education in to all grades at each school, creating school level wellness committees and having classroom celebrations focused on activities, rather than food. Our wellness committee will consider each of these ideas to determine whether they will be included in future wellness goals for our district.

Our Policies and Compliance with State and Federal Regulations are on target and reviewed in a timely manner.

Focus with Farm to Table and Local Farms is a focus for continued growth at all levels.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
NES4	Does your school use strategies to maximize participation in the school breakfast program and/ or school lunch program?	1	1	
NE1	Are skills-based, behavior-focused, and interactive/ participatory methods used in nutrition education to develop student skills?	1	1	
NE2	Do all elementary school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	1	1	
NE3	Do all middle school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	1	1	

Triennial Assessment Report: East Haddam Board of Education (5/2025)
District: EAST HADDAM

NE4	Do all high school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	1	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	1	
PEPA4	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in elementary school receive?	1	1	
PEPA5	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in middle school receive?	1	1	
PEPA6	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in high school receive?	1	1	
PEPA11	 Are there opportunities for families and community members to engage in physical activity at school?	1	1	
PEPA14	 Do teachers provide regular physical activity breaks for students in the classroom?	1	1	
EW2	Are school staff encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors in front of students?	1	1	

Conclusion


In conclusion, The East Haddam Public School Nutrition Department is in full compliance with all State and Federal requirements. Our Policies are annually reviewed and updated as needed. Our biggest weakness continues to be with the wellness committee and ability to convene timely meetings and to increase diversity with the membership. One major goal for the department is to further enhance the food offerings to the students in hopes to increase sales, especially for breakfast. Another focus for the district is to enhance the Farm to Table/ Local Farm offerings and include student involvement including hands-on school gardens and


Triennial Assessment Report: East Haddam Board of Education (5/2025)


District: EAST HADDAM


increased education at all grade levels on the importance of farming, gardening, cooking with fresh foods, and impact on health and nutrition.

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