

South Hadley Public Schools Wellness Committee Meeting Minutes

Date:	February 9, 2026 4p-5p
Attendance:	Cristina Jardine, Carla Lussier, Kaitlin Methot, Matt Hoagland, Steve Kantrowitz, Courtney Mackey, Liz Wood, Abigail Kelley, Amy Provost, Tami Cote, Kelly, Lui, Brittany O’Neil, Elisabeth Greenwood, Kelley Blaser, Kelly Theriault, Katie Viola-Downey
Facilitator:	Melissa Bednarski, Director of Health Services
Recorder:	Melissa Bednarski

Agenda Items	Discussion	Action
Welcome and Introductions	Melissa opened the meeting at 4pm and welcomed and thanked all for their participation in the Wellness Committee. Rounds were completed for everyone to introduce themselves to the group. Pleased to have such a diverse group of individuals and also a student representative.	A major focus is ensuring a "diverse group of individuals" has a voice. The committee is intentionally composed of parents/guardians, staff, health professionals, and students to ensure multiple perspectives are heard. The committee is actively seeking to include a School Committee member to bridge the gap between policy-making and implementation.
Wellness Committee Objectives	Purpose:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help develop and implement protocols that promote healthy eating and active lifestyles for students and staff. ● Contributing your perspective as a Parent/Guardian, Staff Member, Student, Health Professional or Community Member is crucial in ensuring our wellness efforts meet our unique needs. ● Work with other stakeholders (administrators, staff members, health professionals, outside agencies, parents/guardians, students) to create a positive, healthy school environment. <p>What We Do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review and update our district’s wellness policy/protocols. ● Promote nutritious foods and beverages on campus. ● Advocate for physical activity and health education. ● Plan and evaluate school wellness initiatives. 	<p>Because of a late start this year, the committee will only meet twice. The next session is a virtual meeting on April 13th at 4pm.</p> <p>Agenda and invite will go out closer to the meeting date.</p>
Meeting Norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Start and end on time (according to the agenda) ● Be present ● Be open; respect everyone’s point of view 	
Standards for School Wellness Programs	Code of Massachusetts Regulations <u>105 CMR 215.00</u>	The <u>Code of Massachusetts Regulations 105 CMR 215.00</u> establishes the standards for School Wellness Advisory Committees in Massachusetts public school districts.

		<p>The primary goal of this regulation is to ensure that every district has a dedicated group to recommend, review, and implement policies regarding student health, nutrition, and physical activity.</p> <p>The regulation mandates that each public school district (including regional districts, vocational schools, and charter schools) must establish a School Wellness Advisory Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Mandatory Membership: Committees must include a broad range of representatives, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ School nurses and school physicians.○ School nutrition and physical activity staff.○ School committee members and administrators.○ Parents, students, and community members.○ Representatives from local health care providers or boards of health (to the extent feasible).● Superintendent Oversight: The superintendent is responsible for appointing members and ensuring the committee functions actively. They must also appoint a liaison to act as the bridge between the committee and the district leadership.● Policy Focus: The committee is charged with developing and reviewing
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		<p>district policies that address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nutrition education and school nutrition. ○ Physical education and physical activity opportunities (recess, active travel, etc.). ○ Related issues affecting student wellness (mental and behavioral health).
<p>Review of the Wellness Policy and Protocol</p>	<p>Wellness Policy Wellness Protocol</p>	<p>In a school governance context, here is the breakdown of how they differ:</p> <p>School Policy</p> <p>A Policy is a high-level statement of intent or a "rule" that governs the district. It defines the what and the why.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purpose: To set a standard or goal based on legal requirements or community values. ● Approval: Usually requires formal approval from the School Committee or Board of Education. ● Example: A "Wellness Policy" might state that all schools must provide students with healthy food options and regular physical activity to combat

		<p>childhood obesity.</p> <p>School Protocol</p> <p>A Protocol (often referred to as a "Procedure") is the administrative roadmap. It defines the how, when, and who.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purpose: To provide step-by-step instructions on how to implement the policy on the ground. ● Approval: Generally managed and updated by school administrators (Principals, Superintendents, or Department Heads) without needing a formal board vote for every change. ● Example: A "Wellness Protocol" would list the specific snacks allowed in vending machines, the exact number of minutes required for recess, and the process for reporting physical education hours. <p>Before the next meeting, members asked to examine the Wellness Protocol to identify areas for improvement or focus:</p> <p>We will gather suggestions and narrow the focus on one or two items to begin with at our next meeting..</p>
<p>WellSAT</p>	<p>Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) website is where you can score your written</p>	<p>Revised tools have been developed for Massachusetts.</p>

	<p>district wellness policy and rate your district's implementation of school wellness practices.</p>	<p>Melissa suggests we focus on the; <i>The School Wellness Initiative for Thriving Community Health</i> (SWITCH). Review SWITCH HERE</p> <p>Also THIS is a great tool for Wellness Protocols.</p>
<p>Discussion topics discussed at meeting</p>	<p>Culinary discussion about the different governance on food items in school for the culinary department. Steve reports that he distributes a large amount of grab and go bag meals to students to bring home. This number has increased significantly from last year.</p> <p>SHHS offers a 2nd breakfast for those students that are tardy or missed the first breakfast.</p> <p>Members brought up the concern for the high sugar content of some foods.</p> <p>Caffeine in school was also a concern and a potential focus to add to the protocol.</p> <p>Nicotine/vaping is also a potential area of focus for the committee.</p> <p>Liz states that she obtains permits from the BOH for food events and activities at SHHS.</p> <p>Food Insecurity is a concern. Students missing</p>	

	<p>meals and athletes skipping meals. Discussed food share buckets/tables for students requesting more food. Reports that this did not work well at Mosier in the past.</p> <p>Mary Lou from the Food Pantry has been in touch with the school and is arranging for food items to be donated to SHPS. She also plans to provide the health offices with snacks for students that have illness complaints related to hunger.</p>	
<p>Comparative Wellness Policy/Protocols to Review</p>	<p>GPS Wellness Protocol Holyoke Public Schools Wellness Policy</p>	

References:

[Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages in Public Schools Healthier Generation](#)
<https://johnstalkerinstitute.org/>