

Local School Wellness Policy Implementation Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010: Summary of the Final Rule

What is a local school wellness policy?

A local school wellness policy (“wellness policy”) is a written document that guides a local educational agency’s (LEA) or school district’s efforts to establish a school environment that promotes students’ health, well-being, and ability to learn.

The wellness policy requirement was established by the Child Nutrition and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act of 2004 and further strengthened by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA). It requires each LEA participating in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program to develop a wellness policy. The final rule expands the requirements to strengthen policies and increase transparency. The responsibility for developing, implementing, and evaluating a wellness policy is placed at the local level, so the unique needs of each school under the LEA’s jurisdiction can be addressed.

Provisions of the Final Rule

On July 29, 2016, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) finalized regulations to create a framework and guidelines for written wellness policies established by LEAs. The final rule requires LEAs to begin developing a revised local school wellness policy during School Year 2016-2017. LEAs must fully comply with the requirements of the final rule by June 30, 2017.

Content of the Wellness Policy

At a minimum, policies are required to include:

- **Specific goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness.** LEAs are required to review and consider evidence-based strategies in determining these goals.
- **Standards and nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages sold to students on the school campus during the school day that are consistent with Federal regulations for:**
 - School meal nutrition standards, and the
 - Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- **Standards for all foods and beverages provided, but not sold, to students during the school day (e.g., in classroom parties, classroom snacks brought by parents, or other foods given as incentives).**
- **Policies for food and beverage marketing that allow marketing and advertising of only those foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.**
- **Description of public involvement, public updates, policy leadership, and evaluation plan.**

Wellness Leadership

LEAs must establish **wellness policy leadership** of one or more LEA and/or school official(s) who have the authority and responsibility to ensure each school complies with the policy.

Public Involvement

At a minimum, LEAs must:

- **Permit participation** by the general public and the school community (including parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, and school administrators) in the wellness policy process.



Triennial Assessments

The final rule requires State agencies to assess compliance with the wellness policy requirements as a part of the general areas of the administrative review every 3 years.

LEAs must conduct an assessment of the wellness policy every 3 years, at a minimum. This assessment will determine:

- Compliance with the wellness policy,
- How the wellness policy compares to model wellness policies, and
- Progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy.



Regulation

The proposed rule was published in the Federal Register, and the 60-day public comment period closed on April 28, 2014. FNS received 57,838 public comments that were considered in developing the final rule.

The final rule was published on July 29, 2016 and can be found online at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/local-school-wellness-policy>.

Resources

USDA Food and Nutrition Service's "School Nutrition Environment and Wellness Resources" Web site has information and resources on:

- Local school wellness policy process,
- Wellness policy elements,
- Success stories,
- Grants/funding opportunities, and
- Trainings.

Check it out! <http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/school-wellness-resources>

Documentation

The State agency will examine records during the Administrative Review, including:

- Copy of the current wellness policy,
- Documentation on how the policy and assessments are made available to the public,
- The most recent assessment of implementation of the policy, and
- Documentation of efforts to review and update the policy, including who was involved in the process and how stakeholders were made aware of their ability to participate.

Updates to the Wellness Policy

The final rule requires that LEAs update or modify the wellness policy as appropriate.

Public Updates

The rule requires that LEAs must make available to the public:

- The wellness policy, including any updates to and about the wellness policy, on an annual basis, at a minimum, and
- The Triennial Assessment, including progress toward meeting the goals of the policy.



Your District's Scorecard

Congratulations! You have completed the WellSAT. Check out your scorecard below. It contains details of how you scored on each item and section of the assessment. It also provides resources that will help you improve your district's school wellness policy.

Items with a rating of "0" (item not addressed in the policy) or "1" (general or weak statement addressing the item) can be improved by referring to the resource links next to the items. Multiple resources addressing school wellness policy topics are available online. To avoid duplicative information, we have included a small selection, rather than a comprehensive listing.

Policy Name: Flour Bluff ISD Wellness Assessment

Section 1. Nutrition Education		Rating
NE1	There is a standards-based nutrition curriculum, health education curriculum, or other curriculum that includes nutrition.	2
NE2	All elementary school students receive nutrition education.	2
NE3	All middle school students receive nutrition education.	2
NE4	All high school students receive nutrition education.	2
NE5	Links nutrition education with the school food environment.	2
NE6	Nutrition education teaches skills that are behavior-focused.	2
NE7	Nutrition education is sequential and comprehensive in scope	2
	Comprehensiveness Score: Count the number of items rated as "1" or "2" and divide this number by 7. Multiply by 100. Do not count an item if the rating	100

Subtotal for Section 1	is "0."	
	Strength Score: Count the number of items rated as "2" and divide this number by 7. Multiply by 100.	100

Section 2. Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals

Rating

		Rating
SM1	Addresses access to the USDA School Breakfast Program.	2
SM2	Addresses compliance with USDA nutrition standards for reimbursable meals.	2
SM3	School meals meet standards that are more stringent than those required by the USDA.	2
SM4	District takes steps beyond those required by federal law/regulation to protect the privacy of students who qualify for free or reduced priced meals.	2
SM5	USDA National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program standards are described in full (or a link to the standards is provided in the wellness policy)	2
SM6	Specifies strategies to increase participation in school meal programs.	2
SM7	Addresses students leaving school during lunch periods.	2
SM8	Ensures adequate time to eat.	2
SM9	Ensures annual training for food and nutrition services staff in accordance with USDA Professional Standards.	2
SM10	Addresses school meal environment.	2
SM11	Nutrition information for school meals (e.g., calories, saturated fat, sodium, sugar) is available to students and parents.	2

SM12	Specifies how families are provided information about determining eligibility for free/reduced priced meals.	2
SM13	Recess (when offered) is scheduled before lunch in elementary schools.	2
SM14	Free drinking water is available during meals	2
Subtotal for Section 2	Comprehensiveness Score: Count the number of items rated as "1" or "2" and divide this number by 14. Multiply by 100. Do not count an item if the rating is "0."	100
	Strength Score: Count the number of items rated as "2" and divide this number by 14. Multiply by 100.	100

Section 3. Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages

Rating

NS1	Addresses compliance with USDA minimum nutrition standards for all FOODS sold to students during the school day (commonly referred to as Smart Snacks)	2
NS2	Addresses nutrition standards for all FOODS sold to students during the EXTENDED school day (includes regular school day plus after school programming and clubs. Do not count snacks provided in before/aftercare (child care) programs)	2
NS3	Addresses nutrition standards for all FOODS AND BEVERAGES served to students while attending before/aftercare on school grounds.	2
NS4	Regulates food served during classroom parties and celebrations in elementary schools.	2
NS5	Addresses compliance with USDA nutrition standards for all BEVERAGES sold to students during the school day (commonly referred to as Smart Snacks)	2
	Addresses nutrition standards for all BEVERAGES sold to	

NS6	students during the EXTENDED school day (includes regular school day plus after school programming and clubs).	2
NS7	Addresses foods and beverages containing non-nutritive sweeteners (High School)	2
NS8	Addresses foods and beverages containing caffeine at the high school level* *As of 2014, USDA Smart Snacks standards prohibit the sale of foods and beverages containing caffeine in elementary and middle schools.	2
NS9	USDA Smart Snack standards are described in full (or a link to the standards is provided in the wellness policy)	2
NS10	Addresses availability of free drinking water throughout the school day.	2
NS11	Regulates food sold for fundraising at all times (not only during the school day).	2
Subtotal for Section 3	Comprehensiveness Score: Count the number of items rated as "1" or "2" and divide this number by 11. Multiply by 100. Do not count an item if the rating is "0."	100
	Strength Score: Count the number of items rated as "2" and divide this number by 11. Multiply by 100.	100

Section 4. Physical Education and Physical Activity

Rating

PEPA1	There is a written physical education curriculum for grades K-12.	2
PEPA2	The written physical education curriculum is aligned with national and/or state physical education standards.	2
PEPA3	Addresses time per week of physical education instruction for	2

	all elementary school students.	
PEPA4	Addresses time per week of physical education instruction for all middle school students.	2
PEPA5	Addresses time per week of physical education instruction for all high school students.	2
PEPA6	Addresses teacher-student ratio for physical education classes.	2
PEPA7	Addresses qualifications for physical education teachers for grades K-12.	2
PEPA8	District provides physical education training for physical education teachers.	2
PEPA9	Addresses physical education waiver requirements for K-12 students (e.g., substituting physical education requirement with other activities).	2
PEPA10	Addresses physical education exemptions for K-12 students.	2
PEPA11	Addresses physical education substitution requirements for K-12 students (e.g., substituting physical education requirement with other activities).	2
PEPA12	District addresses the development of a comprehensive school physical activity program (CSPAP) plan at each school. Click here for information on CSPAP.	2
PEPA13	District addresses active transport for all K-12 students.	2
PEPA14	District addresses before and after school physical activity for all K-12 students.	2
PEPA15	District addresses recess.	2
PEPA16	Addresses physical activity breaks for all K-12 students.	2
PEPA17	Addresses staff involvement in physical activity opportunities at all schools.	2
PEPA18	Addresses family and community engagement in physical activity opportunities at all schools.	2
PEPA19	District provides physical activity training for all teachers.	2
PEPA20	Joint or shared-use agreements for physical activity participation at all schools.	2

Subtotal for Section 4	Comprehensiveness Score: Count the number of items rated as "1" or "2" and divide this number by 20. Multiply by 100. Do not count an item if the rating is "0."	100
	Strength Score: Count the number of items rated as "2" and divide this number by 20. Multiply by 100.	100

Section 5. Wellness Promotion and Marketing

Rating

		Rating
WPM1	Encourages staff to model healthy eating/drinking behaviors.	2
WPM2	Addresses staff not modeling unhealthy eating/drinking behaviors.	2
WPM3	Encourages staff to model physical activity behaviors.	2
WPM4	Addresses food not being used as a reward.	2
WPM5	Addresses using physical activity as a reward.	2
WPM6	Addresses physical activity not being used as a punishment.	2
WPM7	Addresses physical activity not being withheld as a punishment.	2
WPM8	Specifies marketing/ways to promote healthy food and beverage choices.	2
WPM9	Specifies ways to promote physical activity.	2
WPM10	Specifies that family wellness activities will be planned and will include nutrition and physical activity components.	2
WPM11	On signs, scoreboards, sports equipment.	2
WPM12	In curricula, textbooks, websites used for educational purposes, or other educational materials (both printed and electronic)	2

WPM13	On exteriors of vending machines, food or beverage cups or containers, food display racks, coolers, trash and recycling containers, etc.	2
WPM14	On advertisements in school publications, on school radio stations, in-school television, computer screen savers and/or school-sponsored Internet sites, or announcements on the public announcement (PA) system.	2
WPM15	On fundraisers and corporate-sponsored programs that encourage students and their families to sell, purchase or consume products and/or provide funds to schools in exchange for consumer purchases of those products.	2
Subtotal for Section 5	Comprehensiveness Score: Count the number of items rated as "1" or "2" and divide this number by 15. Multiply by 100. Do not count an item if the rating is "0."	100
	Strength Score: Count the number of items rated as "2" and divide this number by 15. Multiply by 100.	100

Section 6. Implementation, Evaluation & Communication

Rating

IEC1	Establishes an ongoing district wellness committee.	2
IEC2	District wellness committee has community-wide representation.	2
IEC3	Designates one district level official accountable for ensuring each school is in compliance (ensuring that there is reporting up)	2
IEC4	Designates a leader in each school accountable for ensuring compliance within the school.	2
IEC5	Addresses annual assessment of school wellness policy implementation/progress towards wellness goals.	2

IEC6	Progress report on compliance/implementation is made to the school community (Board of Education, superintendent, principals, staff, students and parents)	2
IEC7	Progress report on compliance/implementation is made available to the public	2
IEC8	Progress report ensures transparency by including: the web address of the wellness policy, a description of each school's activities and progress towards meeting wellness goals, contact details for committee leadership and information on how to join the committee.	2
IEC9	Addresses a plan for updating policy based on best practices.	2
IEC10	Addresses methods for communicating with the public.	2
IEC11	Specifies how district will engage families to provide information and/or solicit input to meet district wellness goals (e.g., through website, e-mail, parent meetings, or events).	2
Subtotal for Section 6	Comprehensiveness Score: Count the number of items rated as "1" or "2" and divide this number by 11. Multiply by 100. Do not count an item if the rating is "0."	100
	Strength Score: Count the number of items rated as "2" and divide this number by 11. Multiply by 100.	100

Overall District Policy Score

Total Comprehensiveness Add the comprehensiveness scores for each of the six sections above and divide this number by 6.	District Score 100
Total Strength Add the strength scores for each of the six sections above and divide this	District Score 100

number by 6.