

# Step 1

## Extent To Which the Local Wellness Policy (LWP) Complies with USDA Requirements and Compares to a Model Policy Assessment Tool



Complete one of the LWP assessment tools listed below. Check the box next to the tool used. Retain a copy of the completed comparison assessment.

- Alliance for a Healthier Generation 10-step Checklist (see pages 2-5 of this document)
- [The WellSAT School Assessment Tool](#)

Open the completed comparison assessment and respond to the following questions based on the responses.

### 1. List areas of strength in the wellness policy:

- a. Clear Leadership, Accountability, and Assessment Structure—The policy clearly designates responsible officials (Elementary and Secondary Principals), identifies a multidisciplinary Wellness Team by name and role, and outlines a structured process for annual review and triennial assessment.
- b. Strong Physical Activity Requirements and Protections—The policy includes specific, measurable physical education minute requirements and clear protections around the use of physical activity.
- c. Comprehensive Nutrition Standards and Competitive Food Controls—The policy provides strong controls over foods sold and served during the school day and aligns with federal Smart Snacks standards.

### 2. List opportunities for improvement in the wellness policy:

- a. Strengthening Standards for Foods Provided (Not Sold) During the School Day:  
We could clarify and strengthen standards for foods provided during the school day (e.g., classroom celebrations, snacks brought from home).
- b. Expanding Nutrition Promotion Beyond Curriculum:  
Our curriculum integration is strong, but opportunities exist to expand hands-on or experiential promotion (e.g., student taste tests, menu input, nutrition campaigns, cafeteria engagement strategies).
- c. Enhancing Measurement of Wellness Goal Outcomes:  
Our goals are meaningful (mental health access, fruit/vegetable variety, movement initiatives), but some could benefit from more defined measurement methods to track progress consistently during the triennial assessment.

### 3. As a result of the comparison, was new language adopted in the LWP?

- Yes (complete notes section & question 4)
- No (skip to question 5)

#### Notes:

- **Under Section: Foods Available During the School Day we added the following:**

**Continuous Improvement – Foods Provided During the School Day:**

St. Mary’s Catholic School will continue to strengthen guidance regarding foods provided, but not sold, to students during the school day (e.g., classroom celebrations, snacks brought by families). The Wellness Team will review current practices and explore development of additional guidance materials for families and staff to promote consistency with Smart Snacks nutrition standards while maintaining flexibility appropriate for a Catholic school community.

● **Under Section: Nutrition Education – We added a new subsection:**

**6. Expanded Nutrition Promotion:** In addition to classroom-based instruction, St. Mary’s Catholic School will continue to expand student-centered nutrition promotion efforts. The Wellness Team will explore opportunities for annual school-wide nutrition promotion activities, student involvement in highlighting healthy menu options, and enhanced cafeteria messaging to encourage selection of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

● **Under Section: Goals – We added a New Subsection Titled “Ongoing Policy Improvement”:**

St. Mary’s Catholic School is committed to continuous improvement of its Local Wellness Policy. As part of each annual review and triennial assessment cycle, the Wellness Team will:

- Evaluate the consistency and effectiveness of guidelines for foods provided during the school day;
- Assess opportunities to expand nutrition promotion beyond classroom instruction;
- Strengthen measurable indicators used to monitor progress toward established wellness goals.

Findings from this review will inform future updates to the Local Wellness Policy and support ongoing enhancement of student wellness initiatives.

**4. Have the changes been approved by the board?**

- Yes
- No

**5. Describe the next steps for strengthening your LWP.**

St. Mary’s Catholic School is committed to continuous improvement of its Local Wellness Policy. Based on our most recent review, the following next steps have been identified:

**1. Strengthen Guidance for Foods Provided During the School Day**

The Wellness Team will review current practices related to classroom celebrations and



foods brought from home. The team will explore development of additional guidance for families and staff to promote consistency with Smart Snacks nutrition standards while maintaining flexibility appropriate to our school community.

**2. Expand Student-Centered Nutrition Promotion Efforts**

The school will implement at least one annual school-wide nutrition promotion initiative beyond classroom instruction. Efforts may include taste-testing events, student engagement in menu planning feedback, or enhanced cafeteria messaging highlighting healthy food options.

**3. Increase Structured Physical Activity Opportunities for High School Students**

In addition to required physical education minutes, the school will continue developing voluntary physical activity initiatives such as intramural events, fitness challenges, or open gym opportunities.

**4. Enhance Measurement of Wellness Goal Progress**

The Wellness Team will refine documentation and tracking methods used to measure progress toward established goals, ensuring clearer evaluation during the next triennial assessment cycle.

**5. Increase Awareness of Mental Health Resources**

The school will strengthen communication regarding available on-campus counseling services through student presentations, parent communication, and visible postings within the school building.

These steps will be reviewed during the annual Wellness Team meeting and incorporated into the next triennial assessment cycle to ensure continued alignment with federal and state wellness requirements.

**Skip & delete the following pages if utilizing the WellSAT tool to complete the model policy comparison.**

**Alliance for a Healthier Generation 10-step Checklist**

According to 7 CFR 210.31(e)(2), all School Food Authorities (SFAs) are required to complete an assessment of their compliance with their local wellness policy (LWP) at least once every three years and make this assessment available to the public by posting assessment responses/documentation to your school/district/residential child care institution (RCCI) website.



The local wellness policy (LWP) triennial assessment must be completed by **June 30, 2026**. Non-compliance with this requirement will result in a hold of the SFAs Child Nutrition Program claims for reimbursement until this requirement is met.

The questions contained in this survey have been taken from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's LWP assessment.

This survey outlines the ten required components of the LWP as defined by the USDA final rule of 2016. SFAs can use this checklist with Healthier Generation's Model Wellness Policy to revise/update their LWP to ensure that it meets federal requirements. Healthier Generation's Model Wellness Policy includes model language for the required components, as well as resources to support implementation.

Please provide your SFA's information and then select the rating that applies to your LWP for each of the 10 questions below.

**The rating scale is:**

2 = Current policy includes **all** required language for this component

1 = Current policy includes **some** of the required language for this component

0 = Current policy includes **none** of the required language for this component

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Please provide your SFA's information in the space provided below.

**School/District/RCCI name**

St. Mary's Catholic School/Archdiocese of Omaha

**Agency ID Number/Agreement Number (6 digits, no dashes)**

450701

**Wellness policy contact name (first & last)**

Jennie Schneider

**Wellness policy contact email address**

jschneider@smcards.org

1. The policy identifies one or more district/school/RCCI official(s) who have the authority and responsibility for ensuring that each site complies with the policy.

**Rating**

2



2. The policy includes language inviting parents, students, representatives of the school food authority (SFA), teachers of physical education, health professionals, the school/RCCI board, administrators, and the general public to participate in the development, implementation, review and update of the LWP.

**Rating**

2

3. The policy includes language describing the methods for informing the public (including parents, students, and others in the community) about the LWP, and updates this information on an annual basis.

**Rating**

2

4. The policy includes language that outlines the triennial assessment. At least once every three years, the following is measured and made available to the public:

- the extent to which the school(s) comply with LWP;
- the extent to which the LWP compares to model local wellness policies;
- the progress made in attaining the goals of the LWP

**Rating**

2

5. The policy includes nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold on the school campus during the school day that are consistent with federal regulations for school meals and the Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards.

**Rating**

2

6. The policy includes standards for foods and beverages provided, but not sold, to students during the school day (e.g. in classroom parties or classroom snacks brought by parents).

**Rating**

1



7. The policy includes specific goals for nutrition education and promotion activities.

**Rating**

2

8. The policy includes requirements for marketing and advertising of only those foods and beverages that meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards on the school campus during the school day.

**Rating**

2

9. The policy includes specific goals for physical activity opportunities.

**Rating**

2

10. The policy includes specific goals for other school-based activities that promote student wellness.

**Rating**

2

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## Discussion/Notes:

#6 is strong, but advisory

Questions? Contact: [lauren.christensen@nebraska.gov](mailto:lauren.christensen@nebraska.gov)

