



# School Wellness Policy Requirements

With the Child Nutrition and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act of 2004, educational entities participating in the National School Lunch Program were required to establish local school wellness policies starting in school year 2006-07. The 2004 act was strengthened under the **Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010** that determines policies for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) child nutrition programs.

The 2010 legislation emphasized ongoing policy implementation and assessment, as well as the expansion of collaborators participating in the wellness policy development to foster broad-based support.

The Local School Wellness Policy final rule was published in July 2016. These regulations strengthen the ability of a local educational agency to create a school nutrition environment that promotes students' health, well-being, and ability to learn.

## **Federal Legislation:**

Local School Wellness Policy Implementation under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 [FNS-2014-0010]

<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2016/07/29/2016-17230/local-school-wellness-policy-implementation-under-the-healthy-hunger-free-kids-act-of-2010>

## **POLICY REQUIREMENT AREAS**

A local school wellness policy is an official document that guides a local educational agency's (LEA) efforts to establish a school environment that promotes healthy behaviors among students and staff. The development of the wellness policy is left to each school district so their unique needs can be considered, though the policy must address all requirements outlined in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 <http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>.

## School wellness policies must include language that addresses the following:

### 1. WELLNESS POLICY CONTENT

- **Specific goals** for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness.
- **Guidelines** for all foods and beverages sold to students during the school day on the school campus that are consistent with Federal regulations for school meal nutrition standards and the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- **Local guidelines** for all foods and beverages provided, but not sold, to students during the school day, including school celebrations, classroom parties, and food incentives.
- **Policies for marketing** of food and beverages that are consistent with the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- **Summary** of public involvement, public updates and evaluation plan.
- **Responsible school official(s)** to ensure compliance of the local wellness policy.

### 2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

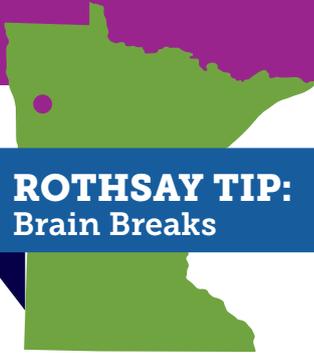
- **Permit parents, students, representatives** of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, school board, administrators and the general public to participate in the wellness policy process.
- **Inform the public** of the wellness policy on an annual basis, including any updates.

### 3. TRIENNIAL ASSESSMENTS

- **At least once every three years**, LEAs must assess the implementation of the local school wellness policy, and make results available to the public. The assessment must include:
  - Compliance with the wellness policy;
  - The extent to which the local wellness policy compares to model wellness policies;
  - A description of the progress made in attaining goals of the local wellness policy.
- **Make appropriate updates or modifications** to the local school wellness policy, based on the assessment.

### 4. RECORDKEEPING

- **Maintain** the following documentation at a minimum:
  - A copy of the written local school wellness policy;
  - Documentation demonstrating how the policy and assessments are made available to the public;
  - Documentation of efforts to provide annual updates to the local wellness policy including who was involved in the process and how stakeholders were permitted to participate;
  - The most recent triennial assessment of implementation of the policy.



**ROTHSAY TIP:**  
Brain Breaks

SHIP staff brought in a teacher from outside the district to model different active classroom strategies like Brain Breaks where students stand and move while learning. Now, every day at 10 a.m. teachers do two-minute Brain Breaks and are more in tune with when a break can get students back on task. Now students not only ask for the breaks, they come up with their own Brain Breaks.

“ It’s imperative to bring in outside stakeholders to help with implementing the wellness policy, especially in a small district where resources are limited. SHIP staff play a key role on our wellness committee. They provided us with the expertise we needed to get the policy off the ground and ongoing support to keep the momentum going. ”

— STACI ALLMARAS  
PRINCIPAL  
ROTHSAY SCHOOL DISTRICT



## COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS

The USDA final rule requires the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to assess compliance with the wellness policy requirements as a part of the USDA's School Nutrition Program Administrative Reviews that occur every three years. As a part of the review process, MDE staff conduct a school site visit and each LEA should be prepared to answer the following questions:

- Does your school have a wellness policy? If so, does the policy include the required components?
- Is the school wellness policy posted on the school website (public schools only)?
- How does the public know about the school wellness policy?
- Who is the designated leader of the wellness policy team?
- What efforts are made to review and update the wellness policy?
- Do you have a copy of the most recent assessment of the school wellness policy?
- Who is involved in reviewing and updating the school wellness policy?
- How are potential stakeholders made aware of their ability to participate in the development, review, updates and implementation of the school wellness policy?
- What is the process by which the public is made aware of the results of the most recent assessment of the wellness policy?

## DOCUMENTATION

As noted on page 11, LEAs are required to keep specific documentation related to their local wellness policy. In addition to the required documents, supporting documentation may also include:

- School wellness policy implementation or action plan.
- Agendas and attendance sheets from wellness committee meetings.
- District emails pertaining to participation in wellness committee meetings.
- Copies of materials disseminated to the wellness committee and/or the public.
- Community flyers or invitations to stakeholders for related wellness events or committee meetings.

## RESOURCES: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

**USDA Local Wellness Policies:** Policy requirements, technical assistance and resources. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/local-school-wellness-policy>

**Minnesota Department of Education:** Policy requirements and resources. <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/FNS/SNP/gen/well/>

**Putting Local School Wellness Policies into Action:** Learn how eleven schools across the country have successfully implemented wellness policy content areas. <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/npao/pdf/SchoolWellnessInAction.pdf>