

Creating a Local School Wellness Policy

A local school wellness policy is a written document that guides a local educational agency (LEA) efforts to establish a school environment that promotes students' health, well-being, and ability to learn. These policies are required for all LEAs that sponsor the USDA National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program. Wellness policies are board-approved documents and are shared with the public.

Seven steps to create a local school wellness policy
1. Form a committee that includes representatives from the following groups: parents, students, school food authority, physical education teachers, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public.
2. Read the Rudd Center's model school wellness policy .
3. Write your own policy that includes all of the federally-required items and additional items that are a priority to your school/district.
4. Score your new policy using the WellSAT 3.0 on the WellSAT website .
5. Review your scorecard to ensure you have incorporated all federally-required items.
6. Work with your Board of Education to bring the policy to a vote.
7. Share your policy widely throughout the district and community. Post the policy in an easy to find location on the district website.

What are the federal requirements?

Wellness policies must be created by a committee and include the following components. See links for more detail. .

- Specific goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness ([7 CFR 210.31\(c\)\(1\)](#));
- Standards and nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages available on the school campus during the school day that are, at a minimum, consistent with Federal regulations for program meals and the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, and designed to promote student health ([7 CFR 210.31\(c\)\(2\)](#) and [\(3\)](#)); and
- Policies that allow marketing or advertising of only those foods and beverages that may be sold on the school campus during the school day, i.e., those foods and beverages that meet the [Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards](#) ([7 CFR 210.31\(c\)\(3\)\(iii\)](#))

LEAs are also required to take the following actions:

- Review and consider evidence-based strategies in determining local school wellness goals ([7 CFR 210.31\(c\)\(1\)](#));
- Involve, inform, and update the public (including parents, students, and other stakeholders) about the content and implementation of the local school wellness policy ([7 CFR 210.31\(d\)\(2\)](#) and [\(3\)](#));
- Conduct an assessment, at least once every three years, to determine compliance, progress, and the extent to which the policy compares to model local school wellness policies ([7 CFR 210.31\(e\)\(2\)](#)); and
- Update or modify the local school wellness policy as appropriate ([7 CFR 210.31\(e\)\(3\)](#)).

Further information and guidance

Use these links to assist you in creating a clear and effective wellness policy.

Tools for creating your wellness policy:

[Model School Wellness Policy](#)

[WellSAT Website](#)

Wellness policy resources from the USDA:

[USDA Local School Wellness Policy Final Rule](#)

[USDA Local School Wellness Policy: Guidance and Q&As](#)

[\(Direct link to the Guidance and Q&As PDF\)](#)

[USDA Local School Wellness Policy Page](#)

Connecticut SDE guidance:

[CSDE School Wellness Policies](#)

[CSDE Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs](#)

Other wellness policy resources:

[Action for Health Kids Wellness Policy 101](#)

[Alliance for a Healthier Generation Guidance](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Guidance](#)

[Connecticut Association of Boards of Education \(CABE\) Guidance](#)