

WellSAT 2.0

The Wellness School Assessment Tool 2.0 provides a standard method for the quantitative assessment of school wellness policies. Such policies have been required since 2006 in all school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program. This tool offers a consistent and reliable means of assessing the comprehensiveness and strength of school wellness policies within or among states. It was developed in 2010 and updated in 2014 by researchers funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

How to Rate Policy Statements

School wellness policies are evaluated based on the degree to which they address 78 policy items, which are categorized into six sections. The sections include Nutrition Education, Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals, Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages, Physical Education and Physical Activity, and Implementation, Evaluation and Communication.

For each of the 78 policy items, school wellness policy statements are to be rated “0,” “1,” or “2,” using the definitions below. This evaluation tool lists each policy item followed by an explanation of the item and examples of “1” and “2” statements.

Rating		Explanation
0	= Not Mentioned	The item is not included in the text of the policy.
1	= Weak Statement	<p>Assign a rating of “1” when the item is mentioned, <i>but</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy will be hard to enforce because the statement is <i>vague, unclear, or confusing</i>. • Statements are listed as <i>goals, aspirations, suggestions, or recommendations</i>. • There are <i>loopholes</i> in the policy that weaken enforcement of the item. • The policy mentions a <i>future plan to act</i> without specifying when the plan will be established. <p>Words often used include: <i>may, can, could, should, might, encourage, suggest, urge, some, partial, make an effort, and try</i>.</p>
2	= Meets / Exceeds Expectations	<p>Assign a rating of “2” when the item is mentioned, and it is clear that the policy makers are committed to making the item happen because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The item is described using specific language (e.g., a concept followed by concrete plans or strategies for implementation). • Strong language is used to indicate that action or regulation is required, including: <i>shall, will, must, have to, insist, require, all, total, comply and enforce</i>. • A district is unable to enforce an item (e.g., teachers role modeling healthy behaviors), but the goal is clearly stated (e.g., “shall encourage teachers to role model healthy behaviors”).

Evaluating Hint: One method for deciding between a rating of “1” and a “2” is to consider the scenario of a parent approaching a school district’s board of education to discuss an issue. If the policy is ambiguous on how the school should handle the issue at hand, rate the item as “1.” If the written policy gives clear guidance about how to decide whether the school complies with the policy, rate the item as “2.”

Note: Many districts have policies in place that may impact or overlap with the district wellness policy. For example, many school boards have a stand-alone policy addressing student transportation that may address biking to school. If biking to school is also covered in the wellness policy, it is important to align the content of the two policies to avoid sending contradictory messages to the school community.

How to Score School Wellness Policies

The WellSAT 2.0 will give you two scores: a **comprehensiveness** score, which reflects the extent to which recommended content areas are covered in the policy; and a **strength** score, which describes how strongly the content is stated. Both scores range from 0-100, with lower scores indicating less content and weaker language, and higher scores indicating more content and use of specific and directive language.

Score	Explanation
Comprehensiveness Score by section	Comprehensiveness is calculated by counting the number of items in each section rated as “1” or “2,” dividing this number by the number of policy items in the section, and multiplying this number by 100.
Strength Score by section	Strength is calculated by counting the number of items in each section rated as “2,” dividing this number by the number of policy items in the section, and multiplying this number by 100.
Total Comprehensiveness	Total comprehensiveness is calculated by counting the number of items rated as “1” or “2,” dividing this number by the total number of policy items (78) in all five sections, and multiplying this number by 100.
Total Strength	Total strength is calculated by counting the number of items rated as “2,” dividing this number by the total number of policy items (78) in all five sections, and multiplying this number by 100.

The example below shows the calculation of sample scores for Section 1.

Section 1. Nutrition Education		Rating
NEWP1	Nutrition curriculum provided for each grade level.	0
NEWP2	Links nutrition education with the school food environment.	1
NEWP3	Nutrition education teaches skills that are behavior-focused.	2
NEWP4	Encourages staff to be role models for healthy behaviors.	1
NEWP5	Specifies district using Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Coordinated School Health Program (CSHP) model or other coordinated/comprehensive method.	0
NEWP6	Specifies how district will engage parents, students or community to provide information and hear feedback to meet district wellness goals.	0
NEWP7	Specifies marketing to promote healthy choices.	1
Subtotal for Section 1 <i>Nutrition Education</i>		57
Comprehensiveness Score <i>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 is “0.”</i>		57
Strength Score <i>Count the number of items rated as “2” and divide this number by 7. Multiply by 100.</i>		14

Comprehensiveness Score = Three items are rated as “1” and one items is rated as “2,” for a total of 4 items. Four divided by 7 equals 0.57, multiplied by 100 for a score of 57.

Strength Score= One item is rated as “2.” One divided by 7 equals 0.14, multiplied by 100 for a score of 14.

In Section 3, item responses may vary if regulations are specific to elementary, middle and high schools. You can assign a score for each grade level. The final score for the item will be the average of the three responses given. Averages should be rounded up.

School Wellness Policy Score Sheet

District ID _____

The following tables include wellness policy statement numbers and item descriptions broken down by section. Please rate the level to which each policy item is addressed in the school wellness policy.

0 = Not mentioned

1 = Weak Statement

2= Meets/Exceeds Expectations

Section 1. Nutrition Education		
Rating	#	Item
	NEWP1	There is a standards-based nutrition curriculum/health education or other curriculum includes nutrition
	NEWP2	All elementary school students receive nutrition education
	NEWP3	All middle school students receive nutrition education

	NEWP4	All high school students receive nutrition education
	NEWP5	Links nutrition education with the school food environment
	NEWP6	Nutrition education teaches skills that are behavior-focused
	NEWP7	Nutrition education is sequential and comprehensive in scope

Section 2. Standard for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals		
Rating	#	Item
	SM1	Addresses access to the USDA School Breakfast Program
	SM2	Addresses compliance with USDA nutrition standards for reimbursable meals
	SM3	School meals meet standards that are more stringent than those required by the USDA
	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
	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)
	SM6	Specifies strategies to increase participation in school meal programs
	SM7	Addresses students leaving school during lunch periods
	SM8	Ensures adequate time to eat
	SM9	Ensures annual training for food and nutrition services staff in accordance with USDA Professional Standards
	SM10	Addresses school meal environment
	SM11	Nutrition information for school meals (e.g., calories, saturated fat, sodium, sugar) is available to students and parents.
	SM12	Specifies how families are provided information about determining eligibility for free/reduced priced meals.
	SM13	Recess (when offered) is scheduled before lunch in elementary schools
	SM14	Free drinking water is available during meals

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

Rating	#	Item
	NS1	Addresses compliance with USDA minimum nutrition standards for all FOODS sold to students during the school day
	NS2	Addresses nutrition standards for all FOODS sold to students during the EXTENDED school day
	NS3	Addresses nutrition standards for all FOODS AND BEVERAGES served to students while attending before/aftercare on school grounds
	NS4	Regulates food served at class parties and other school celebrations in elementary schools
	NS5	Addresses compliance with USDA minimum nutrition standards for all BEVERAGES sold to students during the school day
	NS6	Addresses nutrition standards for all BEVERAGES sold to students during the EXTENDED school day
	NS7	Addresses foods and beverages containing non-nutritive sweeteners
	NS8	Addresses foods and beverages containing caffeine (High School)
	NS9	USDA Smart Snack standards are described in full
	NS10	Addresses availability of free drinking water throughout the school day
	NS11	Regulates food sold for fundraising at all times

Section 4. Physical Education and Physical Activity

Rating	#	Item
	PEPA1	There is a written physical education curriculum for grades K-12
	PEPA2	The written physical education curriculum is aligned with national and/or state physical education standards.
	PEPA3	Addresses time per week of physical education instruction for all elementary school students
	PEPA4	Addresses time per week of physical education instruction for all middle school students.
	PEPA5	Addresses time per week of physical education instruction for all high school students
	PEPA6	Addresses teacher-student ratio for physical education classes
	PEPA7	Addresses qualifications for physical education teachers for grades K-12.
	PEPA8	District provides physical education training for physical education teachers.
	PEPA9	Addresses physical education waiver requirements for K-12 students
	PEPA10	Addresses physical education exemptions for K-12 students
	PEPA11	Addresses physical education substitution requirements for K-12 students
	PEPA12	District addresses the development of a comprehensive school physical activity program (CSPAP) plan at each school
	PEPA13	District addresses active transport for all K-12 students
	PEPA14	District addresses before and after school physical activity for all K-12 students
	PEPA15	District addresses recess for elementary school students
	PEPA16	Addresses physical activity breaks for all K-12 students
	PEPA17	Addresses staff involvement in physical activity opportunities at all schools
	PEPA18	Addresses family and community engagement in physical activity opportunities at all schools
	PEPA19	District provides physical activity training for all teachers
	PEPA20	Joint or shared-use agreements for physical activity participation at all schools

Section 5. Wellness Promotion and Marketing

Rating	#	Item
	WPM1	Encourages staff to model healthy eating/drinking behaviors
	WPM2	Addresses staff not modeling unhealthy eating/drinking behaviors
	WPM3	Encourages staff to model physical activity behaviors
	WPM4	Addresses food not being used as a reward.
	WPM5	Addresses using physical activity as a reward
	WPM6	Addresses physical activity not being used as a punishment
	WPM7	Addresses physical activity not being withheld as a punishment
	WPM8	Specifies marketing/ways to promote healthy food and beverage choices
	WPM9	Specifies ways to promote physical activity
	WPM10	Specifies that family wellness activities will be planned and will include nutrition and physical activity components
	WPM11	Addresses the restriction of marketing of food and beverages that cannot be sold to students during the school day on signs, scoreboards, sports equipment
	WPM12	Addresses the restriction of advertising or marketing of food and beverages that cannot be sold to students during the school day in curricula, textbooks, websites used for educational purposes, or other educational materials
	WPM13	Addresses the restriction of advertising or marketing of food and beverages that cannot be sold to students during the school day on exteriors of vending machines, food or beverage cups or containers, food display racks, coolers, trash, etc
	WPM14	Addresses the restriction of marketing of food and beverages that cannot be sold to students during the school day on advertisements in school publications, school radio stations, in-school television, computer screen savers and/or school-sponsored Internet sites, or announcements on the PA system

	WPM15	Addresses the restriction of marketing of food and beverages that cannot be sold to students during the school day 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
Section 6. Implementation, Evaluation and Communication		
Rating	#	Item
	IEC1	Establishes an ongoing district wellness committee
	IEC2	District wellness committee has community-wide representation
	IEC3	Designates one district level official accountable for ensuring each school is in compliance (ensuring that there is reporting up)
	IEC4	Designates a leader in each school accountable for ensuring compliance within the school
	IEC5	Addresses annual assessment of SWP implementation/progress towards wellness goals
	IEC6	Progress report on compliance/implementation is made to the school community (Board of Education, superintendent, principals, staff, students and parents)
	IEC7	Progress report on compliance/implementation is made to the public
	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
	IEC9	Addresses a plan for updating policy based on best practices
	IEC10	Addresses methods for communicating with the public
	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)

Review scoring information on page 3.

Section 1: Comprehensiveness= (total # of items in Section 1 receiving a "1" or "2" /7) x 100= _____

Strength= (total number of items in Section 1 receiving a "2" /7) x 100= _____

Section 2: Comprehensiveness= (total # of items in Section 2 receiving a "1" or "2" /14) x 100= _____

Strength= (total number of items in Section 2 receiving a "2" /14) x 100= _____

Section 3: Comprehensiveness= (total # of items in Section 3 receiving a "1" or "2" /11) x 100= _____

Strength= (total number of items in the Section 3 receiving a "2" /11) x 100= _____

Section 4: Comprehensiveness= (total # of items in Section 4 receiving a "1" or "2" /20) x 100= _____

Strength= (total number of items in Section 4 receiving a "2" /20) x 100= _____

Section 5: Comprehensiveness= (total # of items in Section 5 receiving a "1" or "2" /15) x 100= _____

Strength= (total number of items in Section 5 receiving a "2" /15) x 100= _____

Section 6: Comprehensiveness= (total # of items in Section 5 receiving a "1" or "2" /11) x 100= _____

Strength= (total number of items in Section 5 receiving a "2" /11) x 100= _____

Total Comprehensiveness= (total number of items in ALL sections receiving a "1" or "2" /78) x 100= _____

Total Strength= (total number of items in ALL sections receiving a "2" /78) x 100= _____