

**MEMORANDUM
NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Office for Student Affairs**



Laura M. Olson
Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services

To: Alisha DiCorpo
From: Laura Olson, PPS Director & Sandra Sullivan, Food Services Director
Date: 6/2/21
Re: Wellness Policy Triennial

The New Milford School District has recently conducted an assessment of our Wellness Policy. By Federal Law requirements, districts are required to complete the evaluation every three years. The assessment determines:

Compliance with our wellness policy,
How the wellness policy compares to a model wellness policy, and
Progress made in attaining the goal of the wellness policy.

Federal Compliance Standards are indicated with an asterisk (*) and must be reflected in NMPS Policy and Practice.

Section 1: Nutrition Education Strengths

- *Our goals for nutrition education are designed to promote student wellness.
- Education is provided through skill based, behavior-focused, interactive methods (ex. Gr 4 “Anatomy of a Food Label”).
- Sequential and comprehensive nutrition education is provided to elementary, middle school and high school students.
- Nutrition education is integrated into other lessons (ex. Plant patch, Scholastic news).
- Nutrition education is linked with the school environment (ex. “Eat the Rainbow” Gr 3 lessons).
- Nutrition education is integrated into the school environments (ex. “gas packed soup”, salad pyramid, school garden).

Section 1: Nutrition Education Weaknesses

- No weaknesses in practice or policy were identified when compared to a model policy and practice.

Section 2: Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals Strengths

- The district is in full compliance of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act (HHFKA).*

- Breakfast is offered every day in all five schools.
- *The district ensures there is no overt identification of students receiving free/reduced meals through the Nutrikids point of sale system.
- Students have access to all meals regardless of their ability to pay. Unpaid balances are handled by the district administration.
- Information regarding eligibility for free/reduced priced meals is provided through the newspaper, district newsletter, district website, emails, school offices and nutrition office.
- Strategies to increase participation in the school meals program include menu promotions, taste tests, farm to school, seasonal celebrations, multiple meal choices, rainbow trays, signage, artwork atmosphere, online payments, Twitter, kindergarten info meeting.
- Breakfast is available as students arrive at school. Lunch periods are 25 minutes. Sit down time will vary depending on menu items and participation.
- *Water fountains are available in all cafeterias.
- Monthly training occurs in order to meet the USDA Professional Standards.
- Procuring locally produced foods is a priority for school meals.

Section 2: Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals Weaknesses

- *District takes steps to protect the privacy of students who qualify for free or reduced priced meals.(Policy Weakness)
- *Free drinking water is available for all meals.(Policy Weakness)
- *Ensure annual training for food and nutrition services staff in accordance with USDA Professional Standards. (Policy Weakness).

Section 3: Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages Strengths

- *All competitive foods sold to students meet the Healthy Food Certification/Smart Snacks nutrition standards and it is a current practice to access foods on the Connecticut State Department of Education website to see if they can be sold.
- *Competitive food/beverages sold a la carte in the cafeteria, vending machines, school stores and through fundraisers during the school day and/or sold in the cafeteria.
- The district participates in the CT exemption policy for food and beverages sold that do not have to meet the Smart Snacks standards. This is both in practice and policy.
- All food and beverages sold at the high school are caffeine free as stated in the policy.
- Both practice and policy address foods sold to students after the school day. The district participates in the CT exemption policy.
- Food is not used as a reward in both practice and policy.

Section 3: Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages Weaknesses

- *The language in the policy needs to be updated to address competitive food/beverages sold to students during the school day. (Policy Weakness)

- Policy language does not address how and where to check food/beverage items to see if it can be sold to a student.
- *Policy language needs updating to address all competitive foods/beverages sold a la carte to students in the cafeteria, vending machines, school stores and fundraisers. (Policy Weakness)
- *There are food-based celebrations and food is purchased through the cafeteria to ensure it meets the CT Nutrition Standards; however the policy language is vague. (Policy and Practice Weakness)
- Policy does not specifically address foods served after the school day.
- Students have access to water throughout the day, however, the policy does not address this.

Section 4: Physical Education and Physical Activity Strengths

- There is a written physical education curriculum for grades K-12 and it is aligned with national and/or state education standards.
- Physical education promotes physically active lifestyles in both practice and policy.
- Policy and practice addresses recess for all elementary students.

Section 4: Physical Education and Physical Activity Weaknesses

- Does not address time per week of physical education instruction for all elementary, middle and high school students in policy.
- Does not fully address training for PE teachers in policy. Policy does not address physical education exemption or substitution requirements for all students.
- Policy does not fully address family and community engagement in physical activity opportunities at all schools.
- Policy does not fully address before and after school activity for all students including clubs, intramural, interscholastic opportunities.
- There are shared-use agreements for physical activity participation, but not explicit in the policy (ex NMHS weight room).
- There is no policy for active transport for all K-12 students who live within walkable/bikeable distance.

Section 5. Wellness Promotion and Marketing Strengths

- The policy explicitly states that physical activity is to never be used as punishment or be withheld as punishment.
- *Policy and practice explicitly restricts marketing on the school campus during the school day to only those foods and beverages that meet Smart Snack standards.

Section 5. Wellness Promotion and Marketing Weaknesses

- Policy broadly encourages staff to model healthy eating, physical activity, and supports staff wellness.
- The following areas are practiced in the district, but not explicitly stated in the policy:
 - There are no foods marketed on school property or during the school day
- There are no foods marketed in educational materials, including electronic education materials, but not explicitly stated in the policy.

- There is not a practice or policy that addresses marketing through fundraisers and corporate-incentive programs (e.g. fundraising programs which encourage students and their families to sell, purchase, or consume products and corporate incentive programs that provide funds to schools in exchange for proof of purchases of company producers, such as Box Tops For Education).

Section 6. Implementation, Evaluation and Communication Weaknesses

- *Addresses how all relevant stakeholders will participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the local wellness policy. (Policy Weakness)
- *Identifies the officials responsible for the implementation and compliance of the local wellness policy. (Policy and Practice Weakness).
- *Addresses making the wellness policy available to the public. (Policy Weakness).
- *Addresses the assessment of the district implementation of the local wellness policy at least every three years. (Policy and Practice Weakness).
- *Triennial assessments results will be made available to the public and will include a plan for updating policy based on results of the triennial assessment. (Policy and Practice Weakness).