

WellSAT:3.0

Wellness School Assessment Tool

[About the WellSAT](#) [Coding Tips](#) [Using Your Scores](#) [Resources](#)



Welcome to the WellSAT 3.0

The WellSAT is a quantitative assessment tool to help you score and improve your local School Wellness Policy. Since 2010, this measure has been used by thousands of people across the country, representing school districts from every state.

All WellSAT items reflect the federal law or best practices. The purpose of scoring your district policy is to identify where it is strong and where it could be improved.

This is the third update to the WellSAT and we would like to thank all of the people who have contributed to each version of the WellSAT.

[Click here for a full list of updates.](#)

[Click here for a pdf of the questions](#) and [here for a blank scorecard.](#)

Highlights of the changes from WellSAT 2.0 are below:

- Items that are part of the latest federal regulations are noted with this symbol: 🏠 These items also include direct quotes from the final rule in the scoring guidance.
- Instead of one "Farm to School" question, there are now two separate questions that address the components of education, school gardens, and procurement. These questions are noted with this symbol: 🌱
- Instead of one CSPAP (Comprehensive School Physical Activity Plan) question, there are now separate questions for the components of physical education, physical activity before and after school, physical activity during school, staff involvement, and family and community engagement. These questions are noted with this symbol: 🏃

New items address:

- Feeding children with unpaid meal balances without stigmatizing them
- School level health advisory teams (in addition to district wellness committees)
- Food marketing in schools and fundraising

Old items were removed if they were no longer relevant due to Smart Snacks and other Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act meal nutrition standards.

History of School Wellness Policies:

The Children Nutrition and WIC (Women, Infants, and Children Program) Reauthorization Act of 2004 mandated that all school districts participating in federal school meal programs create and implement school wellness policies by July 2006. Policies were required to include:

- Goals for nutrition education and physical activity to promote student wellness
- Nutritional guidelines for all foods available on each school campus during the school day
- An assurance that reimbursable school meals follow federal law
- A plan for measuring policy implementation
- The involvement of parents, students, the school food authority, school board, school administrators, and the public in the development of the policy.

The 2010 Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act clarified and strengthened these requirements, and in 2016, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) released updated regulations that require school districts to:

- Review and consider evidence-based strategies to promote student wellness
- Comply with federal competitive food nutrition standards (i.e., Smart Snacks) for all foods sold on campus during the school day
- Prohibit marketing of all foods and beverages that do not meet Smart Snacks standards
- Permit all stakeholders to participate in policy development, implementation, review, and updates
- Report annually to the community about policy content, implementation, and updates
- Complete triennial assessments on compliance, alignment with model policies, and progress towards goals
- Designate one or more officials as responsible for school-level compliance with the policy

WellSAT 3.0 is designed to assist school districts in meeting these requirements.

Support for this project was provided by grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Healthy Eating Research program.

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If you would like to view the survey without scoring a school wellness policy, [click here](#). Data will not be saved.



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Resources

- [Nutrition Education](#)
 - [Standards for USDA School Meals](#)
 - [Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages](#)
 - [Physical Education & Physical Activity](#)
 - [Wellness Promotion and Marketing](#)
 - [Implementation, Evaluation & Communication](#)
 - [Research Using the WellSAT](#)
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Nutrition Education

Society for Public Health Education:

- [Policy brief on health education in the Every Student Succeeds Act](#)

Cairn Guidance:

- [A Systems Approach to Integrating Health in Education](#)

USDA:

- [USDA Food and Nutrition Information Center](#)
- [USDA My Plate](#)

Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior:

- [Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior Website](#)
- [Publications](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Tips for Teachers: Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity in the Classroom](#)
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Standards for USDA School Meals

Alliance for a Healthier Generation:

- [School Wellness Committee Toolkit](#)
- [Wellness Councils and Wellness Policies](#)

Center for Science in the Public Interest:

- Healthier School Lunches

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- CDC Local Wellness Policies
- Putting Local School Wellness Policies into Action: Stories from School Districts and Schools
- Wellness Teams Work: A Guide for Putting Wellness Policies into Practice in Schools

The University of Illinois at Chicago:

- National Wellness Policy Study
- Food Service Directors: Speaking From Experience

USDA:

- Child Nutrition Programs
- Wellness Policies

ChangeLab Solutions:

- Wellness Policy Enforcement
- District Policy Restricting Food and Beverage Advertising on School Grounds

National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity:

- Model School Wellness Policies

National Association of State Boards of Education:

- State School Health Policy Database

Wellness Policy and Implementation Examples:

- California Project Lean

The Kids' Safe and Healthful Foods Project:

- School Meal Programs Innovate to Improve Student Nutrition

Shape America:

- State School Health Policy Matrix 2.0

National Collaborative on Education and Health:

- Report to the National Steering Committee

National Association of Chronic Disease Directors:

- A Guide for Incorporating Health and Wellness into School Improvement Plans
- A Guide for Communicating School Health Achievements

Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages

Berkeley Media Studies Group:

- Examining the public debate on school food nutrition guidelines: Findings and lessons learned from an analysis of news coverage and legislative debates

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- A comprehensive framework for addressing the school nutrition environment and services
- Competitive Foods in School

The Kids' Safe and Healthful Foods Project:

- Kids' Safe and Healthful Foods Project Website

Alliance for a Healthier Generation:

- Snacks and Beverages
- Smart Snacks Product Calculator
- Smart Food Planner

Centers for Disease Control and Promotion

- Water Access in Schools

Physical Education & Physical Activity

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- Recess Planning in Schools
- Strategies for Recess in Schools
- Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool

Shape America:

- The Essential Components of Physical Education
- SHAPE America Website (formerly AAHPERD)
- Guide for Physical Education Policy

Wellness Promotion and Marketing

Berkeley Media Studies Group:

- Eye on Marketers
- Toolkit on Stopping Junk Food Marketing to Kids (English)
- Toolkit on Stopping Junk Food Marketing to Kids (Spanish)
- Stopping Junk Food Marketing to Kids Video (English)
- Stopping Junk Food Marketing to Kids Video (Spanish)
- Target Marketing Soda & Fast Food: Problems with Business as Usual (English)
- Target Marketing Soda & Fast Food: Problems with Business as Usual (Spanish)
- The Soda and Fast Food Industries Target their Marketing Towards Mothers of Color (English)
- The Soda and Fast Food Industries Target their Marketing Towards Mothers of Color (Spanish)

ChangeLab Solutions:

- District Policy Restricting Food and Beverage Advertising on School Grounds

Other Relevant Websites:

- Digital Ads: Exposing How Marketers Target Youth
- Center for Science in the Public Interest
- Food Marketing Workgroup

- Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood

Implementation, Evaluation & Communication

Action for Healthy Kids:

- Parent Toolkit
- Tools for Schools

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- School Health Guidelines
- School Health Index
- Tips for Teachers: Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity in the Classroom

Healthy Schools Campaign:

- ESSA Implementation: Key Opportunities to Support Health and Wellness
- State ESSA Plans to Support Student Health and Wellness: A Framework for Action

National Association of Chronic Disease Directors:

- Speaking Education's Language: A Guide For Public Health Professionals Working in the Education Sector

ChangeLab Solutions:

- National Policy & Legal Analysis Network to Prevent Childhood Obesity (NPLAN)

Other Organizations with Helpful Resources:

- African American Collaborative Obesity Research Network
 - Alliance for a Healthier Generation
 - Voices for Healthy Kids
 - Public Health Advocacy Institute
 - Public Health Law Center
 - Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
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Research Using the WellSAT

Komakech, JJ, Hildebrand DA. The Association Between School Health Promotion Programs and School Wellness Policies. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*. 2020; 000: 1-5. DOI: 10.1016/j.jneb.2020.05.004

LeGros, TA, Jones B, Jacobs L, Orzech KM, Torbert K, Martinez SH. A case study of a new state model for assessing local wellness policies. *J Sch Health*. 2019; 89: 191-199. DOI: 10.1111/josh.12728

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Harvey, SP., Markenson, D., & Gibson, CA. (2018). Assessing School Wellness Policies and Identifying Priorities for Action: Results of a Bi-State Evaluation. *Journal of School Health, 88(5)*, 359-369. doi: 10.1111/josh.12619

Francis, E., Hivner, E., Hoke, A., Ricci, T., Watach, A., & Kraschnewski, J. (2017). Quality of local school wellness policies for physical activity and resultant implementation in Pennsylvania schools. *Journal of Public Health*. Doi: 10.1093/pubmed/fox130

Meendering, J., Kranz, E., Shafrath, T., & McCormack, L. (2016). Bigger???Better: The Comprehensiveness and Strength of School Wellness Policies Varies by School District Size. *Journal of School Health, 86(9)*, 653-659. doi: 10.1111/josh.12419

Hoffman, P.K., Davey, C.S., Larson, N., Gannon, K.Y., Hanson, C., & Nannery, M.S. (2016). School district wellness policy quality and weight-related outcomes among high school students in Minnesota. *Health Education Research, 31(2)*, 234-246. doi: 10.1093/her/cyv101

Brissette, I., Wales, K., O'Connell, M. (2013). Evaluating the Wellness School Assessment Tool for use in public health practice to improve school nutrition and physical education policies in New York. *Journal of School Health, 83(11)*, 757-762. doi: 10.1111/josh.12091

Schwartz, M.B., Lund, A.E., Grow, M., McDonnell, E., Probart, C., Samuelson, A., Lytle, L. (2009) A comprehensive coding system to measure the quality of school wellness policies. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association, 109(7)*, 1256-1262, doi: