

Local School Wellness Policies: Overview and Action Steps

Overview

- The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 required all districts to establish local school wellness policies by School Year 2006-2007.
- The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 expands the scope of wellness policies; brings in additional stakeholders in its development, implementation and review; and requires public updates on the content and implementation of the wellness policies (Section 204). The intent is to strengthen local school wellness policies so they become useful tools in evaluating, establishing, and maintaining healthy school environments, and to provide transparency to the public on key areas that affect the nutrition environment in each school.

Summary of Action Steps for Local Educational Agencies and Districts/Schools:

1. Review the memorandum on wellness policies: http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SP42-2011_os.pdf
2. Continue reviewing and assessing local wellness policies during School Year 2013-2014 and implementing new requirements.
3. Consult the resources linked below.
4. Continue to inform and update the public about the content, implementation, and assessment of wellness policies.
5. Keep Supporting Documentation on file as local educational agencies will be held accountable for local school wellness policy implementation, assessment, and public updates.
http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/healthy/wellnesspolicy_process.html

Interagency Workgroup

- **Agencies involved:** U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (USDA FNS), working with the U.S. Department of Education (ED), and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, acting through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- **Interagency Workgroup:**
 - Has published the final 5-Year Technical Assistance and Guidance Plan outlining activities to support local educational agencies (LEAs) at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/local-school-wellness-policy-workgroup-and-guidance>
 - Will continue providing training and technical assistance to local educational agencies, school food authorities, and State educational agencies to meet these new requirements and establish healthy school environments that are intended to promote student health and wellness (ongoing).
 - Will continue to identify and develop resources and training on designing, implementing, promoting, disseminating, and evaluating local school wellness policies and overcoming barriers to the adoption of local school wellness policies (ongoing).
- **FNS is expected to publish a Proposed Rule in early 2014.** The public will have an opportunity to comment on this rule.

Local School Wellness Policy Resource Links

- **FNS:** <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/healthy/wellnesspolicy.html>.
On an ongoing basis, FNS will continue to update these materials to reflect the new requirements; these materials are a useful starting point for LEAs working to strengthen their local school wellness policies to meet the requirements of the new law.
- **CDC:** <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/wellness.htm>
The CDC website includes resources to assist districts in designing, implementing and promoting elements of local school wellness policies. *School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity* is a resource that presents guidelines for developing, implementing, and evaluating school-based healthy eating and physical activity policies and practices for K-12th grade students. There is also a series of strategies to facilitate implementation of the guidelines <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/strategies.htm>

Comparison Chart of the 2004 and 2010 Requirements for Local School Wellness Policies (LWP)

	2004 Requirements Child Nutrition WIC Reauthorization Act	2010 Requirements Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act
Overview	Directs local educational agencies (LEAs) to have a LWP in place for each school under its jurisdiction.	Strengthens LWPs and adds requirements for public participation, transparency, and implementation.
Elements of the Local School Wellness Policy	LWP to include, at a minimum, goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities to promote student wellness, as well as nutrition guidelines for all foods available on school campus.	In addition to the 2004 requirements, the LWP is also to include goals for nutrition promotion.
Stakeholder Involvement	LEAs are required to involve parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public in the development of LWP.	In addition to the 2004 requirements, LEAs are now required to permit teachers of physical education and school health professionals to participate in the development of LWP.
Stakeholder Participation	The stakeholders named above are required to participate in the development of the LWP.	In addition to the 2004 requirements, LEAs are now required to permit all stakeholders named above and in 2004 to participate in the implementation and periodic review and update of LWP.
Local Discretion	LEAs can determine the specific policies appropriate for the schools under their jurisdiction, provided that those policies include all required elements specified in the Act.	Same as 2004 requirement.
Public Notification	None.	LEAs are required to inform and update the public (including parents, students, and others in the community) about the content and implementation of the LWP.
Measuring Implementation	LEAs are required to establish a plan for measuring implementation of the LWP.	LEAs are required to periodically measure and make available to the public an assessment on the implementation of LWP, including the extent to which schools are in compliance with LWP, the extent to which the LWP compares to model LWP, and a description of the progress made in attaining goals of LWP.
Local Designation	LEAs are required to establish a plan for measuring LWP implementation to include delegating one or more persons with the responsibility for ensuring LWP compliance.	LEAs are required to designate one or more LEA officials or school officials to ensure that each school complies with the LWP.