

LOCAL SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY TOOL KIT

**Your Role as a Partner
in School Wellness**

Presented by



Cincinnati Public Schools
Bond Hill Outdoor Learning Team



JACKIE SHARPE

Education Program Specialist, Office of Nutrition



- ❑ USDA School Nutrition Program- Statewide Trainer
- ❑ USDA School Nutrition Program-Administrative Reviewer
- ❑ CDC grant- Coordinated School Health - partnership Ohio Department of Education and Workforce and Health Department
- ❑ Non Profit- Prevention Educator- Reproductive health & general health education standards



Olentangy Local Schools Wellness Initiative



**Department of
Education &
Workforce**

ANNELIESE TANNER

Executive Director, Food and Nutrition Services



- ❑ Oversee 550 staff serving 50,000 meals per day to 45,000 students at 125 locations in America's oldest public school district
- ❑ Robust wellness policy & relationship with Health & Wellness
- ❑ Partnered with small & medium school districts across the country to advance scratch cooking
- ❑ Previously ran Food Service & Warehouse Operations at Austin Independent School District in Austin, Tx



CYNTHIA WALTERS

Regional Green Schoolyards Manager & Farm to School



External School District Partner

- ☐ Non-profit Partner
 - ☐ School District + City Policy
 - ☐ Green Schoolyards Infrastructure
 - ☐ Environmental + Nutrition Education
 - ☐ Green Workforce Development
 - ☐ Slow Food USA Food & Farming Policy Committee
 - ☐ Cincinnati Public Schools Wellness Committee

Internal School District Partner

- ☐ Public School Educator
- ☐ Local and National School Garden Programs
- ☐ Wellness Committee Leader + Nutritious School Meals Advocacy



Shanahan Middle School Wellness Initiative, 2009-10



A PROGRAM OF  Green Umbrella

Green Schoolyards

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LOCAL SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY TOOLKIT



Wellness Policy Toolkit Rollout

- ❑ Toolkit Pilot 2022-2023
- ❑ Wellness Committee Webinar Fall 2024
- ❑ Toolkit Launch Fall 2024
- ❑ Toolkit Training Series 2024-25



HEALTHY, HUNGER-FREE KIDS ACT OF 2010



What is a local school wellness policy?

- Written document that guides efforts for nutrition and physical activity
- Required by law
- USDA^{*} establishes minimum requirements
- Each district develops a policy to meet needs of the schools in the district

- ❑ **Required Federal Policy for an Educational Agency or School District who Participants in the National School Lunch and/or Breakfast Programs**
- ❑ **The wellness plan is assessed at least once every three years and the results of the assessment must be made available to the public**
- ❑ **The District must notify the public of the wellness plan at least on an annually basis**

***United States Department of Agriculture**

WHAT DOES THE USDA REQUIRE FOR A WELLNESS POLICY?



- ❑ One or more persons within the district who is responsible for ensuring policy compliance
- ❑ Nutritional guidelines for all foods provided but not sold to students during the school day
- ❑ Indicate nutritional guidelines for all foods sold during the school day that are at a minimum equal to the guidelines set by the USDA
- ❑ Marketing of foods and beverages is prohibited on school campus during the school day if it does not meet the nutritional standards set by the USDA
- ❑ Evidence-based strategies and techniques for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity and other school-based activities
- ❑ A plan for implementation and evaluation

PUBLIC-FACING WELLNESS POLICY



Local School Policy Oversight

Engaging parents, staff and community members in planning and implementing the wellness policies at each school is key. To that end, schools are required to:

- **Nominate a School Wellness Champion annually**
- **Have a Local School Wellness Team** which can include parents, teachers, students and community members
- **Report once quarterly to the Local School Council (LSC)** regarding the school's health and wellness initiatives

School Food

Students consume over 2/3 their calories at school. The quality and variety of foods they are offered through school meals can impact their weight and overall health. The policy requires:

- **Schools must meet CPS Nutrition Guidelines – equivalent to the USDA's Gold Standard**
- **CPS's continued commitment to local food procurement when possible**
- **Schools to encourage parents to provide healthy meals and snacks to students to be consumed at school during the school day**

Recess

Recess provides students with a daily opportunity for physical activity, promotes social development, and allows students to develop critical skills outside of the classroom, such as leadership and healthy conflict resolution. The policy requires:

- **All elementary schools must provide at least 20 minutes of daily recess**
- **Schools should schedule recess before lunch to avoid students rushing through their meal to play.**

Physical Activity

Regular physical activity in childhood and adolescence improves strength and endurance, helps build healthy bones and muscles, helps control weight, reduces anxiety and stress, increases self-esteem, and may improve blood pressure and cholesterol levels. To that end, all schools must:

- **Encourage all students to engage in 90 minutes of physical activity per week, during the school day – this includes the time students spend in PE, at recess and engaging in other physical activity in the regular classroom.**

Nutrition Education

By including lessons about nutrition in core curriculum schools can impact students' decisions about healthy eating throughout their lifetime. The policies require:

- **All students K-8 must receive nutrition education at all grade levels**
- **Middle Schools must provide nutrition education in at two grade levels**
- **High Schools must provide nutrition education in two required courses**
- **All schools should engage parents and guardians in nutrition education**

Physical Education

Quality physical education is important for student brain development and motor skills. Recognizing the importance of PE on academic performance, all schools must:

- **Offer health-optimizing PE classes to students that are focused on lifelong fitness skills and includes health education.**
- **2/3 of PE time should be spent in moderate to vigorous activity**
- **Conduct skill-level assessments at the elementary level**

Student Rewards & Punishments

Celebrating and rewarding students with food, or withholding food or physical activity as punishment can have negative consequences on students' regular eating habits and preference for physical activity. For that reason the policy states that:

- **Teachers and staff should limit unhealthy food given as a reward or incentive**
- **Teachers and staff must not withhold food or physical activity as a punishment (this includes recess and PE class)**

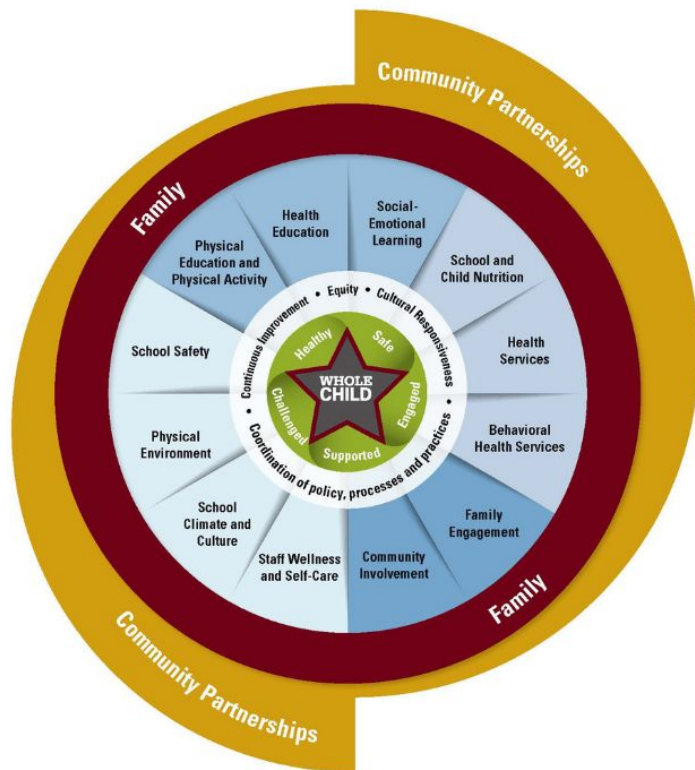


Chicago Public Schools Wellness Policy Plan

WHY DOES WELLNESS POLICY MATTER?



Beyond the Basics: Opportunities & Impact



- ❑ Promotes students' physical and mental health, general well-being and ability to learn
- ❑ Cookie cutter policies vs locally developed policies
- ❑ Provides parameters for all things wellness in school environments
- ❑ Impact on family, local, state and national physical and mental health issues
- ❑ Foundation for a productive workforce

POLICY MATTERS

Beyond the Basics: Opportunities & Impact



- ❑ Creating voice and community
- ❑ A support for school staff
- ❑ Holistic view of health in schools
- ❑ Demonstrating leadership



Orchard Planting, Cincinnati Public Schools



A PROGRAM OF  Green Umbrella

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POLICY-MAKING IN ACTION



Green Cincinnati Plan  2023

SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY IMPACT FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

COLLECTIVE
IMPACT

SCHOOL DISTRICTS + MUNICIPALITIES + COMMUNITY MEMBERS + PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

DIVERSITY
EQUITY
INCLUSION
JUSTICE

LOCAL SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

A USDA Requirement for Schools Participating in Child Nutrition Programs



Nutritious School Meals



Nutrition Education



Physical Activity



Mental Health



Green Sustainability

OUTCOMES

SHARED POLICY

JOINT USE SPACES

INCREASED GREEN WORKFORCE

EXPANDED GREENSPACE

NUTRITIOUS FOOD ACCESS

COMBINED FUNDING

THE WELLNESS COMMITTEE

What partner category do you represent?

According to the USDA the wellness policy must involve a collaborative effort between:

- ☐ Parents
- ☐ Students
- ☐ School Administrators
- ☐ Food Service Personnel
- ☐ Physical Education Teacher
- ☐ School Health Professional
- ☐ School Board Member
- ☐ The Public (organization, community members and city officials)
- ☐ Other

What is your current status as a partner?

- ☐ Wellness committee leader
- ☐ Wellness committee member
- ☐ Internal partner interested in being on a wellness committee
- ☐ External partner interested in being on a wellness committee
- ☐ Public member currently supporting or potentially wanting to support wellness policy implementation
- ☐ Other



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

A group of people are seated at a long table in a meeting room. In the foreground, a woman with curly hair and glasses, wearing a yellow shirt, is looking towards the right. Next to her is an older man with a white beard and glasses, also wearing a yellow shirt, looking in the same direction. Other people are visible in the background, some looking at papers or devices. The scene is brightly lit, and the atmosphere appears to be a professional meeting or workshop.

**How do I join
a wellness
committee?**

**Can a wellness
policy be updated
even if it is not
due for a review?**

**Who implements
the wellness plan?**

**What is the
wellness policy
committee leader
responsible for?**

**As a wellness
committee
leader, how do I
recruit a diverse
group of
members?**

**What duties does a
wellness committee
perform?**

**How can I get
involved if I am
not on a wellness
committee?**

AN INCLUSIVE WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Required & Essential Members

- ❑ Students-educators-parents (including Physical Education Teacher)
- ❑ Food service personnel
- ❑ School administrators (sustainability or wellness associate, facilities manager, principals, community liaisons, student services)
- ❑ Health professionals (school counselors, nurses, including city or county health department, hospitals)
- ❑ Partner organizations-city officials-community members
- ❑ Curriculum managers-(including Career Technology Education (CTE) and school garden coordinator)



Recommended Members Based on Size of District and Scope of the Wellness Plan

- ❑ School board member
- ❑ Out-of-school time providers
- ❑ Higher education representatives
- ❑ Business members
- ❑ School district communications associate
- ❑ School district grant manager

THE WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Roles and Responsibilities

- ☐ Mission and goals
- ☐ Health and wellness support
- ☐ Recruit committee members
- ☐ District surveys
- ☐ Writing or updating a Local School Wellness Policy
- ☐ Identify funding mechanisms
- ☐ Plan policy implementation
- ☐ Prepare and participate in reviews and reports
- ☐ District assessments
- ☐ Notify the public
- ☐ Understand federal, state and local legislation



LEADING THE WELLNESS POLICY COMMITTEE



Administrative Review

- ❑ Ensure the minimum required elements are written into the LSWP
- ❑ Provide documentation showing public awareness of the LSWP
- ❑ Explain when and how the LSWP is reviewed and updated
- ❑ Show how potential partners are made aware of their ability to participate in the development, review, updates, and implementation of the LSWP
- ❑ Demonstrate how the public knows about the results of the most recent assessment on the implementation of the LSWP

The Triennial Assessment

Indicates:

- ❑ The extent to which schools comply with the LSWP
- ❑ The extent to which the LSWP compares to a model local school wellness policy
- ❑ The progress made in attaining the goals of the LSWP

ROLE AND IMPACT OF INTERNAL PARTNERS



- ❑ Students
- ❑ Educators
- ❑ Foodservice Personnel
- ❑ Administrators



BECOMING A MEMBER OF A WELLNESS COMMITTEE



Connect with the Wellness Committee Leader

- ❑ **Connect with an understanding of challenges**
- ❑ **Inquire about who are the members of the current wellness committee**
- ❑ **Ask to observe a committee meeting**
- ❑ **Ask to present during a meeting**
- ❑ **Discuss opportunities for participating in the wellness policy process**

RECRUITING COMMITTEE MEMBERS



With support from the Superintendent and the School Board, the Wellness Committee leader(s):

- ☐ **Announces committee openings publically**
- ☐ **Conducts potential member survey**
- ☐ **Sends out personalized email invitations**
- ☐ **Personally contacts partners**
- ☐ **Connects with student and community groups**

DEVELOPING AN INCLUSIVE WELLNESS COMMITTEE



Individuals & Perspectives

Diversity- the presence of different identities, cultures and perspectives



Processes & Programs

Equity- the act of ensuring the processes and programs that are partial, fair and aim to provide outcomes for every individual



Collective Voice &
Include all abilities

Inclusion- the practice of ensuring belonging



Equal Rights & Equitable
Opportunities

Justice- the process of dismantling systems and structures of historical and current oppression that create inequality and replacing them with proactive systems that promote fairness

BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL-YEAR COMMITTEE MEETING



- ❑ **Establish meeting norms, decision meeting protocols and written agreements each school year**
- ❑ **Research school district mission, goals, guardrails and city policy related to green sustainability, food access, active transportation, and green workforce development**
- ❑ **Review Current Wellness Policy**
 - ❑ How long has the current policy been in place?
 - ❑ Is it compliant with USDA Requirements and customized to meet the school community needs?
 - ❑ Is it due to be updated?
 - ❑ Does it need updating to address issues facing students and educators?
 - ❑ When was policy last shared with the school community and the public?
 - ❑ Does the policy represent all of the wellness related projects and programs?
 - ❑ What opportunities are there to communicate a culture of care and elevate wellness projects and programs?

A WELLNESS NETWORK

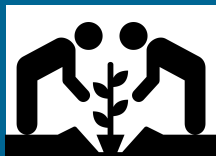
Plan Design Implement



District Wellness Committee



**Writing Wellness Policy
Sub-committee**



School Teams



**Joint Wellness Funding
Sub-committee**



Student Groups

	District Wellness Committee	Writing Wellness Policy Sub-committee	Joint Wellness Funding Sub-committee	School Teams	Student Groups
Students	X	X	X	X	X
Parent/Teacher Organizations (parents & caregivers)	X		X		
District Food & Nutrition Services	X	X	X		
District Wellness or Sustainability Supervisor	X	X	X		
Student Services	X	X			
District Curriculum & Career Readiness	X	X	X		
District Facilities & Maintenance Supervisor	X	X			
Science Educators	X			X	
Physical Education Educators	X			X	
Intervention Specialists	X				
School Counselors	X			X	
School Nurses	X				
Health Department Staff Members	X	X	X		
Garden Educators	X			X	
PreK-12 Principals	X	X			
District School Board Member	X		X		
Elected City Official	X				
Community Councils Partners	X		X		
Partner Organizations	X		X	X	
District Communications Staff Member	X				
Business Partners	X		X		
District Grant Writer	X		X		

BEYOND THE WELLNESS COMMITTEE



- ❑ **Student:** Start a group or club
- ❑ **Parent:** Join the parent-teacher association
- ❑ **Parent/Caregiver:** Eat lunch with your student and participate school cafeteria taste-testing events
- ❑ **Individual:** Offer to speak or present at a committee meeting
- ❑ **Individual:** Contact schools directly for volunteer opportunities
- ❑ **Individual:** Policy-contact state and local governments
- ❑ **Environmental Education Partner:** Contact the curriculum department to provide programming
- ❑ **Higher Education Institution:** Contact school departments where an intern could be placed
- ❑ **National and Local Partner Organization:** Contact the curriculum department to offer resources
- ❑ **Regional Planning Groups:** encourage the inclusion of the Local School Wellness policy in regional climate action plans

YOUR QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE WELLNESS COMMITTEE



Call to Action

What can YOU do now?

FRAC

Food Research & Action Center

Raise your hand

for Healthy School Meals for All

- Locate, read and consider how you can get involved in the current Local School Wellness Policy process in your school community
- Connect with the wellness policy committee leader
- Existing committees-explore adding members to make the work more inclusive and effective
- Advocate for local, state and national policies to improve student academic, health and wellbeing outcomes
- Participate in the upcoming Local School Wellness Toolkit Training Sessions!

S.5084 Safe School Meals Act (SSMA)

U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) introduced the bill that would place limits on heavy metals, certain pesticide residues, food additives including artificial food dyes the use of PFAS, phthalates, and bisphenols in school meal food packaging. The bill would increase the funding available for schools to purchase safe school meals.

Local School Wellness Toolkit Sneak Peak



70+ Pages Filled with Tools & Resources

- ❑ Grassroots approach to igniting whole-district action for meeting the needs of school communities
- ❑ Navigating Wellness Policy Language and Requirements
- ❑ Maximizing Partnerships and Collaboration
- ❑ Building a District Wellness Network
- ❑ Writing and Updating A District Wellness Policy Tools

Local School Wellness Policy Toolkit

Virtual Training Sessions



❑ **Wellness Toolkit Training, Session One (December 2024)**

- ❑ What is a Local School Policy
- ❑ Beyond the Wellness Policy Requirements
- ❑ Why Does Policy Matter
- ❑ Turning Barriers into Opportunities
- ❑ Developing a Diverse Wellness Committee

❑ **Wellness Toolkit Training, Session Two (January 2025)**

- ❑ Building a Wellness Network
- ❑ Beyond the Wellness Committee Opportunities
- ❑ Writing Wellness Policy Tools

Presented by



WEBINAR INFORMATION

**Webinar Recording, Wellness Toolkit
Launch & Toolkit Training Sessions
Dates Coming Soon**

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“

This Local School Wellness Policy Tool Kit is more than a collection of resources; it is an invitation to be a changemaker.

-Edward Mukiibi, Slow Food International President

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