



What is School Wellness Policy?

A School Wellness Policy is written document developed by the school community and approved by the school district's Board of Education. The School Wellness Policy guides the work of the district and its school(s) to enhance health promoting environments that support student achievement and success. Research linking the importance of student health and wellness to student achievement continues to evolve and further reinforce the importance of developing and implementing a quality School Wellness Policy.

A School Wellness Policy is a federal requirement for all school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), a federally assisted meal program serving students, includes both school breakfast and school lunch. The New York State Education Department's Child Nutrition Center oversees school districts NSLP implementation, including the federal Wellness Policy requirement.

Specifically, a School Wellness Policy includes specific goals for nutrition promotion and education, nutrition guidelines for all foods available at school, food and beverage marketing, physical activity and other school-based student wellness promotion efforts.

The development and implementation of a comprehensive School Wellness policy contributes to the development of a safe and supportive learning environment by intentionally focusing on health and wellness promotion.

The development and implementation of a quality School Wellness Policy is most successful and sustainable when school community members such as parents/guardians, students, school staff/faculty, Board of Education members, community organizations, community businesses and other stakeholder groups work as partners following the ASCD/CDC Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model. Each school community partner brings insights and potential resources reflective of the larger school community and enriches the School Wellness Policy work. Ongoing engagement of the district's school community partners is vital to the School Wellness Policy work and the process of continuous improvement.

What is the School's Responsibility?

Each school within a district is responsible for implementing the district's School Wellness Policy. The School Wellness Policy is an important district-wide tool as it identifies the district's goals for nutrition promotion and education, nutrition guidelines for all foods available at school, food and beverage marketing, physical activity and other school-based student wellness promotion efforts. A school's implementation of their School Wellness Policy goals is most effective when school-level stakeholders are partners; all efforts are data driven and follow best practices.

What are the best practices for creating, enhancing and sustaining a School Wellness Policy?

Follow a Coordinated School Health/Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model to comprehensively address [student health and wellness](#) in coordinated and collaborative manner.

Assess School Wellness Policy and implementation practices to support continuous improvement that is data-driven and represents implementation best practices.

Provide continuous opportunity for stakeholder input and engagement.