

Issue Date: January 26, 2024

Local Wellness Policy Development and Implementation: Evaluation of Local Wellness Policies and Their Implementation

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide further guidance on how Local Education Agencies (LEAs) may meet the Local Wellness Policy (LWP) evaluation requirement outlined in the [Vermont Local Wellness Policy Guide](#). Each LEA participating in the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program is required to develop and implement a LWP. This document describes the tools that have been developed by the Vermont Agency of Education to support Supervisory Union/District (SU/SD) processes of LWP self-evaluation.

Introduction

The data gathered through the use of the tools below can support SU/SDs in meeting federal requirements for local wellness policies ([7 CFR 210.31](#)). The U.S. Department of Agriculture's [Final Rule: Local School Wellness Policy Implementation Under the HHFKA of 2010](#) requires that LEAs complete an assessment of their LWP at least once every three years. The LEA as part of this requirement must assess the alignment of LEA policies with national and state LWP models, the extent that practices within the LEA align to written wellness policies, and the progress made in meeting local wellness goals. The Agency of Education has developed the tools below so that SU/SDs are able to self-assess on compliance with Vermont specific requirements (e.g., those for comprehensive health education as outlined in [Act 66](#)) and model policies ([Vermont Agency of Education Model Local Wellness Policy](#)).

Local Wellness Policy Self-Assessment

The following tools should be used by LWP teams to evaluate SU/SD wellness policies and their implementation:

1. [Local Wellness Policy Self-Assessment: Comprehensive Health Education](#)
2. [Local Wellness Policy Self-Assessment: Nutrition Education and Promotion](#)
3. [Local Wellness Policy Self-Assessment: Nutrition Services and Guidelines for Competitive Foods](#)
4. [Local Wellness Policy Self-Assessment: Physical Education and Activity](#)
5. [Local Wellness Policy Self-Assessment: Other School-based Activities to Promote Student Wellness \(If needed\)](#)
6. [Local Wellness Policy Self-Assessment: Policy Development, Implementation, and Assessment](#)



Local Wellness Policy Evaluation, Reporting, and Continuous Improvement

A response of “NO” or “IN PROCESS” to questions in these tools identify where SU/SD policies do not align to the [Vermont Agency of Education Model Local Wellness Policy](#) or where LWP requirements and/or best practices have not been implemented across the SU/SD. Therefore, the use of these tools provide for an evaluation of the alignment between LEA policies with national and state LWP models and also the extent that practices within the LEA align to written wellness policies (serving to fill [federal child nutrition reporting requirements](#)).

These tools, furthermore, if used by LWP teams to self-assess LWP implementation in LWP policy goal areas (as defined in the [Vermont Agency of Education Model Local Wellness Policy](#)) at different time intervals (e.g., at the end of each year) would create data that would allow for measuring progress in LEA LWP goals over time. Data gathered through these tools at different time intervals can, in addition, support ongoing public reporting tied to LWP implementation (as outlined in [7 CFR 210.31](#) and [Vermont Agency of Education Model Local Wellness Policy](#)).

LWP teams can use data derived from these self-assessments with other data on areas of [need](#) and [strength](#) in the SU/SD, to develop and implement continuous improvement efforts in LEA LWP goal areas. For example, a LWP team may identify through use of the “Local Wellness Policy Self-Assessment: Nutrition Services and Guidelines for Competitive Foods” tool that while the SU has a policy goal of providing adequate time for school lunch, in practice this is not the experience of students. In identifying this discrepancy, the LWP team can develop an implementation plan to add an additional point of service at lunch over a period of a year, which will cut down wait times for students at lunch and promote progress on SU LWP goals.

Next Steps

Local wellness policy evaluation encourages reflection on the ways the education system supports the health needs of the students and staff (e.g., in policies, practices, and procedures). The AOE anticipates that many SU/SDs and schools required to have a local wellness policy will have questions and/or need support as they update and implement their policies in accordance with law. To support SU/SDs and schools, the AOE, along with the VSBA, Vermont Department of Health, and other partners, will offer professional learning throughout the coming year and personalized support upon request. We have developed this [LWP feedback form](#) to hear from you and better customize our supports. The AOE will continue to develop and publish additional tools and resources to support LWP development and implementation throughout 2023-2024 as feedback from the field is gathered. You can find some of those resources now on the [Healthy and Safe Schools](#) page of the AOE website.