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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Headmasters, and School Boards  
FROM: Jess DeCarolis, Division Director, Student Pathways Division  
SUBJECT: Release of Vermont Local Wellness Policy Guide  
DATE: August 24, 2023

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### **New Local Wellness Policy Requirements for the 2023-2024 School Year**

The Agency of Education, in collaboration with the Vermont School Board's Association (VSBA) and the [Advisory Council on Wellness and Comprehensive Health \(Advisory Council\)](#), have developed an updated [Vermont Local Wellness Policy \(LWP\) Guide](#) in accordance with [Act 66 of 2021](#) which amended [16 V.S.A. §136](#) to include Comprehensive Health Education as defined in [16 V.S.A. §131](#). Over the course of nearly two years, and with input from more than thirty-two professional, community-based, and membership organizations and government agencies, the AOE, VSBA and Advisory Council developed a Vermont Local Wellness Policy Guide (referred to as Guide) and model policy language to support the development and implementation of updated local wellness policies in compliance with federal and state laws and rules, and that support the health and wellness goals of school communities and families in a safe and equitable manner. This updated Guide replaces *Vermont's School Wellness Policy Guidelines and Implementation* resource of 2019 in sum.

The newly updated Guide's introduction outlines the format changes that organize the statutory, regulatory and policy requirements for each section alongside the corresponding model policy language. Hyperlinked within the Guide are links to recommended evidence-based or research-based strategies and resources to support development and/or implementation of the different sections of a local wellness policy. For VSBA members, we have mapped model policy language within the guide to language in the VSBA's model local wellness policy located on their website.

Each Local Educational Agency (LEA) (as defined in [7 CFR 210.2](#) and [7 CFR 220.2](#) to include schools participating in the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program) is required to develop and implement a local wellness policy in accordance with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. The responsibility for developing, implementing and evaluating a wellness policy is placed at the local level, so the unique needs of each school



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under the LEA's jurisdiction can be addressed. The purpose of the guide is to support supervisory unions and districts (SU/SDs) in updating their existing LWPs in accordance with Act 66 of 2021.

## **What to Expect in the Coming Year**

We recognize that this legislative change was sweeping in scope and is complex in application and practice. 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 and as outlined in the guide. We also recognize that we will learn together as we implement these changes. 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](#).

If you have any questions about this memo, please contact Jess DeCarolis, Division Director, Student Pathways Division, at [jess.decarolis@vermont.gov](mailto:jess.decarolis@vermont.gov)

If you have questions about Comprehensive Health and Physical Education please contact Ian Burfoot-Rochford, Health and Physical Education Specialist, Student Pathways Division, at [ian.burfoot-rochford@vermont.gov](mailto:ian.burfoot-rochford@vermont.gov).

If you have questions about Child Nutrition and required activities related to the the development, implementation and evaluation of a local wellness policy in accordance with Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 please contact Rosie Krueger, State Director of Child Nutrition Programs, at [mary.kreuger@vermont.gov](mailto:mary.kreuger@vermont.gov).