

Triennial Assessment Report: RHS (6/2025)

District: NEW BRITAIN

Introduction

We are pleased to share the results of our district's WellSAT Triennial Assessment, completed in June 2025. This assessment helps us evaluate how our wellness policies and practices align with federal requirements and national best practices. Since our last review, we have strengthened many of our policies and made significant progress in putting them into practice. Several areas now fully meet recommended standards, and those that are not yet fully implemented are actively in progress.

As part of this process, school administration and our food service director carefully reviewed our current wellness policy, compared it to our previous assessment, and assessed how well our day-to-day practices support the health and well-being of our students. This triennial review, completed in June of 2025 ensures that our district remains committed to creating a supportive, healthy school environment for all students, families, and staff.

Strong Policies and Aligned Practices

This section of the triennial assessment highlights several key federal requirements, including nutrition education, promotion of local and healthy foods, adherence to National School Lunch and Breakfast Program standards, access to potable water, physical education expectations, and ongoing wellness committee engagement. Compared to our previous assessment, our district has made substantial progress in meeting—and in many areas exceeding—these federal guidelines.

Since the last review, items that were previously rated lower or placed in other sections have now been fully addressed through improved policy language and consistent implementation. For example, we now have clear, measurable goals for nutrition education; we have prioritized the procurement of locally grown foods; and we have updated our wellness policies and procedures to reflect current best practices. Nutrition education is now meaningfully embedded in both health and culinary courses, providing students with practical, hands-on learning opportunities that reinforce healthy choices. Additionally, the installation of filtered water dispensers throughout the building has greatly improved student access to clean and appealing drinking water.

In alignment with federal requirements for physical activity, we have increased the number of minutes students receive physical education, ensuring more consistent movement opportunities. Our wellness committee has also strengthened, meeting regularly and maintaining broader representation across school roles.

Areas that were previously underdeveloped—such as the absence of set goals, outdated or inaccessible policies, lack of Smart Snack compliance, and limited focus on local food procurement—have all been addressed through deliberate actions and strengthened oversight. As a result, our current assessment reflects significant gains in both compliance and quality, demonstrating the district's commitment to fostering a healthy school environment for all students.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR1	Does the district have specific goals for nutrition education designed to promote student wellness?	2	2	
FR2	Do your National School Lunch Program meals (and, if applicable, School Breakfast Program meals) meet all federal standards for meal patterns, nutrient levels, and calorie requirements for the grade levels served?	2	2	
FR4	Is free (i.e., no cost to students) drinking water available to students during meals?	2	2	
FR5	Do all school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff meet or exceed the annual continuing education/training hours required by the USDA's Professional Standards requirements?	2	2	
FR9	Do all foods and beverages sold in school stores during the school day meet Smart Snack standards?	2	2	
FR10	Are there fundraisers that sell foods or beverages to be consumed during the school day? If yes, do the foods and beverages sold meet Smart Snacks standards?	2	2	
FR12	Is there food or beverage marketing on the school campus during the school day? If yes, do the marketed items meet Smart Snacks criteria?	2	2	

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FR14	Is there an official who is responsible for the implementation and compliance with the wellness policy at the building level for each school?	2	2	
FR15	How is the wellness policy made available to the public?	2	2	
FR16	Is wellness policy implementation evaluated every three years?	2	2	
FR17	What is included in the triennial assessment report to the public?	2	2	
FR18	Has the wellness policy been revised based on the previous triennial assessment?	2	2	
NES1	Does the district offer breakfast every day to all students?	2	2	
NES4	Does your school use strategies to maximize participation in the school breakfast program and/or school lunch program?	2	2	
NES5	Are marketing strategies used to promote healthy food and beverage choices in school?	2	2	
NES6	Do students have at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they are seated?	2	2	
NES7	 In your district, is it a priority to procure locally produced foods for school meals?	2	2	
NES8	Do you know where to access the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards to check and see if an item can be sold in school during the school day?	2	2	
NES9	Are you familiar with any state laws allowing exemptions for school-sponsored fundraisers during which foods and beverages do not have to meet Smart Snacks?	2	2	
NES10	Are foods or beverages containing caffeine sold at the high school level?	2	2	
NES13	Do teachers or school staff give students food as a reward?	2	2	
NES14	Do students have consistent and easy access to free drinking water throughout the school day?	2	2	
NE1	Are skills-based, behavior-focused, and interactive/participatory methods used in nutrition education to develop student skills?	2	2	
NE2	Do all elementary school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	2	2	
NE3	Do all middle school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	2	2	

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NE4	Do all high school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	2	2	
NE5	Is nutrition education integrated into other subjects beyond health education?	2	2	
NE6	Do school nutrition services staff members use the following methods to collaborate with teachers to reinforce nutrition education lessons taught in the classroom?	2	2	
PEPA1	 Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is implemented consistently for every grade?	2	2	
PEPA2	Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is aligned with national and/or state standards?	2	2	
PEPA3	How does your physical education program promote a physically active lifestyle?	2	2	
PEPA4	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in elementary school receive?	2	2	
PEPA5	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in middle school receive?	2	2	
PEPA6	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in high school receive?	2	2	
PEPA7	Are all physical education classes taught by state certified/licensed teachers who are endorsed to teach physical education?	2	2	
PEPA8	Is ongoing professional development offered every year for PE teachers that is relevant and specific to physical education?	2	2	
PEPA13	Is there daily recess for all grades in elementary school?	2	2	
PEPA14	 Do teachers provide regular physical activity breaks for students in the classroom?	2	2	
PEPA17	 Are teachers encouraged to use physical activity as a reward for students?	2	2	
PEPA18	Do teachers ever use physical activity as a punishment?	2	2	
PEPA19	Do teachers ever withhold physical activity as a classroom management tool?	2	2	

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EW1	 Are there strategies used by the school to support employee wellness?	2	2	
EW2	Are school staff encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors in front of students?	2	2	
IC2	Is there an active school-level wellness committee?	2	2	

Create Practice Implementation Plan

This section includes several federal requirements related to the implementation of Local School Wellness Policies (LSWP), including the regulation of foods provided during the school day, nutrition education expectations, and alignment with national standards for health and wellness instruction. To improve the consistency and quality of practice implementation, our school is committed to developing clear, actionable plans that ensure these requirements are applied uniformly across all classrooms and grade levels.

One key area of improvement involves our guideline prohibiting food and beverages for student celebrations. Although this policy exists, it has not always been followed in practice. To achieve full compliance, school administration and the wellness committee will meet regularly to review expectations, provide guidance to staff, and reinforce accountability. The school's management team will take an active role in monitoring adherence and providing support or corrective action as needed.

In addition, we are working to expand our nutrition education to include agriculture, food systems, and hands-on learning opportunities. Our plan includes installing raised garden beds or small greenhouses so that students of all grade levels can engage in growing locally sourced produce. This initiative directly aligns with federal recommendations for experiential nutrition education and supports our broader farm-to-school goals. We are also exploring the addition of a full-time staff member dedicated to ensuring that health education fully addresses all required components.

The wellness committee—along with school administration, the vocational coordinator, and the foodservice director—will be responsible for creating and overseeing the practice implementation plan. Our timeline for these improvements spans one year. The finalized implementation plan will be created by the end of the current school year, with full rollout scheduled for the beginning of the following academic year.

Success will be assessed through multiple measures, including staff compliance checks, feedback from the wellness committee, student engagement in nutrition and agriculture-based activities, and an evaluation of whether each federal requirement has been fully met. Through consistent oversight and a structured implementation process, our school is committed to achieving full compliance and strengthening our culture of health and wellness.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR11	Does your district regulate foods and beverages served at class parties and other school celebrations in elementary schools?	2	1	
NE7	 Does nutrition education address agriculture and the food system?	2	1	

Update Policies

Opportunities for Growth

To ensure full alignment with federal requirements and district priorities, we will continue to refine and strengthen our implementation practices. This will include providing staff training on wellness expectations, reinforcing guidelines around food provided during the school day, and improving communication across departments to ensure consistency. We also plan to enhance our nutritional education programming by incorporating more experiential activities, such as raised garden beds or small greenhouse projects, which will allow students to participate in growing and harvesting food. Additionally, we will evaluate staffing needs and continue exploring the addition of a full-time health educator to ensure instruction fully aligns with federal and state standards.

Our wellness committee—consisting of the food service director, the vocational assistant director of education, the physical education teacher, the part-time

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health teacher, a school nurse, and student representatives—will be responsible for creating the practice implementation plan. Due to safety and confidentiality requirements, we are unable to include external community members at this time; however, we will continue to use internal expertise to guide decisions and uphold policy standards.

The timeline for developing the practice implementation plan spans the current academic year. The comprehensive plan will be drafted by June 2025, with full implementation beginning at the start of the 2025–2026 school year. Success will be monitored through staff compliance reviews, wellness committee evaluations, student participation data, and alignment checks with federal wellness requirements.

Policy language updates will be overseen by the wellness committee in collaboration with school administration. Revisions will be drafted and reviewed by the end of the school year, ensuring that all federally required elements—including goals for nutrition promotion, physical activity, food standards, and evaluation procedures—are clearly defined and publicly accessible. By following this structured process, our district will maintain a strong, compliant Local School Wellness Policy that supports a healthier environment for every student.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR13	Which groups are represented on the district-level wellness committee?	1	1	

Conclusion

After reviewing our district's wellness policies and practices, we are proud to share that we have made significant improvements since our last assessment. We now meet many federal wellness requirements, have strengthened our nutrition and physical activity programs, and have clearer goals and systems in place to support student health. Our school has increased nutrition education, expanded physical education time, improved access to drinking water, and begun prioritizing locally grown foods in our meals. We have also built a more consistent wellness committee that helps guide our decisions and ensures we stay on track.

Although we still have a few areas to improve—such as ensuring all staff consistently follow our food guidelines and expanding hands-on nutrition learning—we have concrete plans underway. These include adding school gardens or small greenhouses, increasing health education support, and strengthening communication across classrooms. Our wellness committee and school administration will continue working together to update our policies, monitor progress, and create a healthier school environment for every student.

Overall, we are moving in a positive direction and are committed to continuing this work so that our wellness practices grow stronger each year.

Key



Strong Policies and Aligned Practices - District has a strong policy and is fully implementing practices that align with the policy



Create Practice Implementation Plan - District has a strong or weak policy, but practice implementation is either absent or limited



Update Policies **Update Policies** - District is fully implementing a practice but there is no or only weak language in the written policy, or the district is partially implementing practices and there is no language in the policy



Opportunities for Growth - District has either not addressed the topic in policy or practice; or has only addressed the topic in a very limited way

For more resources, visit: wellsat.org/resources

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