

# Local Wellness Policy Triennial Assessment

Hawai'i State Department of Education (HIDOE), Month/Year of Current Assessment: 6/2025

Online policy/guidelines- [Policy 103-1/Wellness Guidelines](#)

The wellness guidelines were developed as part of the HIDOE's local wellness policy in efforts to create a healthier school environment. Effective wellness guidelines help establish lifelong healthful practices and procedures amongst students, staff, and families. An assessment of the schools/districts wellness policy is conducted once every three years per United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations and the Wellness Committee meets a minimum of three times annually to address school health issues, including implementation of the wellness guidelines. This report is a summary of the local wellness policy/guidelines and the result of the most recent evaluation.

## Section 1: Policy/Wellness Guidelines Assessment on Compliance

The results of the annual Safety and Wellness Survey (SAWS) will be used as a component of the triennial assessment evaluation to measure the extent to which the district is following the current policy. The purpose of the SAWS report is to monitor and evaluate school progress towards implementation of the current wellness guidelines.

**Overall Rating: 81%**

Scores were calculated using the data from the 2023-2024 [Safety and Wellness Survey \(SAWS\)](#)

Opportunities for Growth > Room to Improve > Strengths		
WELLNESS GUIDELINES		PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS MEETING THE GUIDELINES
<b>Wellness Committee</b>		
WC1 The school has a designated wellness coordinator.		63%
WC2 The school has a wellness committee that includes members of the school community and/or members of the general public (e.g., representatives of community organizations, public agencies, or locally elected officials)		71%
WC3 The school wellness committee meets at least three times per school year.		61%
WC4 The wellness committee uses the School Health Index or other data sources (e.g. Youth Risk Behavior Survey data) to identify priority areas and to monitor improvements in those areas annually.		66%
WC5 Priority areas for wellness are included in the school's Academic and/or Financial Plan.		98%

WC6 The school community is notified about the wellness policy and provides contact information for the wellness coordinator at the beginning of each school year.	46%
WC7 The school encourages students' families to support wellness at school and at home through a variety of culturally and linguistically appropriate formats (e.g. online, flier, presentations)	88%
WC8 The principal or the school wellness coordinator completes the Safety and Wellness Survey annually.	100%
<b>Nutrition Guidelines</b>	
NG1 All reimbursable meals and snacks meet the USDA nutrient standards.	100%
NG2 All foods sold or provided (e.g., a la carte sales, fundraisers, student stores, vending machines, and parties) on school campus during the school day meet the USDA meal pattern requirements or Smart Snacks standards.	41%
<p>NG3 All beverages sold or provided (e.g., a la carte sales, fundraisers, student stores, vending machines, and parties) on school campus during the school day meet the following criteria during the school day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No caffeine, no artificial colors, and no artificial flavors</li> <li>• Maximum 8 oz. serving, except water which has no portion size limit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water – Plain (with or without carbonation)</li> <li>• Milk- Unflavored 1% of fat free; flavored fat free milk; milk alternatives as permitted by the National School Lunch/Breakfast Program; with ≤ 22 grams of sugar per 8 oz. serving.</li> <li>• 100% Fruit or vegetable juice with no added sweeteners</li> <li>• 100% Fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water and no added sweeteners</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	61%
NG4 Fundraising activities that promote physical activity, non-food items, or healthy foods based on Smart Snacks standards are encouraged.	87%
NG5 Meals and snacks include fresh and locally grown fruits and vegetables when possible	100%
NG6 Students are allowed to have at least 20 minutes to eat their lunch after being served.	99%
NG7 Students have access to free drinking water during meal times and throughout the school day at multiple locations on campus.	100%
NG8 Food is not used as a reward or punishment for students.	64%
<b>Health Education and Nutrition Promotion</b>	
HE1 Instructional content of health education classes includes a focus on knowledge and skills that support healthy eating and is aligned with the Hawai'i DOE Standards for health education.	90%

HE2 Health education is provided to students in elementary grades at least 45 minutes per week and secondary grades at least 200 minutes per week as measured by time spent in a course, integrated into multiple content areas, or through interdisciplinary units.	79%
HE3 Nutrition education includes culturally relevant activities that are 'āina-based and hands-on, such as food preparation, taste-testing, farm visits, and school gardens.	84%
HE4 All school-based marketing of foods and beverages must meet the Nutrition Guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, school publications, the exterior of vending machines, posters, banners, in-school television, and scoreboards.	78%
<b>Physical Education</b>	
PE1 Instructional content of physical education classes is aligned with the Hawai'i DOE Standards for physical education.	97%
PE2 Physical education is provided to students in elementary grades at least 45 minutes per week and secondary grades at least 200 minutes per week.	88%
PE3 At least 50% of physical education class time is dedicated to moderate to vigorous physical activity.	98%
PE4 Physical education classes are taught by State-certified physical education instructors.	80%
PE5 Physical education classes have a student/teacher ratio similar to other classes.	98%
PE6 Physical education in grades 5, 7, and 9 includes a health-related student fitness assessment (e.g. FitnessGram).	71%
<b>Physical Activity</b>	
PA1 Students are provided at least 20 minutes a day of recess that include opportunities to engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity.	97%
PA2 Students are provided with physical activity breaks at least every 60 minutes.	85%
PA3 The school does not use or withhold physical activity (e.g. recess or PE) as a negative consequence.	83%
PA4 The school supports active transport by encouraging students and staff to walk and/or bike to school if reasonably safe to do so.	81%
PA5 The school supplies bike racks for students and staff.	83%
PA6 The school staff, students, families, and community members have access to school grounds and facilities to be physically active during	60%

non-instructional time (e.g. before and after school, on weekends, and holidays).	
<b>Professional Development</b>	
PD1 The school staff receive annual professional development on the wellness guidelines.	67%
PD2 The school staff are encouraged to be role models for wellness (e.g. healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco-free, and stress management).	94%
<b>AVERAGE WELLNESS GUIDELINES SCORE</b>	<b>81%</b>

## Wellness Committee

Schools excelled in integrating wellness priorities into their Academic and Financial Plans (98%), engaging families through culturally and linguistically appropriate formats (88%), and ensuring the principal or wellness coordinator completes the Safety and Wellness Survey annually (100%). However, significant gaps remain. Only 46% of schools effectively notify the community about the wellness policy and provide contact information for the wellness coordinator. Additionally, just 61% of wellness committees meet at least three times per year, and only 63% of schools have a designated wellness coordinator. These low scores indicate a need for improved communication, accountability, and leadership within the wellness framework. Furthermore, while 71% of schools include community members in their wellness committees and 66% use data to monitor wellness priorities, these areas should be strengthened to ensure broader representation and data-driven decision-making.

## Nutrition Guidelines

Schools demonstrated strong compliance with USDA nutrition standards, with 100% of reimbursable meals and snacks meeting these requirements. Additionally, fresh and locally grown fruits and vegetables are consistently included in meals (100%), students have access to free drinking water throughout the school day (100%), and they are given at least 20 minutes to eat lunch after being served (99%). Fundraising activities that promote physical activity and non-food items are also widely encouraged (87%), supporting a healthier school environment.

However, certain areas need further attention. Only 41% of all foods sold or provided outside of reimbursable meals—such as those from vending machines, fundraisers, and student stores—meet USDA Smart Snacks standards. Similarly, just 61% of beverages sold on campus adhere to established nutrition criteria, indicating a need for stricter enforcement of beverage guidelines. Additionally, food is still being used as a reward or punishment in 36% of cases, which conflicts with best practices for fostering a healthy relationship with food (64% compliance).

## Health Education and Nutrition Promotion

Instructional content in health education classes effectively supports healthy eating and meets Hawai'i's Standards, achieving a high compliance rate of 90%. Additionally, nutrition education incorporates culturally relevant, 'āina-based, and hands-on learning experiences such as food

preparation, taste-testing, farm visits, and school gardens (84%), reinforcing student engagement with local and sustainable food systems.

However, areas for improvement remain. While 79% of students receive the recommended amount of health education per week, ensuring full compliance across all grade levels should be a priority. Furthermore, only 78% of school-based marketing materials for food and beverages meet the established Nutrition Guidelines, suggesting a need for stronger enforcement of advertising standards within school publications, vending machine exteriors, banners, and other promotional materials.

## **Physical Education**

Based on the physical education assessment data, our program performs strongly in several key areas. We have achieved a high level of alignment with Hawai'i DOE Standards, with 97% of instructional content meeting the required guidelines. Additionally, we provide adequate physical education time, with 88% of elementary students receiving at least 45 minutes per week and secondary students meeting the 200-minute per week requirement. Class time is also effectively dedicated to physical activity, with 98% of classes engaging students in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity. Furthermore, our student/teacher ratio aligns with other classes, achieving another strong score of 98%. However, some areas require improvement. Only 80% of our physical education classes are taught by state-certified physical education instructors, indicating a gap in professional qualifications. Additionally, only 71% of physical education programs in grades 5, 7, and 9 include a health-related student fitness assessment, such as FitnessGram. These two areas need targeted attention to meet program goals and ensure compliance with educational standards.

## **Physical Activity**

Our schools achieved a strong score of 97% for providing at least 20 minutes of daily recess that includes opportunities for moderate-to-vigorous physical activity. Additionally, 85% of students were provided with physical activity breaks at least every 60 minutes, and 83% of schools do not use or withhold physical activity as a consequence. While the program demonstrates strong support for active transport, with 81% of schools encouraging walking or biking to school, there are areas in need of improvement. While 83% of schools supply bike racks for students and staff, a significant gap is noted in providing access to school grounds and facilities for physical activity outside of school hours, with only 60% of schools ensuring such access for staff, students, families, and the broader community.

## **Professional Development**

Looking at the professional development data, there's one area that stands out for improvement. While 94% of school staff are encouraged to be role models for wellness—promoting healthy eating, physical activity, being tobacco-free, and managing stress—there's room for growth in another area. Only 67% of staff receive annual professional development on wellness guidelines, which is a relatively low score. This suggests that while there's good encouragement for staff to model wellness, more consistent and structured training could help to further strengthen our wellness initiatives and ensure staff are well-equipped with the knowledge they need.

## **Section 2: Model Policy Comparison**

A required component of the triennial assessment is comparing the local wellness policy ([Policy 103-1/Wellness Guidelines](#)) to a model policy which is designed to assist districts in identifying policy strengths and areas for improvement.

The State of Hawai'i's wellness policy has remained unchanged over the past three years. However, the State of Hawai'i Wellness Committee is currently working on updating the policy to better align with our goals. The updated policy will focus on fostering collaboration, ensuring access to resources, and integrating wellness practices into all aspects of school design, from early childhood education through high school. The committee aims to guide the development of locally relevant, wellness guidelines that support lifelong healthy habits and the well-being of keiki, staff, and communities. As part of this update, the committee will also incorporate feedback from stakeholders, evaluate current wellness practices, and ensure the policy reflects the goals of the Healthy Hawai'i Strategic Plan 2030 and other health-related initiatives.

### Model Wellness Policy used for comparison against Local Wellness Policy:

The district chose Rudd Center's [WellSAT 3.0](#) quantitative tool to measure the strength and comprehensiveness of our current policy/guidelines. The comprehensiveness score is a reflection of how well the recommended topics are covered in the policy overall, and the strength score is a reflection of how strongly the content was stated. Both scores range from 0-100 (**0- weaker content/language, 100- specific and directive content/language**).



Hawai'i State School  
District WellSAT 3.0  
Scorecard

### Comparison Results:

HIDOE Results 2025	WellSAT 3.0: <i>Comprehensiveness: <b>72</b> Strength: <b>52</b></i>
National Average of 50 Policy Results 2018 (Source: <a href="#">WellSAT:3.0</a> )	WellSAT 3.0: <i>Comprehensiveness: <b>54</b> Strength: <b>33</b></i>

### Local Wellness Policy Strengths:

The policy strengths for HIDOE were in the following three categories: (1) Nutrition Education; (2) Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages; and (3) Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication.

### Local Wellness Policy Improvements:

The results of the model policy comparison identified areas of improvement within our local policy/wellness guidelines.

#### Create Practice Implementation Plan-

*Stated in policy, but needs improvement in being enforced in the schools.*

- Regulating food and beverages sold in vending machines, school stores, a la carte, and class parties.
- Consider strategies to support employee wellness.

#### Update Policy-

*Not strongly stated in policy, but it is being implemented in schools.*

- Updating our current policy to mention the triennial assessment requirements.

#### Opportunities for Growth –

*Not strongly stated in policy, and not being closely monitored in schools.*

- Identify officials responsible for the implementation and compliance with wellness guidelines.

- Explanation of how the Triennial Assessment results will be made available to the public.
- Have a written guideline explaining the protection of the privacy of students who qualify for free and reduced-priced meals.

### **Section 3: Progress and Next Steps**

#### **Current Progress:**

- The National Health Education Standards (NHES): Achieving Excellence was adopted by the Hawai'i State Board of Education in December 2019. A three-year implementation rollout began in School Year (SY) 2020-2021, with full implementation of the NHES in SY 2023-2024.
- The Wellness Committee will be holding a meeting with stakeholders to update the current policy/wellness guidelines based on the Triennial Assessment results.
- The Department developed a resource for [using school gardens in Health Education](#) and promotes culturally relevant, 'āina-based Health Education.
- In 2021, [Act 175](#) moved the Hawai'i Farm to School Program from the Hawai'i State Department of Agriculture to the DOE. Since then, two State-level positions have been established to support the implementation of the Hawai'i Farm to School Program in schools: Farm to School Program Coordinator and School Garden Coordinator.
- Currently working on revising and updating the Wellness Guidelines.
- The Physical Education Standards Review Workgroup is reviewing national and state Physical Education Standards in order to revise the current State of Hawai'i Physical Education Standards.
- Statewide professional development around Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programs.
- The Department of Health's Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan (PAN Plan) 2030 includes two objectives supporting Health Education, Physical Education, and Nutrition in Department of Education schools. Interagency stakeholders collaborate on PAN Plan implementation activities to:
  - increase individual school-level scores on the SAWS
  - promote the expansion of the Health Education and Physical Education annual course requirement from K-5 to K-8

#### **Future plans:**

- Establish the state's wellness committee structure, broaden the membership, and develop a strategic plan aligned with Hawai'i State Department of Education and Hawai'i State Department of Health and wellness initiatives.
- Support Complex Areas and Schools with the implementation of wellness initiatives.
- Enhance communication and awareness of Wellness Guidelines.
- Expand and evaluate wellness practices.
- Provide support and professional development focused on the specific areas outlined in the Wellness Guidelines.
- Promote local staple crops as part of nutrition education and nutrition promotion.
- Finalize State Physical Education Standards to be adopted by the Hawai'i State Board of Education.
- Develop a three-year implementation plan to support the rollout of the State Physical Education Standards, which are planned to be adopted by the Hawai'i State Board of Education in the Fall of 2026.

Annual reminder/memo of HIDOE Wellness Guidelines, including the availability of translated HIDOE Wellness Guidelines here: [HawaiiPublicSchools.org](http://HawaiiPublicSchools.org) to support communication with families.

**Wellness resources for making improvements based on the assessment:**  
<https://www.wellsat.org/resources.aspx>

**Wellness Guidelines Contacts:**

Hawai'i State Department of Education  
School Food Services Branch- Lindsay Nakamura, at 808-784-5500 [lindsay.nakamura@k12.hi.us](mailto:lindsay.nakamura@k12.hi.us)  
Health Education- Nadine Marchessault, at 808-784-6423 or [nadine.marchessault@k12.hi.us](mailto:nadine.marchessault@k12.hi.us)  
Physical Education- George Centeio, at 808-784-6424 or [george.centeio@k12.hi.us](mailto:george.centeio@k12.hi.us)  
Hawai'i State Department of Health  
Primary Prevention Branch- Sarah Hipp, at 808-586-5492, or [sarah.hipp@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:sarah.hipp@doh.hawaii.gov)

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[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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