

## DCPS Local Wellness Policy – Triennial Assessment

In accordance with local and federal law and regulations, DCPS will conduct a triennial progress assessment<sup>1</sup> of its Local Wellness Policy (LWP) every three years and make any necessary updates to that policy. Results of the assessment will be made available to the public and will measure the implementation of the LWP, including:

- The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of DCPS are in compliance with the local school wellness policy;
- The extent to which DCPS' local school wellness policy compares to model local school wellness policies; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the local school wellness policy.

DCPS must also make appropriate updates or modifications to its LWP based on results of the triennial assessment.<sup>2</sup>

To comply with these requirements, beginning in November 2021, DCPS began evaluating its compliance with and the effectiveness of its LWP through a multi-faceted review that integrated input from schools; students, staff, and the community; and the Central Services teams that oversee and support aspects of the LWP. The DCPS Division of Food and Nutrition Services, Early Childhood Education Division, Health and Physical Education Team, Comprehensive Alternative Resolution & Equity Team, Facilities Management Team, Student Health Services Team, School Mental Health Team, LGBTQ and Sexual Health Program, Section 504 Team, Student Behavior and School Culture Team, and Policy Team collaborated to review and update the LWP to ensure that it conforms to current DCPS policies and procedures and reflects best practices for student, school, and community wellness. The review also considered school-level data, such as School Health Profiles,<sup>3</sup> school administrator surveys, and student and parent satisfaction surveys.



This process included an opportunity for students, families, school staff, and community members to review the draft LWP and provide public input on the degree to which the LWP and specific sections of the LWP will effectively support student and staff wellness; the most important ways that DCPS can support and improve student and staff wellness; and how they would like to see information about the LWP communicated to schools and staff, families, and the community. The policy was posted for three weeks for community review and comment. DCPS received 616 responses, including 174 written

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<sup>1</sup> This triennial assessment was adapted from *Annual Local Wellness Policy Self-Evaluation Assessment and Action Plan*, Office of the State Superintendent of Education, available at [https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page\\_content/attachments/LWP%20Evaluation%201.17.20.pdf](https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/LWP%20Evaluation%201.17.20.pdf) and *Triennial Assessment Template for Local Educational Agencies*, Let's Eat Healthy (offered by the California Local School Wellness Policy Collaborative), available at <https://www.healthyeating.org/products-and-activities/programs-services/professional-development-advising/california-local-school-wellness-policy-collaborative/triennial-assessment-template>.

<sup>2</sup> 7 C.F.R. § 210.31(e)(2)–(3).

<sup>3</sup> *2021-22 School Year DC Public Schools Health Profiles*, Office of the State Superintendent of Education, available at <https://osse.dc.gov/node/1595086>.

comments from 77 various stakeholders. Parents/guardians were the most common response type, followed by DCPS staff members and community members. In addition, DCPS received four long-form responses providing feedback on the proposed update. They were submitted by a DCPS parent/LSAT co-chair, a DCPS parent, a volunteer at a DCPS elementary school, and the DC Voters for Animals Education Fund. DCPS reviewed all public input and feedback and made appropriate updates to the LWP.

An updated LWP reflecting the results of this assessment, changes to local and federal law and regulations, and evolving best practices for student and staff wellness will be finalized and posted effective for the beginning of school year 2022-23.

### Compliance with the Local Wellness Policy

Based on discussions with the Central Services teams that oversee and support each aspect of the LWP and a review of school-level data, DCPS is largely in compliance with the elements of its Sept. 2017LWP. To review compliance section-by-section:

- **Ensuring Quality Health Education, Physical Education, and Physical Activity:** As written, largely complies with requirements of the Healthy Schools Act. Minor updates were made to reflect updated goals and requirements, particularly around Health Education.
- **Nutrition Environment and Services:** Updated the section on Family Style Meals to reflect changes to this process during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students in ECE classrooms continued to eat Family Style, with necessary health and safety precautions regarding the number of students per table and individual packaging. Similarly, as a result of COVID-19, the practice of supporting ECE students with toothbrushing to assist the development of proper oral hygiene was temporarily suspended; this practice will resume in the future as health conditions allow. Additional information was also added on food-based fundraisers to ensure that schools are meeting USDA Smart Snack and Healthy Schools Act standards.
- **Physical Environment:** Added new information to reflect changes to DCPS policy on LEED certifications and the WELL Building Standard. DCPS has enrolled all 117 of its building into the WELL Health & Safety Rating for Facility Operations and Management, a third-party verified rating for new and existing buildings and facilities focused on operational policies, maintenance protocols, occupancy engagement, and emergency plans. Added additional information to ensure that the LWP reflects current DCPS policy on indoor air quality and the upgrades that DCPS made to its buildings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Ensuring a Safe & Supportive School Climate:** While the COVID-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges for schools in creating a positive school culture, managing student engagement, and responding to student behavior challenges, schools have continued their concentrated efforts to maintain alignment with the requirements of this section.



- **Health Services:** Schools are continuing to work with families to meet legal requirements on Universal Health Certificates, Oral Health Assessments, and immunization certifications that are discussed in the LWP. Otherwise, schools are meeting requirements for EpiPens and should be on track to meet newly added language on “undesigned EpiPens” that are not prescribed to any individual and are available for use on anyone experiencing an anaphylactic reaction in a school building. All schools have at least one staff member designed to serve as 504 coordinator to oversee the 504 process for their school and students. All DCPS schools participate in the School Health Services Program and are assigned school nurses.
- **Family Engagement and Community Involvement/Measuring Policy Impact and Implementation:** The transition to virtual schooling presented new challenges for sharing information on the LWP with families and engaging the community in its implementation. DCPS, however, aims to use this chance to assess and update the LWP as an opportunity to ensure that it is meeting federal and local requirements on sharing the LWP with the necessary members of the school staff and community. To this end, the updated draft of the LWP was shared for public feedback as part of its development. That feedback was reviewed and updates were made to the policy to reflect the community’s feedback.
- **Appendices:** The appendices were updated, particularly the Local Wellness Policy Checklist, to provide a more usable and efficient way for school staff to ensure that schools meet the requirements of the LWP across all of its sections. Contact information for the relevant Central Services teams was also updated to ensure that schools and the community have access to accurate contact information and can receive prompt answers to their questions about the LWP.



### Comparison to Model Local Wellness Policy

To ensure that DCPS’ LWP meets all necessary federal and local requirements and conforms to best practices, DCPS’ 2017 LWP was compared to OSSE’s Local Wellness Policy Template (Sept. 2021)<sup>4</sup> and Local Wellness Policy Guide (Sept. 2021).<sup>5</sup> Similarly to OSSE’s Template, DCPS’ 2017 LWP was based on the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model and incorporates the same ten components of:

- Health Education;
- Physical Education and Physical Activity;
- Nutrition Environment and Services;
- Physical Environment;
- Social and Emotional Climate;

<sup>4</sup> Available at

[https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/12.20%20LWP\\_TemplateBooklet\\_Fileable.pdf](https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/12.20%20LWP_TemplateBooklet_Fileable.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Available at

[https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/10.25%20LWP\\_Guide.pdf](https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/10.25%20LWP_Guide.pdf).

- Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services;
- Health Services;
- Employee Wellness;
- Family Engagement; and
- Community Involvement.

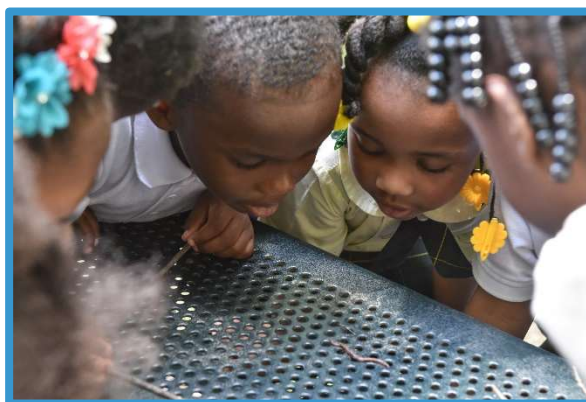
The DCPS LWP does group of these components together differently than the Template based on the organization of DCPS' offices, teams, and workstreams.

The review of OSSE's Local Wellness Policy Template also found that DCPS' 2017 LWP largely conformed to its requirements, though several items needed to be updated to reflect changes in DCPS policy and procedure since 2017. For instance, additional information was added on the manner in which DCPS developed and implemented an Environmental Literacy Plan. DCPS actively participated in the development of OSSE's 2020 Environmental Literacy Plan, incorporated its goals and objectives, and implemented its teaching and learning standards into our curricula. Additional information was also added on DCPS' triennial LWP assessment and the manner in which DCPS will provide parents, students, DCPS' Office of Food and Nutrition Services, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the DC State Board of Education, school administrators, and the general public with an opportunity to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of this LWP through the public posting of an updated draft of the policy for community review and comment.

### Progress Made in Attaining the Goals of the Local Wellness Policy

DCPS and its schools have made substantial progress in meeting the goals of the LWP based on discussions with DCPS Central Services teams and a review of school-level data. Examples of that progress include:

- Students at **Brookland Middle School** receive an average of 120 minutes per week of health education instruction, greater than the requirement of an average of 75 minutes per week.
- **Lafayette Elementary School** has numerous strategies to promote physical activity during or outside of regular school hours, including active recess, after-school activities, a bike to school initiative, a playground/field off of school campus, a shared use agreement with organizations that provide physical activity outside of normal school day, the use of movement in the classroom, athletic programs, a playground/field on school campus, and a walk to school initiative.
- **Dunbar High School** offers students a school store stocked with nutritious options, including 100% fruit and/vegetable juice; baked chips, lower calorie and/or fat snacks; fresh fruits and/or non-fried vegetables; milk and dairy products; whole grain products; and water.



- **Seaton Elementary School** shares information on its school menus and nutritional content broadly, including on its school website, in the cafeteria, to school staff, in the school main offices, and to the parent/teacher organization. There is also wide availability of vegetarian food options at breakfast and lunch that are rotated to avoid repetition and are clearly labeled and identified. Seaton Elementary School also shares information on its Local Wellness Policy on its school website, to food-service staff, in the school main office, to administrators, and upon request.
- **Hart Middle School** offers many health services to its students and community, including access and/or referrals to medical providers; prevention materials and resources for chronic diseases; screening, testing, and/or treatment for chronic diseases; on-site COVID-19 testing; prevention materials and resources for sexually transmitted diseases; screening, testing, and/or treatment for sexually transmitted diseases; vision screenings; and hearing screenings. Other schools, such as **Anacostia High School**, offer on-site COVID-19 vaccinations and routine pediatric immunizations.
- **Dunbar High School** has several initiatives designed to meet environmental sustainability goals, including school-wide recycling, lead testing of water, environmentally-friendly cleaning products, landscaping with native plants, and stormwater reduction efforts (i.e., rain barrels cisterns, rain gardens).
- Staff at **Deal Middle School** can take advantage of numerous wellness initiatives, such as organizational structures to support staff wellness (e.g., lactation rooms, welcoming break rooms), staff wellness events, professional development, and mental/behavioral health services.