

# **Triennial Assessment Report: Mansfield Public Schools 2025 (5/2025)**

## **District: MANSFIELD**

### **Introduction**

The 2025 WellSat review revealed various strengths and weaknesses of the district wellness policy and how the policy is implemented as practices within the schools.

The strengths found in the policy and practices highlight the district's commitment to its core beliefs of; lead with equity, develop the whole child, ensure active learning, build partnerships, prepare global citizens and grow educators.

Much of the policies that are in need of enhancement are already in practice in the schools, which aligns with the commitment to these core beliefs and the district leadership's commitment to a wellness culture.

Updating the wellness policies written content will be a priority for the district Wellness Committee's agenda for the 25/26 school year. In addition, the Wellness Committee will work to improve communication and professional development for all district staff related to the content of the policy. The committee will engage the families of the school community to help support and strengthen the wellness culture within the district.

The 2025 triennial assessment revealed similar areas of strength and growth compared to the last one conducted in 2022. The district continues to have an active Wellness Committee and a strong food service program. The district has made strides to implement a new nutrition curriculum for the elementary grades and to support more physical activity throughout the school day and beyond. The Wellness Committee has worked to organize school and community members in hosting family activity opportunities. The Committee has also worked to support administrators in enforcing the policy in regards to classroom celebrations and incentives. There will be more robust efforts to support implementation of policies in the schools this coming school year as a continuation of these efforts.

The triennial assessment of the Mansfield Public Schools wellness policy, was completed for the 24/25 school year. The review was conducted during the spring of 2025. This review was of the language that is specifically written in the district's policy, as well as how the wellness policy statements are implemented in the elementary and middle schools. The policy and practices were reviewed using the WellSat tools by the Wellness Committee and district administration, including building level administrators.

### **Strong Policies and Aligned Practices**

The Mansfield Public Schools demonstrated strength and implementation of policy in multiple areas. Specific areas included: National School Lunch Program's (NSLP) standards, and the active Wellness Committee's commitment to the triennial wellness policy evaluation.

The first federal requirement that is both strong in policy and practice highlights adherence with the federal standards for meal patterns, nutrient levels and calorie requirements for all grades. The food service program has recently integrated more scratch cooking, using fresh ingredients and recipes to serve to students as well as implementing a cycle menu which helps to control nutrient content on a weekly basis. The second federal requirement refers to the steps that the school takes to protect the privacy of students who qualify for free and reduced meals. Food service team members are trained annually on strict confidentiality standards. The food service software does not identify student meal status anywhere on the point of sale terminal.

Departments outside of food service who need access to student meal status information to perform their jobs are required to sign a document that promises confidentiality will be maintained.

The wellness policy implementation is evaluated every three years, by the Wellness Committee. The committee is organized by the wellness coordinator and the food service director. The food service director just completed her third year on staff and worked together with the wellness coordinator to interview leadership team members on how the policies are implemented as practices in the curriculum and in daily culture of the schools.

The district continues to maintain an active Wellness Committee made up of school and community

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members. The group meets at least twice per year to support and coordinate programming practices related to the wellness policy.

		2 / 2 1	5/2025		
		P O L I C Y	P O L I C Y	P R A C T I C E	
<b>F R 2</b>	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	2	★
<b>F R 3</b>	Does your school take steps to protect the privacy of students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals?	2	2	2	★
<b>F R 1 6</b>	Is wellness policy implementation evaluated every three years?	2	2	2	★
<b>IC 1</b>	Is there an active district-level wellness committee?	2	2	2	★

**Create Practice Implementation Plan**

- The following federal requirements that need addressing or improving in practice are the following items:
- District should have specific goals for nutrition education to promote student wellness
  - Does the district regulate foods and beverages served at class parties and other school celebrations in the elementary school.
  - Has the wellness policy been revised based on the previous triennial assessment?

The Wellness Committee, led by the wellness coordinator and the food service director will implement

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strategies to inform and support the school community on how to achieve the standards set by the wellness policy. This may include staff training, school community communications and support by the Wellness Committee and building leadership.

The wellness coordinator and food service director will use model language to create suggestions to the board of education to update the wellness policy. The suggestions will be reviewed by the Wellness Committee and the superintendent. The policies will be updated at the start of the 25/26 school year and made available to stakeholders before they are brought to the board’s policy committee for consideration.

The wellness coordinator and the food service director will create a practice implementation plan. The plan will be created by the start of school year 25/26 (8/28/25). The plan will be implemented over the 25/26 school year, and put in place during the week of back to school training. The implementation will be evaluated by surveying building leadership using the Wellsat practice evaluation tool.

		2 / 2 1	5/2025		
		P O L I C Y	P O L I C Y	P R A C T I C E	
<b>F R 1</b>	Does the district have specific goals for nutrition education designed to promote student wellness?	2	2	1	
<b>F R 1 1</b>	Does your district regulate foods and beverages served at class parties and other school celebrations in elementary schools?	1	1	0	
<b>F R 1 8</b>	Has the wellness policy been revised based on the previous triennial assessment?	2	1	0	
<b>N E</b>	Do teachers or school staff give students food as a reward?	2	1	0	

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<b>S 1 3</b>					
<b>N E 2</b>	Do all elementary school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>N E 5</b>	Is nutrition education integrated into other subjects beyond health education?	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>P E P A 4</b>	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in elementary school receive?	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>P E P A 5</b>	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in middle school receive?	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>P E P A 1 2</b>	 Are there opportunities for all students to engage in physical activity before and after school?	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>P E P A 1 6</b>	What proportion of students walk or bike to school?	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>EW 2</b>	Are school staff encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors in front of students?	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	

**Update Policies**

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Which federal requirements are in this section?

- Is free drinking water available to students during meals?
- Do all school food service employees meet or exceed federal requirements for continuing training and education hours required by USDA’s Professional Standards requirements?
- Do competitive foods and beverages SOLD to students during the school day meet or exceed the USDA’s nutrition standards? (Smart Snack standards).
- Do a la carte items sold in the cafeteria meet the Smart Snack standards?
- Do all foods sold in the vending machines meet the Smart Snack standards?
- Is there food or beverage marketing on the school campus during the school day? If yes, do the market items meet the Smart Snack criteria?
- Is there a building level official who is responsible for the implementation and compliance with the wellness policies?
- How is the wellness policy available to the public?
- What is included in the triennial assessment report to the public?

These are the other items in this section that are a priority for our district:

- Does your district take steps to address feeding students with unpaid meal balances without stigmatizing them?
- Does your district provide info to families about eligibility for free/ reduced meals?
- Does your school use strategies to promote participation in the school meal program?
- Is purchasing local foods for use in school meals a priority for your district?
- Do you know where to access USDA Smart Snack lists?
- Do students have easy access to free drinking water throughout the school day?
- Are skills based, behavior focused interactive participatory methods used in nutrition education?
- Does the district have a written PE curriculum?
- Does the district have PE curriculum that is aligned with national standards?
- Are PE classes taught by state certified teachers?
- Is ongoing PD offered every year to all PE staff, relevant to PE education?
- Are there daily recess for all elementary grades?

The wellness coordinator and food service director will use model language to create suggestions to the board of education to update the wellness policy. The suggestions will be reviewed by the Wellness Committee and the superintendent. The policies will be updated at the start of the 25/26 school year and made available to stakeholders before they are brought to the board’s policy committee for consideration. Any weak practices identified will be addressed by improving communication between the Wellness Committee and building level leadership and staff. Training and email newsletters will be used to engage and inform teaching and support staff which will support them in implementing the policies on a daily basis.

	2 / 2 1	5/2025		
	P O L	P O L	P R A	

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		I C Y	I C Y	C T I C E	
<b>F R 4</b>	Is free (i.e., no cost to students) drinking water available to students during meals?	2	1	2	
<b>F R 5</b>	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	1	2	
<b>F R 6</b>	Do all competitive foods and beverages sold to students during the school day meet or exceed the USDA's nutrition standards, commonly called Smart Snacks?	2	0	2	
<b>F R 7</b>	Do all a la carte foods and beverages sold in the cafeteria meet Smart Snacks standards?	2	0	2	
<b>F R 8</b>	Do all foods and beverages sold in vending machines meet Smart Snack standards?	2	0	2	
<b>F R 1 2</b>	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	1	2	
<b>F R 1 4</b>	Is there an official who is responsible for the implementation and compliance with the wellness policy at the building level for each school?	2	1	2	
<b>F R 1 5</b>	How is the wellness policy made available to the public?	2	1	2	
<b>F R 1</b>	What is included in the triennial assessment report to the public?	2	1	2	

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7					
N E S 1	Does the district offer breakfast every day to all students?	2	1	2	
N E S 2	Does your school take steps to address feeding students with unpaid meal balances without stigmatizing them?	0	0	2	
N E S 3	Does your school or district provide information to families about eligibility for free or reduced-price meals?	2	1	2	
N E S 4	Does your school use strategies to maximize participation in the school breakfast program and/or school lunch program?	2	0	2	
N E S 5	Are marketing strategies used to promote healthy food and beverage choices in school?	2	1	2	
N E S 6	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?	1	0	2	
N E S 7	 In your district, is it a priority to procure locally produced foods for school meals?	0	0	2	
N E S 8	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?	0	0	2	
N E	Do students have consistent and easy access to free drinking water throughout the school day?	2	0	2	

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S 1 4					
N E 1	Are skills-based, behavior-focused, and interactive/participatory methods used in nutrition education to develop student skills?	1	0	2	
N E 3	Do all middle school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	2	1	2	
P E P A 1	<del>⇒</del> Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is implemented consistently for every grade?	2	0	2	
P E P A 2	Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is aligned with national and/or state standards?	2	0	2	
P E P A 3	How does your physical education program promote a physically active lifestyle?	2	1	2	
P E P A 7	Are all physical education classes taught by state certified/licensed teachers who are endorsed to teach physical education?	2	0	2	
P E P A 8	Is ongoing professional development offered every year for PE teachers that is relevant and specific to physical education?	2	0	2	
P E	What percentage of students do you estimate do not take PE each year due to exemptions?	2	0	2	

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P A 9					
P E P A 1 3	Is there daily recess for all grades in elementary school?	2	1	2	
P E P A 1 5	Does the district have "joint-use" or "shared-use" agreements?	2	1	2	
P E P A 1 8	Do teachers ever use physical activity as a punishment?	2	1	2	
EW 1	 Are there strategies used by the school to support employee wellness?	2	1	2	

**Opportunities for Growth**

Which federal requirements are in this section?

- Identify if there are fundraisers that sell food or beverages to be consumed during the school day. If yes, do they meet the smart snack standards?
- Has the wellness policy been revised based on the previous triennial assessment?

These items are a priority for our district Wellness Committee to address:

- Do nutrition services staff members collaborate with teachers to reinforce nutrition education lessons taught in the classroom?
- Does nutrition education address agriculture and the food system?
- Are there opportunities for families to engage in physical activity at school?
- Do teachers provide regular physical activity breaks for students in the classroom?
- Are teachers encouraged to use physical activity as a reward?

The wellness coordinator and the food service director will create a practice implementation plan. The plan

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will be created by the start of school year 25/26 (8/28/25). The plan will be implemented over the 25/26 school year, and put in place during the week of back to school training. The implementation will be evaluated by surveying building leadership using the Wellsat practice evaluation tool at the midyear and end of year points.

Any weak practices identified will be addressed by improving communication between the Wellness Committee and building level leadership and staff. Training and email newsletters will be used to engage and inform teaching and support staff which will support them in implementing the policies on a daily basis. The wellness coordinator and food service director will use model language to create suggestions to the board of education to update the wellness policy. The suggestions will be reviewed by the Wellness Committee and the superintendent. The policies will be updated at the start of the 25/26 school year and made available to stakeholders before they are brought to the board’s policy committee for consideration.

		2 / 2 1	5/2025		
		P O L I C Y	P O L I C Y	P R A C T I C E	
<b>F R 1 0</b>	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	1	1	
<b>F R 1 3</b>	Which groups are represented on the district-level wellness committee?	2	1	1	
<b>N E 6</b>	Do school nutrition services staff members use the following methods to collaborate with teachers to reinforce nutrition education lessons taught in the classroom?	0	0	1	
<b>N E 7</b>	 Does nutrition education address agriculture and the food system?	0	0	1	

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P E P A 1 1	 Are there opportunities for families and community members to engage in physical activity at school?	2	0	1	
P E P A 1 4	 Do teachers provide regular physical activity breaks for students in the classroom?	2	1	1	
P E P A 1 7	 Are teachers encouraged to use physical activity as a reward for students?	2	1	1	
P E P A 1 9	Do teachers ever withhold physical activity as a classroom management tool?	2	1	1	
IC 2	Is there an active school-level wellness committee?	2	0	0	

**Comparison with prior assessments**

The Wellness Policy has not been updated since the last triennial assessment, however the practices in need of attention have been addressed by the Wellness Committee. The district’s three small independent elementary schools were combined into one building in 2023, this prompted many changes for the school community. The Wellness Committee has supported the teacher leaders in the development and implementation of a unified nutrition curriculum for elementary students. The elementary school administration, supported by The Wellness Committee, has focused on communicating with staff about the policies related to food based celebrations and incentives for students in order for consistency throughout the unified elementary school. Both the middle and elementary school added more opportunities for physical activity through special events during and after school. New programming has been added to the physical activity curriculum, for example the Bike Mansfield program which ensures all fourth graders have the opportunity to learn to ride a bike and learn to understand basic riding safety. Some of the policies, although not changed, scored lower based on the guidance examples written in the

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triennial assessment guide. This indicates a need for revision to the policy to strengthen the phrasing in the district's wellness policy. The Wellness Committee plans to work with the Board of Education's Policy Committee to enhance the Wellness Policy in the 25/26 school year. The Food Service Director has scheduled back to school communications and presentations to better communicate the district's Wellness Policy with building staff and the school community. The communications will include a back to school letter, periodic newsletters and social media marketing featuring practical tips that teachers can easily implement in the classroom. In addition, the administration will add the wellness policy to the staff training platform Vector, which will make reading this language part of the mandatory assigned reading for all staff.

### Conclusion

The triennial assessment of the Mansfield Public Schools wellness policy, has been completed for the 24/25 school year. The review was conducted of what is specifically written in the district's policy, as well as how the wellness policy statements are implemented in the elementary and middle schools. The policy and practices were reviewed using the WellSat tool by the Wellness Committee and district administration, including building level administrators. The review highlighted strengths related to both policy and practices in the district's adherence to the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) standards, triennial wellness policy evaluation and in addition, the active Wellness Committee.

The following federal requirements that were identified as in need of addressing or improving in practice include what are specific goals the district has for nutrition education to promote student wellness, how class parties or celebrations are regulated, and how often the wellness policy is updated.

The federal requirements listed in this section were identified as needing updating in the wellness policy document however most are implemented in practice at both the elementary and middle schools. Some of these areas in need of revised language include policies related to National School Lunch Program regulations, which are implemented and enforced by the food service director under the guidance of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). In addition, the federal requirements not met include how the actual policy is updated and how that document and the triennial assessment is shared with the public. The policy does not currently explicitly state these actions.

Other fields of importance, include various components of the physical education program which should be highlighted as strengths in the policy. These are policies in which the district exceeds the requirement for practice, yet the written policy does not contain supportive language.

Lastly, the assessments identified opportunities for growth in both the realms of written wellness policy and daily wellness policy practices. This specifically includes the topics of food celebrations, food as rewards, nutrition and food system education opportunities, family engagement in school based physical activity and before and after school opportunities for daily physical activity.

The District Leadership, led by the Wellness Coordinator and the Food Service Director are committed to strengthening wellness policy and practices for the 25/26 school year. Community input and support continues to be welcomed and essential for maintaining a strong student centered wellness culture within the Mansfield Public Schools.

### Key



**Strong Policies and Aligned Practices** - District has a strong policy and is fully implementing practices

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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](https://wellsat.org/resources)

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