

Alachua County Public Schools

Local School Wellness Policy Triennial Assessment Report

School Years 2023-2024 through 2025-2026

Assessment Date: June 2026

District: Alachua County Public Schools

Wellness Policy: ACPS Board Policy 8510 – Wellness

Executive Summary

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and 7 CFR Part 210 require local educational agencies participating in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program to complete a triennial assessment of the Local School Wellness Policy (LWP). The assessment must evaluate:

1. The extent to which schools are in compliance with the Local School Wellness Policy;
2. The extent to which the Local School Wellness Policy compares to model wellness policies; and
3. Progress made toward attaining the goals of the Local School Wellness Policy.

Alachua County Public Schools (ACPS) conducted this assessment through a review of Board Policy 8510 – Wellness, Healthy School Team activities, Food and Nutrition Services program implementation, district wellness initiatives, and compliance monitoring activities.

The assessment found that ACPS maintains a strong commitment to student wellness and demonstrates substantial compliance with its Local School Wellness Policy. The District has established systems and programs that support nutrition education, nutrition promotion, physical activity, Farm to School initiatives, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program implementation, and compliance with federal nutrition standards.

Assessment Methodology

The District reviewed:

- Board Policy 8510 – Wellness
- Healthy School Team requirements and activities
- USDA School Meal Program operations
- Smart Snacks compliance procedures
- Farm to School activities
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program implementation

- Nutrition promotion activities
- Physical activity requirements and opportunities
- District wellness communications
- Annual wellness monitoring practices

The Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) framework was utilized as a reference when comparing the District policy to nationally recognized model wellness policies.

Requirement 1

Extent of Compliance with the Local School Wellness Policy

The District demonstrates a high level of compliance with the Local School Wellness Policy.

Nutrition Education

The District provides nutrition education through:

- Standards-based health curriculum
- Nutrition education resources
- Cafeteria nutrition promotion
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program educational materials
- Farm to School educational activities
- Family and community outreach

Nutrition education opportunities are provided throughout the school year and reinforced through Food and Nutrition Services programming.

Nutrition Promotion

The District actively promotes healthy eating through:

- Cafeteria signage and messaging
- Smart Snack compliance
- Farm to School promotions
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program activities
- Nutrition education resources
- Wellness communications to families and schools

School Meal Programs

The District operates the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program in accordance with USDA requirements. Meals served meet federal nutrition standards and Smart Snacks requirements are monitored throughout the District.

Smart Snacks Compliance

Schools are required to comply with USDA Smart Snacks standards for:

- A la carte sales
- Vending machines
- School stores
- Fundraisers occurring during the school day

Food and Nutrition Services provides guidance and technical assistance to support compliance.

Physical Activity

Schools provide opportunities for physical education and physical activity consistent with Florida statutes and District policy. Schools are encouraged to provide additional opportunities for physical activity throughout the school day and through extracurricular programming.

Healthy School Teams

Healthy School Teams are established at schools and are responsible for supporting wellness initiatives, reviewing wellness goals, and monitoring compliance.

Compliance Determination

Based on policy review, program implementation, and ongoing monitoring activities, ACPS is determined to be:

Substantially Compliant with the Local School Wellness Policy

Any identified areas of non-compliance are addressed through corrective action, technical assistance, and follow-up monitoring.

Requirement 2

Comparison to Model Wellness Policies

The ACPS Wellness Policy was compared to nationally recognized model wellness policies using WellSAT criteria.

Areas of Strong Alignment

The ACPS policy includes:

- Nutrition education goals
- Physical activity goals

- Nutrition promotion goals
- Healthy School Team requirements
- Smart Snacks standards
- Stakeholder involvement requirements
- Wellness assessment procedures
- Public reporting requirements
- Triennial assessment requirements

Areas Exceeding Minimum Federal Requirements

The District exceeds minimum requirements through:

Farm to School Program

ACPS maintains a robust Farm to School program. All district-operated schools and charter schools served by the District are offered locally grown produce whenever available. The program supports local agriculture while increasing student access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

The District operates the USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program in eighteen elementary schools. The program provides students with access to fresh produce and nutrition education opportunities beyond those required through standard meal programs.

Nutrition Promotion

The District actively incorporates nutrition promotion through cafeteria-based education, wellness communications, Farm to School initiatives, and FFVP activities.

Opportunities for Future Enhancement

While the policy compares favorably to model wellness policies, future revisions may strengthen language related to:

- Protection of student meal eligibility confidentiality
- Free potable water availability during meal service
- USDA Professional Standards training requirements
- Classroom celebration guidelines

Overall, the ACPS Wellness Policy compares favorably to model wellness policies and demonstrates a strong commitment to student wellness.

Requirement 3

Progress Toward Wellness Goals

Goal Area: Nutrition Education

Progress Status: Achieved/Ongoing

The District continues to provide nutrition education through curriculum integration, cafeteria-based learning opportunities, Farm to School activities, FFVP educational materials, and family outreach.

Goal Area: Nutrition Promotion

Progress Status: Achieved/Ongoing

The District promotes healthy food choices through:

- Nutrition messaging
- Healthy food marketing
- Cafeteria promotions
- Farm to School activities
- FFVP implementation
- Wellness communications

Goal Area: Farm to School

Progress Status: Exceeds Goal

The District has developed and maintained a robust Farm to School program that provides opportunities for students to experience locally sourced foods and learn about agriculture and nutrition.

All district-operated schools and charter schools served by ACPS are offered locally grown produce whenever available.

Goal Area: Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

Progress Status: Exceeds Goal

The District successfully operates FFVP in eighteen elementary schools.

The program:

- Increases student exposure to fresh produce
- Supports nutrition education
- Encourages healthy eating habits
- Introduces students to new fruits and vegetables

Goal Area: Physical Activity

Progress Status: Achieved/Ongoing

Schools continue to provide physical education and opportunities for physical activity consistent with District policy and state requirements.

Goal Area: Stakeholder Engagement

Progress Status: Achieved

Stakeholders are provided opportunities to participate in wellness policy review and implementation through Healthy School Teams, wellness communications, and public reporting requirements.

Findings

The assessment determined that:

1. ACPS is substantially compliant with its Local School Wellness Policy.
 2. The Wellness Policy compares favorably with model wellness policies.
 3. The District has made significant progress toward achieving wellness goals.
 4. Farm to School and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program implementation are notable strengths.
 5. Nutrition education and nutrition promotion activities are effectively integrated into District operations.
 6. Ongoing monitoring and corrective action procedures support continued compliance.
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Recommendations

The District should continue:

- Supporting Farm to School programming.
- Expanding Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program opportunities when funding permits.
- Maintaining Healthy School Teams.
- Promoting Smart Snacks compliance.
- Supporting nutrition education initiatives.
- Monitoring wellness policy implementation.

Future policy revisions should consider:

- Additional language regarding confidentiality of free and reduced-price meal eligibility.
- Explicit language regarding free potable water availability during meal service.
- Reference to USDA Professional Standards training requirements.
- Stronger classroom celebration and wellness language.

Conclusion

Alachua County Public Schools has demonstrated a strong commitment to student health and wellness through comprehensive policy implementation, nutrition education, nutrition promotion, Farm to School programming, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program participation, and compliance monitoring.

The District continues to meet and, in several areas, exceed federal wellness policy requirements while fostering school environments that support healthy eating, physical activity, and lifelong wellness habits for students.

Overall Assessment Rating: Fully Implementing Wellness Policy with Significant Evidence of Progress Toward Goals

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