

V3.0



WellSAT 3.0 Guide

for Improving Local Wellness Policies (LWPs)

FY21-25 Plan Cycle

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The WellSAT 3.0 at a Glance

What is the WellSAT 3.0?

- WellSAT stands for **Wellness School Assessment Tool**, a tool developed by The Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity.
- The WellSAT measures the quality of written Local Wellness Policies (LWPs) across 6 topics. Version 3.0 aligns with the most recent federal LWP guidance and is available at www.wellsat.org.
- The WellSAT also aligns with indicators in the [SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework](#).

What's in this Guide?

- How to complete the WellSAT 3.0 process in fiscal years 2021-25 (FY21-25)
- Appendices: Sample WellSAT 3.0 Scorecard, Interpreting Your WellSAT 3.0 scores, and sample Recommendations.

The WellSAT 3.0 and You

- The WellSAT 3.0 process applies to Local Implementing Agencies (LIAs) who work in the School & Other Youth-Based Systems strategy in any of these Activities: *Policy Revision & Communication*, *Wellness Committees*, *Staff Development*, *School-Based Agriculture*, or *Community Engagement* (families & students only).
- The WellSAT 3.0 is available for LIAs to adopt in any year, FY21-25, as part of the State Evaluation Team (SET)'s menu of assessments.
- Each LWP should be submitted (at least) twice over the 5-year plan cycle, once for you to receive results that assist revisions, and again to measure changes made to your partner District's policy.
- All LIA staff who submit LWPs for WellSAT 3.0 scoring must first complete the WellSAT 3.0 training and certification quiz provided by the SET.

Click [HERE](#) to take the WellSAT 3.0 Certification Training & Quiz.

- The WellSAT assessment process is simple! Just submit the written LWPs to the [State Evaluation Team \(SET\)](#) (or your SET liaison) for WellSAT 3.0 scoring. You will receive back a WellSAT Scorecard and Recommendations within 4-6 weeks.

When Do I Use the WellSAT 3.0 Process?

CAPs. LIAs who plan to support improvements to written LWPs in their Community Action Plans (CAPs) will participate in the WellSAT 3.0 assessment as an essential part of that work. Step 1 of the WellSAT cycle of improvement is to submit the LWP to the SET for scoring; when this is done a second time, it is to resubmit the revised LWP to measure change. *Note: The LIA does not need to learn how to complete the WellSAT assessment; the SET does the scoring for you!*

SEEDS. LIAs report all support for the LWP review & revision process under Childhood: School & Other Youth-Based Systems. Most LIAs report written LWP support in *Policy Revision & Communication* but may also report under these Activities (circumstances):

- Wellness Committees (the LWP establishes a committee, a committee works on LWP revision)
- Staff Development (if partner District is writing staff development into the LWP)
- School-Based Agriculture (if partner District is writing gardens or Farm to School into the LWP)
- Community Engagement (if students or families are directly engaged with LWP revisions)

The LIA Evaluation Plan. Each year, the SET works with LIAs to complete the LIA Evaluation Plan. This plan lists all evaluations that an LIA expects to complete for that fiscal year and helps the LIA staff and the SET track which evaluations have been completed and which remain to be completed each year.

<i>We are working in:</i> Focus Area STRATEGY Activities (track)	<i>Based on our CAPs, we select this assessment to progress our work:</i>	<i>Based on our CAPs & partners' interest, we will do assessments here:</i>	<i>In FY23, we plan to complete at least this many assessments:</i>	<i>We completed the required training (this MUST be yes before starting!):</i>
Childhood School Systems Local Wellness Policy Wellness Committees Staff Development Youth-based Agriculture	WellSAT 3.0	Enter district name(s).	Enter # LWPs you plan to submit.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Not Yet CLICK HERE to log into the SET website & complete the training.

When you complete your LIA Evaluation Plan for **the WellSAT 3.0**, you specify the number of policies you plan to submit for scoring that year. Be sure to:

- Reference your CAPs** to ensure that your LIA Evaluation Plan aligns. Your CAP may or may not mention the WellSAT, but if it mentions *updating or revising the LWP*, that's a WellSAT!
- Verify that the district is interested** in partnering with you *before* finalizing your WellSAT plans. In keeping with the principles of equity, community engagement, and trauma awareness, it is important to *reach out early to gauge the district's interest, availability, and need*.
- Only include the number of LWPs for which you have solid plans.** Later you may over-deliver if you end up working with another Districts or Charter School on their written policy.

WellSAT Preparation

Training & Certification. All LIA staff who submit LWPs for scoring must first be trained and certified. After you pass the certification quiz, the SET is automatically notified that you are certified. *Only after passing the quiz can you submit LWPs to the SET.*

LIAs submit the LWP, but LIA staff do NOT need to know how to score it using the WellSAT 3.0. If you are curious, click [HERE](#) to watch a tutorial.

Federal & State LWP Requirements. The WellSAT assessment compares a District's policy against a "model" policy. **Federal (USDA) and state (ADE) regulations call for this type of LWP assessment at least once every three years.** Districts may need your support in certain years in order to meet this requirement, so it helps to be prepared!

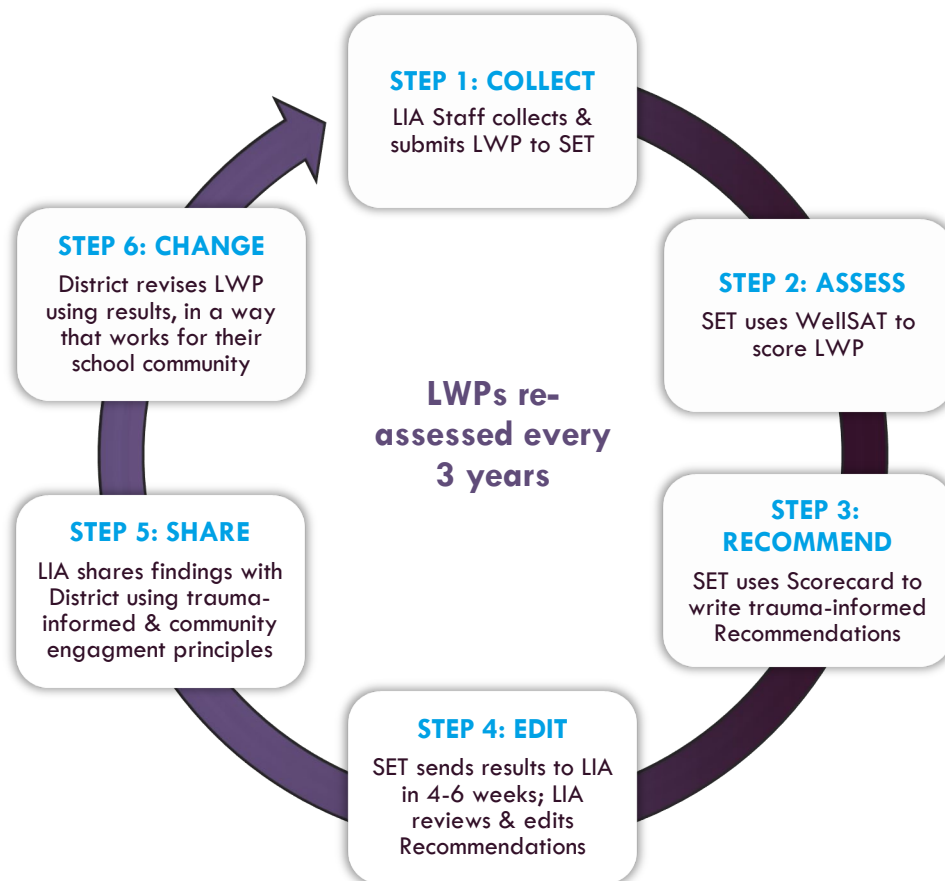
Prep Now to Submit LWPs in the Coming Months!

1. Get certified. Click [HERE](#) to access the recorded training and pass the WellSAT 3.0 Certification Quiz.
2. Start submitting LWPs as soon as you are certified. The SET generally returns Scorecards and Recommendations to you within 4-6 weeks of your submission, however **September of each fiscal year tends to be busy**. If numerous policies are submitted for scoring at the same time, the SET processes these in the order they are received.
3. Let the SET know if you have an upcoming meeting or due date. Although we cannot promise a faster turnaround time, the SET strives to meet you and your partner's needs. **If you have an upcoming meeting during which you plan to review the LWP, let us know and we'll try to return your Scorecard and Recommendations by your deadline!**

The WellSAT Cycle of Improvement:

CARE, Share, Change!

LWPs are important because studies show that, often, stronger policies are associated with healthier school environments and positive student-level outcomes. The WellSAT cycle of improvement helps to strengthen LWPs to make them even more effective! If it helps, you can think of this as the CARE, Share, Change! cycle for LWP improvement: first, we CARE enough to **C**ollect and **A**ssess the LWP, **R**ecommend changes, and **E**dit the recommendations. Then you **S**hare the results with your partner District, and they decide to **C**hange their LWP (maybe with your help!). This process is illustrated below.



1: Collect LWPs. LIAs may collect and submit LWPs after passing the certification quiz. When you collect LWPs, it is important to reach out to District staff to (1) engage them at the start of the change process, a key component of a trauma-informed approach, and (2) ask for the most recent version of their LWP. *If you have obtained the LWP online, verify that it is the most recent, board-approved version.*

District staff may be unsure about what documents constitute their LWP. Please ask for:

- ✱ **The actual LWP.** This may be titled “Wellness Policy,” “Student Wellness,” or something similar.
- ✱ **Any Regulations or Legal References related to the LWP.** These often describe implementation guidelines for broader policy goals (or “how we intend to make the goals happen”). *Note: You do not need to track down legal References cited in LWP’s; the SET does that for you.*

Once you have collected the LWP and any supplemental materials, simply email these as attachments to the [State Evaluation Team \(SET\)](#) (or your SET liaison) for WellSAT 3.0 scoring. Be sure to include the **name of the District or Charter School** and **your LIA**.

If you have a particular timeline for which you are hoping to receive results, you can also include this in your email (ex., you let us know you have a wellness committee meeting in 2 weeks and would like to present WellSAT findings, so we prioritize the scoring).

2: Assess LWP’s. The SET performs the WellSAT 3.0 assessment for you! It includes two scores: *comprehensiveness* measures whether an LWP addresses an item, and *strength* measures how well the LWP addresses the item. Comprehensiveness is always higher than strength because to address an item well, the item must be addressed in the first place.

The WellSAT provides a Scorecard with total comprehensiveness and strength scores, as well as scores for each of the six sections below.

- ✱ Section 1: Nutrition Education
- ✱ Section 2: Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals
- ✱ Section 3: Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages
- ✱ Section 4: Physical Education Physical Activity
- ✱ Section 5: Wellness Promotion and Marketing
- ✱ Section 6: Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

3: Recommend. After scoring, the SET writes short, user-friendly Recommendations using a trauma-informed lens: *We do not assume the AZ Health Zone knows what is best practice for any given District. Instead, we make suggestions for the District to consider.* We also try to avoid making unrealistic or potentially offensive suggestions if we are aware of specific circumstances. For example, if we learn that food-based celebrations are an integral part of a local community, we do not recommend eliminating food at school celebrations.

4: Edit. Within 4-6 weeks of LWP submission, the SET sends you the WellSAT 3.0 Scorecard ([Appendix A](#)). *The Scorecard cannot be edited, but the LIA is encouraged to help the partner District interpret it* if you choose to share the scores with the District. Why? WellSAT scores range from 0 (worst) to 100 (best), but score ranges do not act as letter grades. Instead, the information in [Appendix C](#), “Interpreting Your WellSAT 3.0 Scores,” shows where the LWP scores falls among these categories: **Beginning**, **Developing**, **Accomplished**, or **Exemplary**. These categories are based on average state and national

scores as well as the idea of setting realistic expectations that meet the needs of school communities.

Along with the Scorecard, the SET also sends you customized Recommendations based upon the Scorecard ([Appendix B](#)). LIA staff can keep these as is or can edit them before sharing them back with partners. Here are some tips:

- ✿ **Examine the Scorecard bar graph, section scores, and items in each section.** What stands out to you as already strong? What needs improvement? Of the items or sections that need improvement, are there certain things that you think the District is more eager to address?
- ✿ **Review or edit the Recommendations.** Recommendations are provided as a Word document and can be printed on a double-sided page. As you read through these, ask yourself whether you would like to add, emphasize, re-word, or delete any recommendations. *Hint: Consider your capacity and what you know about the District related to their LWP.*
- ✿ **Review the “Interpreting Your WellSAT 3.0 Scores” document.** You can use this document in [Appendix C](#) to mark where your LWP scores fall along the scale. Consider sharing this document with the district or school if you think it will be helpful.

5: Share. While it is easy to email the WellSAT results to a district or school, consider sharing them back during one-on-one or wellness committee meetings. *Personalized support can be much more effective for LWP revision.*

It is also important to engage the right people. By the time you have results, you will have already been in touch with at least one District representative. Is this the person empowered to make revisions? Is there a wellness committee with which to work? Will your contact person be able to link you to an administrator who can approve changes?

6: Change. Some LIAs assist the revision process by revising the actual policy language for board approval, while others share the Recommendations with District representatives who then develop the revisions.

Some Districts are especially interested in updating their policies just prior to or after a state Administrative Review. Because *the WellSAT 3.0 scoring process meets a state administrative review requirement*, Districts may even reach out to you proactively for help during this time!

What does this mean? The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) conducts triennial Administrative Reviews of districts that participate in Federal School Meals Programs. This includes a review of the District LWP to be sure that it meets federal and state regulations.

One federal regulation that the ADE reviews is the requirement to compare the District LWP against a model LWP every 3 years. This is exactly what the WellSAT 3.0 does, and the ADE knows it! Therefore, *the ADE accepts the WellSAT results as meeting the Model LWP requirement*. This can be very appealing to overburdened districts.

Appendices

A: Sample WellSAT 3.0 Scorecard

B: Sample Recommendations

C: Interpreting Your WellSAT 3.0 Scores

Your District's Scorecard

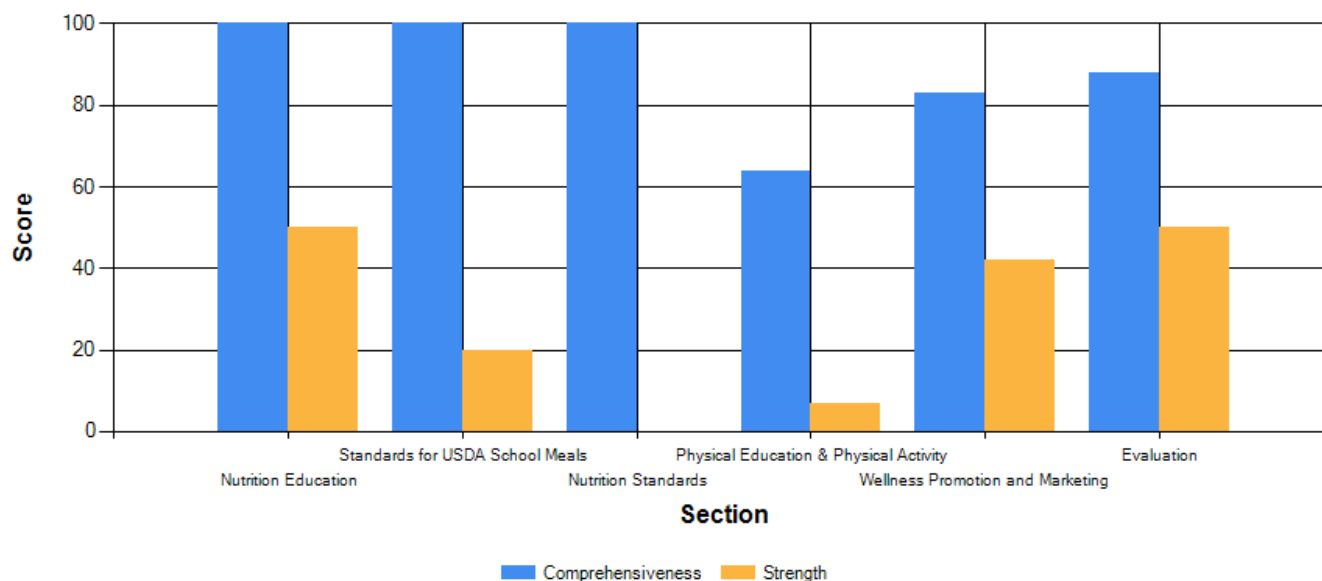
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Congratulations! You have completed the WellSAT. Check out your scorecard below. It contains details of how you scored on each item and section of the assessment. It also provides resources that will help you improve your district's school wellness policy.

Items with a rating of "0" (item not addressed in the policy) or "1" (general or weak statement addressing the item) can be improved by referring to the resource links next to the items. Multiple resources addressing school wellness policy topics are available online. To avoid duplicative information, we have included a small selection, rather than a comprehensive listing.



Version: 3.0

Policy Name: Sample Scorecard








Section 1. Nutrition Education

Rating

NE1	 Includes goals for nutrition education that are designed to promote student wellness.	2
NE2	Nutrition education teaches skills that are behavior focused, interactive, and/or participatory.	2
NE3	All elementary school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education.	2
NE6	Nutrition education is integrated into other subjects beyond health education	1
NE7	Links nutrition education with the school food environment.	1
NE8	 Nutrition education addresses agriculture and the food system.	1
Subtotal for Section 1	Comprehensiveness Score: Count the number of items rated as "1" or "2" and divide this number by 6. Multiply by 100. Do not count an item if the rating is "0."	100
	Strength Score: Count the number of items rated as "2" and divide this number by 6. Multiply by 100.	50

[Click here for Nutrition Education Resources](#)**Section 2. Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs and School Meals**

Rating







SM1	 Assures compliance with USDA nutrition standards for reimbursable school meals.	2
SM2	Addresses access to the USDA School Breakfast Program.	1
SM3	 District takes steps to protect the privacy of students who qualify for free or reduced priced meals.	1
SM4	Addresses how to handle feeding children with unpaid meal balances without stigmatizing them.	1
SM5	Specifies how families are provided information about determining eligibility for free/reduced priced meals.	1
SM6	Specifies strategies to increase participation in school meal programs.	1
SM7	Addresses the amount of "seat time" students have to eat school meals.	1
SM8	 Free drinking water is available during meals.	2
SM9	 Ensures annual training for food and nutrition services staff in accordance with USDA Professional Standards.	1
SM10	 Addresses purchasing local foods for the school meals program.	1

Subtotal for Section 2	Comprehensiveness Score: Count the number of items rated as "1" or "2" and divide this number by 10. Multiply by 100. Do not count an item if the rating is "0."	100
	Strength Score: Count the number of items rated as "2" and divide this number by 10. Multiply by 100.	20

[Click here for School Food Resources](#)

Section 3. Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods and Beverages



Rating

NS1	 Addresses compliance with USDA nutrition standards (commonly referred to as Smart Snacks) for all food and beverages sold to students during the school day.	1
NS2	USDA Smart Snack standards are easily accessed in the policy.	1
NS3	 Regulates food and beverages sold in a la carte.	1
NS4	 Regulates food and beverages sold in vending machines.	1
NS5	 Regulates food and beverages sold in school stores.	1
NS6	 Addresses fundraising with food to be consumed during the school day.	1
NS7	Exemptions for infrequent school-sponsored fundraisers.	1
NS8	Addresses foods and beverages containing caffeine at the high school level.	1
NS9	 Regulates food and beverages served at class parties and other school celebrations in elementary schools.	1
NS10	Addresses nutrition standards for all foods and beverages served to students after the school day, including, before/after care on school grounds, clubs, and after school programming.	1
NS11	Addresses nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold to students after the school day, including before/after care on school grounds, clubs, and after school programming.	1
NS12	Addresses food not being used as a reward.	1
NS13	Addresses availability of free drinking water throughout the school day.	1
Subtotal for Section 3	Comprehensiveness Score: Count the number of items rated as "1" or "2" and divide this number by 13. Multiply by 100. Do not count an item if the rating is "0."	100
	Strength Score: Count the number of items rated as "2" and divide this number by 13. Multiply by 100.	0

[Click here for Nutrition Standards Resources](#)


Section 4. Physical Education and Physical Activity


Rating

PEPA1	 There is a written physical education curriculum for grades K-12.	1
PEPA2	The written physical education curriculum for each grade is aligned with national and/or state physical education standards.	1
PEPA3	Physical education promotes a physically active lifestyle.	1
PEPA4	Addresses time per week of physical education instruction for all elementary school students.	1
PEPA7	Addresses qualifications for physical education teachers for grades K-12.	0
PEPA8	Addresses providing physical education training for physical education teachers.	0
PEPA9	Addresses physical education exemption requirements for all students.	1
PEPA10	Addresses physical education substitution for all students.	1
PEPA11	 Addresses family and community engagement in physical activity opportunities at all schools.	0
PEPA12	 Addresses before and after school physical activity for all students including clubs, intramural, interscholastic opportunities.	0
PEPA13	Addresses recess for all elementary school students.	2
PEPA14	 Addresses physical activity breaks during school.	1
PEPA15	Joint or shared-use agreements for physical activity participation at all schools.	0
PEPA16	District addresses active transport (Safe Routes to School) for all K-12 students who live within walkable/bikeable distance.	1
Subtotal for Section 4	Comprehensiveness Score: Count the number of items rated as "1" or "2" and divide this number by 14. Multiply by 100. Do not count an item if the rating is "0."	64
	Strength Score: Count the number of items rated as "2" and divide this number by 14. Multiply by 100.	7

[Click here for Resources on Physical Activity in Schools](#)**Section 5. Wellness Promotion and Marketing**

Rating






WPM1	Encourages staff to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors.	0
WPM2	 Addresses strategies to support employee wellness.	1


WPM3	Addresses using physical activity as a reward.	1
WPM4	Addresses physical activity not being used as a punishment.	1
WPM5	Addresses physical activity not being withheld as a punishment.	1
WPM6	Specifies marketing to promote healthy food and beverage choices.	1
WPM7	 Restricts marketing on the school campus during the school day to only those foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks standards.	2
WPM8	Specifically addresses marketing on school property and equipment (e.g., signs, scoreboards, sports equipment).	2
WPM9	Specifically addresses marketing on educational materials (e.g., curricula, textbooks, or other printed or electronic educational materials).	0
WPM10	Specifically addresses marketing where food is purchased (e.g., exteriors of vending machines, food and beverage cups and containers, food display racks, coolers, trash and recycling containers).	2
WPM11	Specifically addresses marketing in school publications and media (e.g., advertisements in school publications, school radio stations, in-school television, computer screen savers, school-sponsored Internet sites, and announcements on the public announcement (PA) system).	2
WPM12	Specifically addresses marketing through fundraisers and corporate-incentive programs (e.g., fundraising programs that encourage students and their families to sell, purchase, or consume products and corporate incentive programs that provide funds to schools in exchange for proof of purchases of company products, such as Box Tops for Education).	2
Subtotal for Section 5	Comprehensiveness Score: Count the number of items rated as "1" or "2" and divide this number by 12. Multiply by 100. Do not count an item if the rating is "0."	83
	Strength Score: Count the number of items rated as "2" and divide this number by 12. Multiply by 100.	42

[Click here for Wellness Promotion and Marketing Resources](#)

Section 6. Implementation, Evaluation & Communication

Rating

IEC1	Addresses the establishment of an ongoing district wellness committee.	2
IEC2	 Addresses how all relevant stakeholders (parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, school administrator, and the general public) will participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the local wellness policy.	1
IEC3	 Identifies the officials responsible for the implementation and compliance of the local wellness policy.	2
IEC4	 Addresses making the wellness policy available to the public.	1
IEC5	 Addresses the assessment of district implementation of the local wellness policy at least once every three years.	2
IEC6	 Triennial assessment results will be made available to the public and will include:	2

IEC7	 Addresses a plan for updating policy based on results of the triennial assessment.	1
IEC8	Addresses the establishment of an ongoing school building level wellness committee.	0
Subtotal for Section 6	Comprehensiveness Score: Count the number of items rated as "1" or "2" and divide this number by 8. Multiply by 100. Do not count an item if the rating is "0."	88
	Strength Score: Count the number of items rated as "2" and divide this number by 8. Multiply by 100.	50

[Click here for Resources for Wellness Policy Development, Implementation and Evaluation](#)

Overall District Policy Score

Total Comprehensiveness Add the comprehensiveness scores for each of the six sections above and divide this number by 6.	District Score 89
Total Strength Add the strength scores for each of the six sections above and divide this number by 6.	District Score 28



Federal Requirement



Farm to School



CSPAP



WELLSAT 3.0 SCORECARD RECOMMENDATIONS

SAMPLE Elementary School District

Date | 1/1/2022



Denotes a federal Local Wellness Policy requirement.

Congratulations on completing the AZ Health Zone's WellSAT review of your district's wellness policy. *We compared your policy against a "model" wellness policy and found it to be accomplished!* These recommendations offer ways to make your policy align even more with practices shown to improve student wellness. Because every district is unique, we hope that you can choose from these suggestions in a way that reflects your community's values and goals.


Nutrition Education

Consider whether any of these policy additions would support your wellness goals:

- Nutrition education is *incorporated into general studies*.
- The district provides *education around the local food system* (ex. gardening).

Standards for USDA Child Nutrition Programs & School Meals

Simply adding this web link for the [Nutrition Standards for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs](#) can enhance clarity for families and staff.

If the district is community eligible, the policy can include that statement. If not, consider adding *steps the District takes to protect the privacy of students who qualify for free or reduced priced lunch (FRPL)* , *how families receive information about qualifying for FRPL*, and/or *how unpaid meal balances are handled without stigmatizing students*.

Consider adding *the amount of seat times students have to eat lunch*.

If applicable, consider adding *any local food procurement used by the district*.

Nutrition Standards for Competitive and Other Foods & Beverages

Adding this web link for the [USDA Smart Snack Guidelines](#) or [Arizona Nutrition Standards](#) would increase clarity for families and staff.

If applicable for the district, the policy can include that *food will not be used as a reward*, and/or that *fundraiser exemptions are limited* (ex. to one per year).

Physical Education (PE) & Physical Activity

Where feasible and applicable, the district may wish to add language to:

- Describe the district's use of *a comprehensive, standards-based PE program*.
- Include the *amount of time that elementary and middle school students have for PE*.
- Describe any *certification requirements and/or training for PE teachers*.
- *Minimize PE exemptions and substitutions* (ex. students cannot replace a PE requirement with another course).
- Promote *safe, active transportation* (ex., walking, biking) for students who live nearby.

Wellness Promotion & Marketing

The district may wish to *encourage staff to model healthy eating and physical activity* for students (ex. encourage teachers to be physically active during brain breaks).

Consider whether the district is interested in *using physical activity rewards* (ex. extra recess) and *neither using nor withholding physical activity as punishment* (ex., pushups for bad behavior, no recess for incomplete work).

If applicable, the policy could specify that food and beverage marketing must meet *Smart Snack guidelines for all fundraisers*.

Implementation, Evaluation & Communication



This section mainly includes federal and state requirements. To enhance adherence, the district may wish to add that *the triennial wellness policy assessment also includes a comparison of the SAMPLE policy against a model policy* (this WellSAT meets that requirement, so you are already doing it!).

The district may also wish to add *how their wellness committee actively collects school stakeholders' input* on student wellness topics.

If relevant and feasible, consider establishing *school-level wellness committees* to help implement the wellness policy in each school.

Interpreting Your AZ Health Zone WellSAT Score

WellSAT scores range from 0-100, but we should not interpret scores as letter grades. Instead, use the information below to see where your Wellness Policy score falls. These categories are based on Arizona and national averages and promote achieving *realistic* best practices.

