Triennial Assessment Report: LWP Triennial (5/2026)
District: HERSHEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Introduction

Hershey Public Schools completed its Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP) Triennial Assessment during the spring of 2026. The assessment was conducted by a wellness committee consisting of representatives from the district's food service management company, student council, administration, school nurse, school counselor, teaching staff, and parents. This diverse group reviewed district wellness policies, current practices, and implementation efforts to evaluate compliance with federal requirements and identify areas for continuous improvement.

Overall, Hershey Public Schools continues to demonstrate strong compliance with federal wellness policy requirements and many recognized best practices. The district maintains comprehensive policies related to nutrition education, school meal standards, Smart Snacks compliance, public participation, wellness policy review, and public reporting. The assessment also found that many wellness practices currently exceed what is specifically outlined in district policy, particularly in the areas of nutrition services, physical education, employee wellness, and wellness committee participation.

Compared to the previous triennial assessment, Hershey Public Schools has made meaningful progress toward several established wellness goals. The district successfully expanded access to student mental health services by contracting with a licensed provider to offer support during the summer months. In addition, the school nutrition program increased local food procurement through a partnership with Birdwood Beef, providing locally sourced beef for school meals. A map for Safe Routes to School was produced, though it will be revised to account for the new building entrance. Finally, our Smart Snacks practices as related to students were corrected as we relocated a competitive foods fundraiser that was not aligned to Smart Snacks policies to a keyed teacher workroom, eliminating student access completely. Additionally, we began not allowing snacks and energy/sugary drinks brought from home to be consumed during school hours in classrooms.

Several goals, including updates related to physical education curriculum alignment through our Guaranteed Viable Curriculum and Common Formative Assessment work, and wellness policy revisions, and collaboration projects with the new Food Service Management Company (Oppa!) remain ongoing areas of focus as the district continues to strengthen both policy language and implementation efforts.

The results of this assessment will guide future wellness initiatives and policy updates as Hershey Public Schools remains committed to providing a school environment that supports student health, academic success, and lifelong wellness.

Strong Policies and Aligned Practices

The 2026 Triennial Assessment identified several areas in which Hershey Public Schools has both strong wellness policy language and fully implemented practices that align with those policies. These results demonstrate the district's commitment to creating and maintaining a healthy school environment that supports student wellness and academic success.

A number of federal wellness policy requirements were identified as areas of strength. The district maintains specific goals for nutrition education that promote student wellness and ensures that all reimbursable school meals meet federal nutrition standards and meal pattern requirements. Hershey Public Schools also maintains full compliance with USDA Smart Snacks standards for competitive foods, including foods and beverages sold through vending machines, school stores, and school-sponsored fundraisers during the school day.

The district continues to support strong stakeholder involvement through an active wellness committee that includes representation from food service, students, parents, school health professionals, educators, and administrators. The wellness policy is made available to the public, implementation is evaluated at least once every three years, and the district publicly reports the results of its triennial assessment. Additionally, the wellness policy has been reviewed and revised based on findings from previous assessments, demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement.

Additional strengths identified through the assessment include providing students with consistent access to free drinking water throughout the school day and offering opportunities for physical activity before and after school through school-sponsored programs and activities.

Many of these areas were also identified as strengths during the district's previous wellness policy assessment. The current assessment demonstrates that Hershey Public Schools has successfully maintained these high standards while continuing to implement wellness practices that align with federal requirements and district wellness goals. The district's ongoing commitment to nutrition education, healthy school meals, physical activity opportunities, stakeholder engagement, and policy review processes continues to support the health and well-being of all students.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR1	Does the district have specific goals for nutrition education designed to promote student wellness?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR2	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**	☆

Triennial Assessment Report: LWP Triennial (5/2026)
District: HERSHEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FR3	Does your school take steps to protect the privacy of students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR6	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**	**2**	☆
FR8	Do all foods and beverages sold in vending machines meet Smart Snack standards?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR9	Do all foods and beverages sold in school stores during the school day meet Smart Snack standards?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR10	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**	**2**	☆
FR13	Which groups are represented on the district-level wellness committee?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR14	Is there an official who is responsible for the implementation and compliance with the wellness policy at the building level for each school?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR15	How is the wellness policy made available to the public?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR16	Is wellness policy implementation evaluated every three years?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR17	What is included in the triennial assessment report to the public?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR18	Has the wellness policy been revised based on the previous triennial assessment?	**2**	**2**	☆
NES3	Does your school or district provide information to families about eligibility for free or reduced-price meals?	**2**	**2**	☆
NES4	Does your school use strategies to maximize participation in the school breakfast program and/or school lunch program?	**2**	**2**	☆
NES7	 In your district, is it a priority to procure locally produced foods for school meals?	**2**	**2**	☆
NES8	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?	**2**	**2**	☆
NES14	Do students have consistent and easy access to free drinking water throughout the school day?	**2**	**2**	☆
PEPA1	 Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is implemented consistently for every grade?	**2**	**2**	☆

PEPA2	Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is aligned with national and/or state standards?	**2**	**2**	☆
PEPA12	Are there opportunities for all students to engage in physical activity before and after school?	**2**	**2**	☆

Create Practice Implementation Plan

The 2026 Triennial Assessment identified several areas where Hershey Public Schools has established strong wellness policy language but has opportunities to strengthen implementation practices. Federal requirements included in this section are food and beverage marketing during the school day (FR12). Additional areas identified for improvement include the use of marketing strategies to promote healthy food and beverage choices (NES5) and the integration of nutrition education into academic subjects beyond health education (NE5).

To address FR12 and NES5, the wellness committee, food service management company, and building administration will review current marketing practices and develop procedures to ensure that all food and beverage marketing on campus aligns with Smart Snacks standards while increasing promotion of healthy meal options and nutritious food choices. This review will include school publications, signage, announcements, digital communications, and other promotional materials.

To address NE5, building administrators, teachers, and the school counselor will collaborate to identify opportunities for nutrition education to be integrated into multiple content areas, including science, agriculture, and other appropriate subjects. Resources and instructional examples will be provided to staff to support implementation. The district Food Service Management Company will play a critical role in supporting this process. The district Guaranteed Viable Curriculum initiative will also support this goal.

The district wellness committee will be responsible for creating the practice implementation plan during the 2026-2027 school year. The plan will be developed by December 2026 and implementation will begin during the second semester of the 2026-2027 school year. Full implementation is expected by the beginning of the 2027-2028 school year.

Success will be measured through twice annual wellness committee reviews, documentation of marketing and communication practices, evidence of nutrition education integration across subject areas, and progress monitoring during future wellness committee meetings. These measures will help ensure that district practices fully align with the expectations outlined in the Local School Wellness Policy and support continuous improvement in student wellness.

		Policy Score	**Practice Score**	
FR12	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**	
NES5	Are marketing strategies used to promote healthy food and beverage choices in school?	**2**	**1**	
NE5	Is nutrition education integrated into other subjects beyond health education?	**2**	**1**	
PEPA4	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in elementary school receive?	**2**	**0**	

Update Policies

The superintendent, district administration, food service management company representatives, physical education staff, school wellness committee members, and the Board of Education will be responsible for reviewing the Local School Wellness Policy and identifying areas where policy language may be strengthened. As part of this process, the district will consult with its legal counsel to determine whether revisions to policy language are appropriate and consistent with current federal and state requirements, district practices, and board policy procedures.

Areas identified for review include student privacy protections related to free and reduced-price meal eligibility, availability of free drinking water during

meals, annual USDA training requirements for nutrition staff, school meal program participation strategies, unpaid meal balance procedures, Farm-to-School initiatives, nutrition education, physical education curriculum and standards alignment, employee wellness initiatives, and district wellness committee responsibilities.

The wellness committee will review assessment results and current district practices during the 2026-2027 school year. Recommendations for policy revisions, if deemed necessary following consultation with legal counsel, will be presented to the Board of Education for consideration. Any approved revisions will be implemented according to the district's board policy adoption process.

Because the district is already implementing many of the practices identified in this section, the primary focus will be determining whether existing policy language accurately reflects current practices and whether additional clarification or revisions are needed. Ongoing monitoring through wellness committee meetings, annual program reviews, and future triennial assessments will be used to evaluate continued alignment between policy and practice.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR4	Is free (i.e., no cost to students) drinking water available to students during meals?	**1**	**2**	
FR5	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?	**1**	**2**	
FR7	Do all a la carte foods and beverages sold in the cafeteria meet Smart Snacks standards?	**1**	**2**	
NES1	Does the district offer breakfast every day to all students?	**1**	**2**	
NES2	Does your school take steps to address feeding students with unpaid meal balances without stigmatizing them?	**0**	**2**	
NES6	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**	**2**	
NES10	Are foods or beverages containing caffeine sold at the high school level?	**1**	**2**	
NES12	Do all foods or beverages SOLD (not served) to students after the school day on school grounds (including aftercare, clubs, and afterschool programming) meet federal nutrition standards (e.g., CACFP or Smart Snacks)?	**0**	**2**	
NE2	Do all elementary school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	**1**	**2**	
NE3	Do all middle school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	**1**	**2**	
NE7	Does nutrition education address agriculture and the food system?	**0**	**2**	
PEPA3	How does your physical education program promote a physically active lifestyle?	**1**	**2**	

Triennial Assessment Report: LWP Triennial (5/2026)
District: HERSHEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PEPA5	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in middle school receive?	**1**	**2**	
PEPA7	Are all physical education classes taught by state certified/licensed teachers who are endorsed to teach physical education?	**0**	**2**	
PEPA8	Is ongoing professional development offered every year for PE teachers that is relevant and specific to physical education?	**1**	**2**	
PEPA9	What percentage of students do you estimate do not take PE each year due to exemptions?	**0**	**2**	
PEPA10	What percentage of students do you estimate do not take PE each year due to substitutions?	**0**	**2**	
PEPA13	Is there daily recess for all grades in elementary school?	**1**	**2**	
PEPA14	Do teachers provide regular physical activity breaks for students in the classroom?	**1**	**2**	
PEPA15	Does the district have “joint-use” or “shared-use” agreements?	**1**	**2**	
PEPA17	Are teachers encouraged to use physical activity as a reward for students?	**0**	**2**	
EW1	Are there strategies used by the school to support employee wellness?	**1**	**2**	
EW2	Are school staff encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors in front of students?	**0**	**2**	
IC1	Is there an active district-level wellness committee?	**0**	**2**	

Opportunities for Growth

The 2026 Triennial Assessment identified several areas where Hershey Public Schools has opportunities to strengthen wellness practices and evaluate whether additional policy language may be appropriate. One federal requirement, guidance regarding foods and beverages served at classroom celebrations and other school-sponsored celebrations (FR11), was included in this section.

Areas for improvement include classroom celebrations, foods served during after-school programs, the use of food as a reward, collaboration between nutrition services staff and teachers, reduction in the use of physical activity as punishment, increase in family and community engagement, and establishing active wellness committees work.

The district wellness committee, administrators, food service representatives, teachers, and other stakeholders will review these areas during the 2026-2027 school year and develop recommendations to strengthen implementation. The district will also consult with legal counsel to determine whether revisions to the Local School Wellness Policy are appropriate and consistent with current requirements and district practices.

Recommendations will be developed by spring 2027 and presented to the Board of Education for consideration. Any approved policy revisions and practice improvements will be implemented during the 2027-2028 school year. Success will be measured through wellness committee reviews, program documentation, and future triennial assessments.

Triennial Assessment Report: LWP Triennial (5/2026)
District: HERSHEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR11	Does your district regulate foods and beverages served at class parties and other school celebrations in elementary schools?	**1**	**1**	
NES11	Do all foods or beverages SERVED (not sold) to students after the school day on school grounds (including aftercare, clubs, and afterschool programming) meet federal nutrition standards (e.g., CACFP or Smart Snacks)?	**0**	**1**	
NES13	Do teachers or school staff give students food as a reward?	**1**	**1**	
NE1	Are skills-based, behavior-focused, and interactive/participatory methods used in nutrition education to develop student skills?	**1**	**1**	
NE4	Do all high school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	**1**	**1**	
NE6	Do school nutrition services staff members use the following methods to collaborate with teachers to reinforce nutrition education lessons taught in the classroom?	**0**	**1**	
PEPA6	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in high school receive?	**1**	**1**	
PEPA11	 Are there opportunities for families and community members to engage in physical activity at school?	**1**	**1**	
PEPA16	What proportion of students walk or bike to school?	**1**	**1**	
PEPA18	Do teachers ever use physical activity as a punishment?	**0**	**0**	
PEPA19	Do teachers ever withhold physical activity as a classroom management tool?	**0**	**0**	

Conclusion

The 2026 Triennial Assessment demonstrates Hershey Public Schools' continued commitment to supporting student health and wellness. The district maintains strong compliance with many federal wellness requirements, particularly in the areas of nutrition education, school meal standards, Smart Snacks compliance, stakeholder involvement, public reporting, access to drinking water, and opportunities for physical activity.

The assessment also identified areas where district practices can be strengthened and where policy language may be reviewed to better reflect current practices. The wellness committee will continue working with district stakeholders and legal counsel to evaluate potential improvements and ensure ongoing compliance with federal and state requirements.

Hershey Public Schools remains committed to providing a healthy learning environment that supports the physical, social, emotional, and academic well-being of all students. The results of this assessment will help guide future wellness initiatives and continuous improvement efforts throughout the district.

Triennial Assessment Report: LWP Triennial (5/2026)
District: HERSHEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Key

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

Triennial Assessment Report: LWP Triennial (5/2026)
District: HERSHEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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