

Triennial Assessment Report

Gates County Public Schools Student Wellness Policy 6140

General Information

An assessment was conducted to measure the effectiveness of the Gates County Public School District (GCPS) Student Wellness Policy 6140. An assessment of this policy will be conducted every 3 years, at a minimum. This assessment will be shared with members of the Gates County community to understand shared progress on wellness efforts in the District. This report will focus on three domains: 1) compliance with the wellness policy, 2) how the wellness policy compares to model wellness policies, and 3) progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy. The results will be made available to the public through the Gates County Public Schools website.

Assessment Information

Domain 1: Compliance with the Wellness Policy

The last survey to assess compliance with the Wellness Policy was in August, 2017. An extensive survey was sent to members of the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), which consist of parents, school nurses, school administrators, a guidance counselor, and partners from community agencies. The survey was also sent to Principals and the Director School Nutrition for feedback. Some of the questions included in the survey included questions on: School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), school health and education, physical activities and physical education, nutrition education, and food and beverage practices. The full survey is available upon request.

Summary of Assessment Domain 1:

The Wellness Policy requires that the Board maintain a School Health Advisory Council (SHAC). The School Health Advisory Council, in the Gates County School District meets every third Thursday of each month during the academic school year. The purpose of this council is to “help plan, update, implement, promote, and monitor this policy as well as to address other health and nutrition issues within the school system”. The committee members are:

- Dr. Paula Simpson Director of School Nutrition, simpsonpj@gatescountyschools.net
- Ms. Andrea Clark, Department of Social Services aclark@gatescountync.gov
- Ms. Ashley Miller, Health Department amiller@arhs-nc.org
- Ms. Heather Boyce, School Nurse boycehm@gatescountyschools.net
- Ms. Joan Bundy Guidance Counselor, bundyjh@gatescountyschools.net
- Ms. Hope Eley, Trillium Health Services heley@ecbhme.org

- Ms. Ann Jacox, School Nurse jacoxat@gatescountyschools.net
- Ms. Karen Riddick , Health Department kriddick@arhs-nc.org
- Ms. Kay Wiggins, School Nurse wigginsk@gatescountyschools.net
- Ms. Tammy Boone, Administrator – Assistant Superintendent
boonetr@gatescountyschools.net

The committee reviewed and implemented policies, shared information, and utilized resources that would support student’s wellness in Gates County. The school nurses have played an integral part of this committee regarding student’s health. Changes to policies were reviewed, discussed, and implemented during the academic school year. The Concussion and Head Injury Policy was the most prevailing. The committee also discussed school policies, mental health, services provided by Trillium Health, safe schools, nutrition education for students and staff, sanitation, diabetes awareness and prevention, dental and vision services, Health and fitness, flu season and preventive measures, job fairs, services provided by the local health department and the Department of Social Services, and grant opportunities that would support nutrition, health, and physical fitness. The committee was very active in the changes that were made to the Wellness Policy, August 2017, in order for Gates County to maintain its compliance. There were a variety of resources utilized in the community that supported student wellness in addition to what is provided by the school district. Agencies used as resources were:

- The Department of Social Services
- Albemarle Regional Health Department
- Gates County Health Department
- Trillium Health Services
- Gates County Community Center
- Adolescent Care Center

All schools in Gates County have implemented and putting to use the health education curriculum, which includes physical education and physical activities, and providing nutrition education to students. Based on the feedback received from the survey, it is evident that all students in Gates County Schools have the opportunity to participate in physical activities, as a part of the school systems curriculum. The goal is for all students on the elementary level, to have 150 minutes weekly of quality physical education with a certified physical education teacher. The goal is for all students on the middle and high school level, to have 225 minutes weekly of Healthful Living Education, divided equally between health and physical education with a certified health and physical education teachers. The results of the survey indicated that these goals were being met. A variety of standard-based physical education curriculum and nutrition education is being taught at each school site within the classroom and food service, this includes the Healthful Living Standard Course of Study.

The Food and Beverage Policy is being enforced. Water is made available to students during meal service and throughout the day. The Student Wellness Policy is made available to parents, to educate them on the goals of the student wellness, and to make them aware of the availability of water at school sites. Food is not being used as a means of reward or punishment. The Food and Beverage Policy has been made public to the Gates County community, the policy is made available on the district website. However, continued community outreach efforts, can continue to improve the community awareness, and involvement with this policy.

Domain 2: Comparison of Wellness Policy to Model Policies

The Gates County Public Schools, Student Wellness Policy 6140, underwent its last revision during the 2017-2018, academic school year. The goal of the review was to assess compliance with the wellness policy requirements, including the changes required by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA); final rule published July, 2016. During the review, the policy was compared to the “Alliance for a Healthier Generation Model Wellness Policy” and the State Board recommendations.

Summary of Assessment Domain 2:

The language in our Wellness Policy was very similar to the language in the model policy. Wording such as, health education, nutrition promotion and education, physical activity and education, drinking water, competitive foods to include, classroom parties and celebrations, vending machines, fundraisers, and, food, snacks, and beverages from a la carte menus. There were some changes made after comparing our Wellness Policy to the model wellness policy to comply with federal, state, and local guidelines.

School Lunch, Breakfast, and Snack Programs:

Gates County Schools, School Nutrition Program, has promoted healthy food and beverage choices for all students in the school district and encouraged participation in all school meals. The Director of School Nutrition ensures that the program is operating in compliance with the rules and regulations for serving reimbursable meals in the school cafeterias.

Competitive Foods:

Each school site is familiar with the policy on competitive foods. All schools have a copy of the Smart Snacks Options Declaration, which all schools are operating under Option 4. The nutrition standards for food and beverages available on school campuses have been updated to be consistent with the final rule. This rule is being enforced at each school site. Vending machines are not accessible to students during the school day.

Other Foods Available on the School Campus During the School Day and After the School Day:

School Principals have established rules consistent with this policy regarding foods and beverages brought from home for classroom events or parties during the school day or extracurricular activities during the school day. All schools are in compliance with the sale of food and beverages for fundraising activities. All fundraising activities are in compliance of the Smart Snack Rule, from midnight until 30 minutes after the dismissal bell rings, which are conducted after the last lunch is served.

Food and Beverage Marketing:

The Alliance For Healthier Generation (2016), states that “Food and beverage marketing is defined as advertising and other promotions in schools. Food and beverage marketing often includes an oral, written, or graphic statements made for the purpose of promoting the sale of a food or beverage product made by the producer, manufacturer, seller or any other entity with a commercial interest in the product” (p.11).

Gates County is committed to providing students with healthy nutritious food and beverage choices by marketing only those foods and beverages that are allowed to be sold on the campus during the school day. In order maintain compliance, new language was implemented in the wellness policy on food marketing, which replaces prior language on food advertising. The language clearly states that only foods and beverages that meet the Smart Snacks standards may be marketed or advertised on school campuses during the school day.

Physical Education and Physical Activity:

A part of student wellness, is to promote lifelong physical activity and educate all students on how to lead a healthy life style, by teaching them the importance staying physically fit. Gates County provides students opportunities to participate in physical education and physical activities, by using an age-appropriate physical education curriculum, which aligns with state standards for physical education. Elementary students are provided 150 minutes weekly of quality physical education with a certified physical education teacher. Middle and high school students, are provided 225 minutes weekly of Healthful Living Education, divided equally between health and physical education with a certified health and physical education teacher. The results of the survey indicated that all schools in Gates County were in compliance with the policy.

Other School Based Activities to Promote Wellness:

In addition to the standards outlined in the policy, the Board adopted additional goals to promote wellness. In order to support these goals, schools provide a clean and safe

environment with adequate time for students to enjoy their meals, drinking water is available to students at all meal periods and throughout the school day, and schools do not use food as a reward or punishment. Professional development is provided to all the School Nutrition Staff throughout the academic school year.

Updating the Public on Wellness Policy Initiatives:

Steps were taken to educate the public on the Board goals for the Student Wellness. Community members were invited to serve on the School Health Advisory Council to oversee and support the goals of the policy. The Student Wellness Policy can be found on the Gates County Public Schools District website. The policy includes language that calls attention to the implementation and evaluation of the policy. Gates County School District is committed to being open to community feedback.

In order to strengthen community awareness, non-electronic mechanisms, and such presentations to parents during parent meetings or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all parents are informed of the contents of the Student Wellness Policy can be put into practice. A copy of this report will also be posted on the district website for the public's review.

Summary of Assessment Domain 3:

Domain 3: Progress Made in Attaining the Goals of the Wellness Policy

Gates County School District has made a lot of progress in "Attaining the Goals of the Wellness Policy". The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) has been very instrumental in this process. The committee met regularly during the academic year, to discuss the goals of the Wellness Policy and its compliance. The School Nutrition Department has been very productive in maintaining a safe and healthy eating environment for students and staff. The sanitation score has been outstanding during the academic school year. The ratings in each school have been ranging from 99-100 %. Nutritional standards for breakfast, lunch, and after school snacks were implemented and followed in order to meet federal, state, and local guidelines. All schools are in compliance with the Smart Snacks final rule. The District has met the goal of having water available to students throughout the day. The vending machines are not accessible to students during the school day. For physical activities and physical education, each school site has been in compliance in meeting the weekly requirements.

The school Health Advisory Council (SHAC) has agreed to make continuous efforts in meeting the goals of our Student Wellness Policy by working attentively with the lead wellness official for Gates County Public Schools.

Reference

Alliance For A Healthier Generation (2016). Model Wellness Policy, Retrieved from https://www.healthiergeneration.org/_assetwtqdwu/14-6372_Model