



23 John Street • Waterbury, CT 06708 • (203) 575-0659 • www.ccswaterbury.org

June 24, 2025

Dear CCS Community,

Children's Community School is fortunate to be able to support our community's wellness needs in a variety of ways, including providing daily breakfast, lunch, and snacks for all of our students through federal and state school nutrition programs. As a requirement for participation in these programs, Children's Community School is required to establish policies and practices for school wellness in its Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP). A triennial assessment of the LSWP is required, and the pages that follow include further details on CCS's review of our policies and practices.

Partnering with the University of Connecticut's Rudd Center of Food Policy & Obesity, the Connecticut State Department of Education provided tools for CCS to assess its written policies (WellSAT 3.0) and implemented practices (WellSAT-I). The Executive Director completed the WellSAT 3.0 online, and the WellSAT-I was completed through interviews with the CCS Principal, Katherin Sniffin, and our Nutrition Services Director, Carlos Flores. With these two "scorecards" in hand, we examined the strengths and weaknesses of both our written policies and our implemented practices by comparing our scores on each of the assessment tools. The findings are included in this document. In reviewing the result, we have updated our Local School Wellness Policy, and as the new school year gets underway, we will continue to examine how our implemented practices can best promote health and wellness.

To summarize this experience and what we learned, it was a valuable process in which we saw that our school is highlighted with strong wellness practices, however, our written policies and implementation were able to be improved.

As you will see on the following pages, our updated Local School Wellness Policy is far more comprehensive and robust, thanks to what we learned through the triennial assessment process. As an educational institution, we believe that we must always continue to learn, and we believe that this document reflects Children's Community School's deep commitment to that belief.

Sincerely,

Kelly Anelli
Executive Director
Children's Community School



Where learning and Self-empowerment are the keys to a brighter future



Triennial Assessment Report: Children's Community School Triennial Assessment 2025 (6/2025)

District: Children's Community School

Introduction

Children's Community School is fortunate to be able to support our community's wellness needs in a variety of ways, including providing daily breakfast, lunch, and snacks for all of our students through federal and state school nutrition programs. As a requirement for participation in these programs, Children's Community School is required to establish policies and practices for school wellness in its Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP). A triennial assessment of the LSWP is required, and the pages that follow include further details on CCS's review of our policies and practices.

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Strong Policies and Aligned Practices

Though CCS had many opportunities to improve, the school overall has a lot to be proud of as we continue to strive to meet all of the requirements. Some requirements are a bit more difficult to meet and take more time given the structure of our school. However, we are exploring resources and partnerships with other school similar to our structure to assist and share resources.

There are multiple federal requirements reflected in this section.

Unfortunately, we were not able to access our previous assessment, however, we are positive that we improved in multiple areas. We will continue to do so as well.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR4	Is free (i.e., no cost to students) drinking water available to students during meals?	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	☆

**Triennial Assessment Report: Children's Community School Triennial
Assessment 2025 (6/2025)
District: Children's Community School**

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	☆
NES1	Does the district offer breakfast every day to all students?	2	2	☆
NES4	Does your school use strategies to maximize participation in the school breakfast program and/or school lunch program?	2	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?	2	2	☆
NES14	Do students have consistent and easy access to free drinking water throughout the school day?	2	2	☆
NE1	Are skills-based, behavior-focused, and interactive/participatory methods used in nutrition education to develop student skills?	2	2	☆
NE2	Do all elementary school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	2	2	☆
NE3	Do all middle school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	2	2	☆
NE5	Is nutrition education integrated into other subjects beyond health education?	2	2	☆
PEPA4	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in elementary school receive?	2	2	☆


Triennial Assessment Report: Children's Community School Triennial Assessment 2025 (6/2025)

District: Children's Community School

PEPA7	Are all physical education classes taught by state certified/licensed teachers who are endorsed to teach physical education?	2	2	☆
PEPA13	Is there daily recess for all grades in elementary school?	2	2	☆
PEPA18	Do teachers ever use physical activity as a punishment?	2	2	☆


Create Practice Implementation Plan

By utilizing the wellness committee and identifying stakeholders, the committee can review the practice verse policy and provide feedback and updates for better alignment. WE will start this process at the beginning of the school year (August 2025) and ensure that the group meets monthly to review and implement the practices aligned with the updated policy.












		Policy Score	Practice Score	
PEPA16	What proportion of students walk or bike to school?	2	1	

Update Policies








The Executive Director will be responsible for updating the policy and ensuring implementation. The ED will work in partnership with the Principal, the Director of Nutrition and the Director of PreK. We are very fortunate to be an independent non-profit school that can move very quickly in implementing and updating policies to ensure CCS meets the the federal requirements and continues to strive to be a champion in all components of the wellness policy.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR1	Does the district have specific goals for nutrition education designed to promote student wellness?	1	2	

**Triennial Assessment Report: Children's Community School Triennial
Assessment 2025 (6/2025)
District: Children's Community School**



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?	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	
NES5	Are marketing strategies used to promote healthy food and beverage choices in school?	1	2	
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)?	1	2	
NES13	Do teachers or school staff give students food as a reward?	1	2	
NE7	 Does nutrition education address agriculture and the food system?	1	2	
PEPA1	 Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is implemented consistently for every grade?	1	2	
PEPA2	Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is aligned with national and/or state standards?	1	2	
PEPA3	How does your physical education program promote a physically active lifestyle?	1	2	

**Triennial Assessment Report: Children's Community School Triennial
Assessment 2025 (6/2025)
District: Children's Community School**











PEPA5	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in middle school receive?	1	2	
PEPA14	 Do teachers provide regular physical activity breaks for students in the classroom?	1	2	
PEPA19	Do teachers ever withhold physical activity as a classroom management tool?	1	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	

Opportunities for Growth

CCS has already started to work in advancing these practices and policies. CCS has entered a contract with a local food hub that provides local produce, poultry, and dairy products. This forward contracting will be a step in the right direction to procuring local foods. CCS will also work to hold monthly parent and community activities to offer physical education and physical activities such as jump roping, basketball tournaments, dance and yoga classes. The ED along with the gym teacher and principal will identify activities nights for students and families on a monthly basis where the gym teacher will organize the event or we will identify outside resources to assist. This will take place at the beginning of the 2025 school year. The wellness committee will be established and begin meeting by the start of the school year as well.

		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	
FR13	Which groups are represented on the district-level wellness committee?	0	1	

Triennial Assessment Report: Children's Community School Triennial Assessment 2025 (6/2025)
District: Children's Community School


NES7	 In your district, is it a priority to procure locally produced foods for school meals?	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?	1	1	
PEPA8	Is ongoing professional development offered every year for PE teachers that is relevant and specific to physical education?	1	1	
PEPA11	 Are there opportunities for families and community members to engage in physical activity at school?	1	1	
PEPA17	 Are teachers encouraged to use physical activity as a reward for students?	0	1	
IC1	Is there an active district-level wellness committee?	1	1	
IC2	Is there an active school-level wellness committee?	1	1	

Conclusion

To summarize this experience and what we learned, it was a valuable process in which we saw that our school is highlighted with strong wellness practices, however, our written policies and implementation were able to be improved.

We have updated Local School Wellness Policy to be far more comprehensive and robust, thanks to what we learned through the triennial assessment process. As an educational institution, we believe that we must always continue to learn, and we believe that this document reflects Children's Community School's deep commitment to that belief.

Key

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

Triennial Assessment Report: Children's Community School Triennial Assessment 2025 (6/2025)

District: Children's Community School



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

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1. **Mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 9410
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. **Fax:**
(202) 690-7442; or
3. **Email:**
program.intake@usda.gov

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Local School Wellness Policy

Updated Spring 2025

Effective July 1, 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Children’s Community School Wellness Policy	3
Policy Goals	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
I. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Served on Campus	3
School Meals	3
Meal Pricing	4
Meal Times & Scheduling	4
Qualifications of School Food Service Staff	4
Sharing of Foods and Beverages	4
Foods and Beverages Sold Individually	5
Fundraising Activities	5
Snacks	5
Rewards	5
Celebrations & School-Sponsored Events	5
II. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing	5
Nutrition Education and Promotion	5
Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting	6
Communications with Parents	6
Food Marketing in Schools	6
Staff Wellness	7
III. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education	7
Regular Physical Education (P.E.)	7
Daily Recess	7
Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School	7
Physical Activity and Punishment	7
Safe Routes to School	7
IV. Monitoring and Policy Review	7

Children's Community School Wellness Policy

Children's Community School (CCS) believes that children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive. We believe good health fosters student attendance and education. CCS takes seriously its obligations to help address the childhood obesity epidemic, and we recognize that healthy eating and physical activity habits begin in childhood, helping our young people to avoid a life that is troubled by risk factors that can lead to fatal conditions such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes. We recognize that many factors contribute to young people choosing foods that lack nutritional value and/or choosing a lifestyle that does not include sufficient physical activity. Children's Community School is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of Children's Community School that:

- CCS will engage students, families, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing the school's nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages served through the breakfast, lunch, and snack programs will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of nutritious and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- CCS will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

I. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Served on Campus

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- make water available to all students during meals;
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (as deemed by USDA); and

- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

CCS will engage students and parents/guardians, through a variety of methods, in selecting foods to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, CCS will make available, upon written request, information about the nutritional content of meals.

To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- CCS will operate CCS Breakfast Program.
- CCS will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation.
- CCS will notify parents and students of the availability of CCS Breakfast Program.
- CCS will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, and other means.

Meal Pricing

Children's Community School operates under the Community Eligibility Provision, meaning that all students qualify for free breakfast, lunch, and snack. For students in the Pre-Kindergarten program, as well as those attending Summer Bridges, all meals and snacks will be provided during summer months when school/programs are in session.

Meal Times & Scheduling

When considering meal times and scheduling, CCS is committed to:

- providing students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- scheduling meal periods at appropriate times;
- not scheduling tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- when possible, scheduling lunch periods to follow recess periods for students in elementary grades
- providing students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks;
- taking reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs.
-

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff

The USDA Professional Standards for State and Local Nutrition Programs are followed to ensure that professional development in the area of food and nutrition is provided for food service directors, managers and staff. New and current food service directors must have at least 12 hours; new and current managers must have at least 10 hours; new and current staff must have at least 6 hours.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

All members of the CCS community are prohibited from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually

To promote the healthiest possible nutrition for all members of our community, and because our School provides access to free breakfast, lunch and snacks, Children's Community School strictly prohibits the sale of any food or beverages during school hours, including Before Care and after school programs.

Fundraising Activities

To support our student's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities will not involve food or will make every effort to use only foods that meet the nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages, according to applicable state and/or federal guidelines. In the event that a fundraising activity includes foods that do not meet these standards, notice to this fact will be given to all students and parents/guardians. CCS will make every effort to encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. CCS will assess when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations.

Rewards

CCS will minimize its use of foods or beverages, especially those that do not meet state and/or federal nutrition standards for foods and beverages, as rewards for academic performance or good behavior. In the event that a reward does include a food or beverage that does not meet the aforementioned standards, notice to this fact will be given to all students and parents/guardians. Similarly, Children's Community School will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations & School-Sponsored Events

Children's Community School will limit celebrations that involve food during school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party will include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet state and/or federal nutrition standards. CCS does not permit any outside food provided by parents/guardians. The same standards apply to School-sponsored events such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances.

II. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion

Children's Community School aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. As such, CCS will make every effort to provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- promotes local fruits and vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e., at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as playing video games and/or watching television;
- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.
- Physical education class is offered to every student.

Communications with Parents

Children's Community School will support parents/guardians' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. From time to time, CCS will send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. In addition, the CCS will provide opportunities for parents/guardians to share their healthy food practices with others in the CCS community.

CCS will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents/guardians' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

Food Marketing in Schools

As a general rule, Children's Community School does not promote any particular products, brands, and/or companies. Marketing and/or promotion of food or beverage products at the school, or in any aspect of school operations, must meet relevant state and/or federal nutrition guidelines.

Staff Wellness

Children's Community School highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. CCS will utilize surveys annually to solicit recommendations to CCS Administration regarding matters of staff wellness.

III. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Regular Physical Education (P.E.)

All students, including students with disabilities and/or special health-care needs, will receive regular physical education for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a qualified teacher. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess

All students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which moderate to vigorous physical activity is encouraged verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

CCS will make every effort to avoid extended periods (i.e., periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, CCS will give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School

When available, CCS will provide information to students about families about physical activity clubs or intramural programs, including opportunities for interscholastic sports programs.

Physical Activity and Punishment

Teachers and other School and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

Safe Routes to School

When safe and practical, Children's Community School encourages students and families to consider walking or riding a bicycle to school. Working with appropriate parties in the City of Waterbury, CCS will help to identify needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school.

IV. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring

The Executive Director, or her/his designee, will ensure compliance with established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

School food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the Executive Director. CCS will comply with all required practices for ensuring compliance and best practices related to school nutrition policies and procedures. Similarly, CCS will complete a triennial assessment of its School Wellness Policy. A triennial progress report with

information about each school's wellness related activities will be shared with the entire school community.



Local School Wellness Triennial Assessment

Prior to updating Children's Community School's Local School Wellness Policy (see pages 2-10 above), CCS completed the WellSAT 3.0 to assess the previous LSWP. The results of the WellSAT 3.0 can be accessed via this [link](#).

To assess practice implementation at CCS, interviews were conducted with CCS Principal, Katherin Sniffin, and Nutrition Program Director, Barbara; those interviews were scored using the WellSAT-I tool. This scorecard is accessible via this [link](#).

As a culminating activity in the Triennial Assessment, Children's Community School was challenged to identify connections between policy and practice. Based on comparing the scores between WellSAT 3.0 and WellSAT-I, CCS was challenged to identify specific items in these four categories:

- Strong Policies & Aligned Practices
- Create Practice Implementation Plan
- Update Policies
- Opportunities for Growth

You can find the full version of "Worksheet 3" via this [link](#). In accordance with the USDA's LSWP requirements for public notification, Children's Community School must share the results of the Strong Policies & Aligned Practices section, as well as the Create Practice Implementation Plan section. CCS is also required to report any federal requirements that are identified in the Update Policies and Opportunities for Growth sections. The following narratives summarize the required reports:

Strong Policies & Aligned Practices

As noted in the introductory letter, CCS is very pleased with the implementation of strong practices in our school nutrition programs. Until this point, our written policies have not matched the strength of our practices. As such, there were no items identified in Section 1. In our next triennial assessment, we anticipate this to be our strongest area.

Create Practice Implementation Plan

CCS can improve its overall connection between policy and practice by further examining ways of increasing students' physical activity time. Competing demands and limited time each day pose di cult challenges for meeting suggested time amounts for physical activity. The Principal is exploring ways to increase this, and CCS as a whole is looking for ways to increase physical activity time for all of our students, including before, during, and after school.

Update Policies

As noted, this is probably the area where we have the most room to improve, and we believe that the updated Local School Wellness Policy addresses the deficiencies found in our previous policy. The new policy makes clear the school's commitment to intentional nutrition education across disciplines and at all grade levels. Policies have been updated to fully address compliance with USDA standards for all school nutrition programs; again, our practices in this area are very strong, and now our policies are too. CCS continues to limit opportunities for competitive foods to exist in our school environment, and our policies have been updated to justify our approach and help students and families make healthy choices. Similarly, our policies around Wellness Promotion & Marketing have been updated to provide clarity regarding our stance and obligations, and to provide guidance for all in our school community. The establishment of CCS Wellness Committee will help us to properly navigate the ongoing implementation and assessment processes.

Opportunities for Growth

As a learning institution, we believe in lifelong learning, and we are committed to growing as an institution, just as we expect our students to commit themselves to growth as individuals. We can strengthen our policies and practices surrounding nutrition education, and the Principal and School Wellness Committee will examine this as a top priority. We can improve on utilizing local foods when possible. We definitely have opportunities for growth in physical education and physical activity; with support from partner organizations and grant funders, we are exploring ways to increase physical education, while also introducing more physical activity before, during, and after school, including interscholastic sports. With guidance from the newly revised Local School Wellness Policy, our ability to implement, evaluate, and communicate matters of school nutrition and wellness are poised to show drastic improvements.