

Edgecombe County Public Schools

Wellness Policy Implementation Report (2025)

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to summarize findings from the **2025 Edgecombe County Public Schools (ECPS) Wellness Policy Assessment**, completed by school administrators across the district.

This assessment aligns with the district's **Local Wellness Policy** and the federal **triennial assessment requirement**. It evaluates how effectively schools are implementing wellness practices related to **nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and staff and community engagement**. The findings provide valuable insight into what ECPS is doing well and where continued growth is needed to support a culture of health and wellness across all schools.

Nutrition Standards and Practices

All schools that responded (100%) indicated that they provide both school breakfast and lunch programs that meet **federal and state nutrition guidelines**. Likewise, all respondents reported that students are given at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, and the majority promote healthy eating through **marketing, classroom lessons, or schoolwide events**.

Several schools mentioned specific initiatives such as **School Lunch Week celebrations, social media messaging, and nutrition-focused bulletin boards**.

Nearly all respondents confirmed that their schools **limit or prohibit food and beverage marketing** that does not align with district nutrition standards.

Family engagement in healthy eating was evident through activities such as School Lunch Week events, the use of student planners to share wellness reminders, and parent communication through newsletters and school websites.

Physical Activity Opportunities

Most schools (approximately 80%) reported providing **regular opportunities for physical activity** during the school day, including **PE classes, recess, brain breaks, and structured movement sessions**.

About three-quarters of respondents indicated that teachers are encouraged to include **activity breaks** during instructional time, reinforcing the district's commitment to promoting movement throughout the school day.

Additionally, several schools offer **before- and after-school physical activity options** through clubs, athletics, or recreational programs. These practices reflect a strong emphasis on the importance of physical wellness as a component of academic success.

Mental and Emotional Health Supports

All schools (100%) reported promoting **mental and emotional health** through programs such as **advisory sessions, social-emotional learning (SEL) lessons, and wellness awareness events**.

Common resources cited include **school counselors, social workers, administrators, and partnerships with local mental health agencies**. This demonstrates strong alignment with the district's commitment to supporting the **whole child** by addressing academic, emotional, and behavioral well-being in tandem.

Student Health Advisory Council (SHAC) Awareness and Engagement

Awareness of the **Student Health Advisory Council (SHAC)** varied across schools. Approximately half of the respondents indicated that they were *somewhat familiar* or *not familiar* with SHAC's role, while others noted that they were aware of its function and expressed interest in greater involvement.

Several schools shared a desire to learn more about how SHAC influences district wellness initiatives and how school-level staff can participate in the council's work. This highlights an opportunity for SHAC to strengthen its visibility and communication across all campuses.

Implementation Barriers and Resource Needs

Common barriers identified by schools include:

- Limited staff time to coordinate and monitor wellness activities
- Insufficient funding or access to wellness materials and equipment

- A need for additional professional development on nutrition, physical activity, and mental health integration

Schools also expressed interest in:

- **Funding for wellness equipment and resources**
- **Partnerships with local health agencies**
- **Sample lesson plans and communication tools** to support schoolwide implementation

These insights can help SHAC and district leaders prioritize professional learning, grant funding, and community partnerships to strengthen wellness outcomes.

Summary of Findings

Overall, **Edgecombe County Public Schools** is successfully implementing many aspects of the district's **Wellness Policy**. Nutrition standards are consistently met, and schools provide students with access to balanced meals and adequate time to eat. Physical activity and mental health supports are embedded into the school day, reflecting a district-wide culture of care for students' overall well-being.

Strengths:

- Consistent compliance with nutrition guidelines
- Strong commitment to physical and emotional wellness
- Creative engagement through events and schoolwide initiatives

Areas for Growth:

- Increase staff and student awareness of SHAC's role
- Expand professional development on wellness-related best practices •

Address resource and time limitations that hinder program expansion

By continuing to build on these strengths and addressing identified gaps, **Edgecombe County Public Schools** can further its mission to provide environments where every student can thrive—academically, physically, and emotionally.