

The New Academy Charter School

Local School Wellness Policy Triennial Assessment

2026

Prepared using the Pennsylvania Department of Education Wellness Policy Assessment Tool and Report Template (Rev. March 2025)

LEA / School	The New Academy Charter School
Grades	8–12
Date Completed	September 24, 2026
Reviewer / Wellness Policy Lead	Kristen Harpster, Executive Director

Purpose and Overall Findings

Purpose. Federal regulations require an LEA participating in the National School Lunch Program to assess its Local School Wellness Policy at least once every three years. The assessment measures compliance with the local policy, compares the policy with a model wellness policy, and describes progress toward wellness goals.

Overall finding. The New Academy Charter School's current policy contains strong provisions for wellness leadership, triennial assessment, public notification, nutrition education and promotion, physical education, school meal environments, and general nutrition standards. The assessment also identifies several areas where the written policy should be strengthened to more explicitly reflect the current PDE model, particularly Smart Snacks/competitive foods, food and beverage marketing, standards for foods offered outside reimbursable meals, and several optional physical-activity and school-based wellness practices.

Implementation note. Implementation ratings below are a working administrative assessment based on the school's current policy and known school practices. Items marked "Partial" should be supported with documentation or confirmed by the Wellness Committee before the assessment is posted publicly.

1. Public Involvement, Notification, and Assessment

Assessment Item	Policy	Implementation	Notes / Evidence
LEA official/designee is responsible for wellness policy compliance.	Yes	Full	Executive Director/designee oversees implementation and compliance.
Triennial assessment is completed at least once every three years.	Yes	Full	This 2026 assessment documents the current review cycle.
Triennial assessment results are made publicly available in an accessible manner.	Yes	Partial	Post this completed assessment on the school website and retain evidence of posting.
Assessment results are used at least every three years to update/modify the policy as needed.	Yes	Full	Policy requires updates based on assessment results, changing needs, and new guidance.
Public is informed at least annually about policy contents, updates, and implementation; policy is accessible.	Yes	Partial	Policy specifies website, handbook, newsletters, posted notices, or other communications. Retain annual notice evidence.
Required wellness-policy records are retained.	Yes	Partial	Maintain policy, public notices, stakeholder outreach, triennial assessment, and evidence that results were made public.
Wellness Committee/stakeholder participation supports development, implementation, review, and update.	Yes	Partial	Policy names principal, parent/guardian, school health professional, PE teacher, and public. Continue inviting food service staff, students, Board members, administrators, and other stakeholders.

2. Nutrition Education

Assessment Item	Policy	Implementation	Notes / Evidence
Nutrition education is provided within PDE's sequential, comprehensive health education standards.	Yes	Full	Policy aligns nutrition education to Health, Safety and Physical Education standards.
School teaches, models, encourages, and supports healthy eating.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed in policy.
All students receive knowledge and skills needed for healthy lives.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed in policy.
Age-appropriate nutrition education and activities are provided at the high-school level.	Yes	Full	Policy covers grades 8–12 and requires age-appropriate lessons.
Nutrition curriculum includes behavior-focused skills such as menu planning, labels, and media awareness.	Yes	Full	Explicitly listed in policy.
School food service and nutrition education classes work together as a learning laboratory.	No	Partial	Good practice to document if occurring; consider adding to policy.
Nutrition education is integrated into subjects beyond health/PE.	No	Partial	May occur through classroom instruction; not explicitly required by current policy.
Nutrition and physical activity are linked to reinforce lifelong lifestyle balance.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed in policy.
Staff providing nutrition education receive appropriate training/professional development.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed in policy.
Families/community are engaged in nutrition education efforts.	Partial	Partial	Policy provides parent health/nutrition resources but could more explicitly address participation in nutrition education.

3. Nutrition Promotion

Assessment Item	Policy	Implementation	Notes / Evidence
Evidence-based nutrition messages are used and participation in school meal programs is encouraged.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed in policy.
Farm to School activities are supported where possible.	Yes	Partial	Policy encourages gardens, taste testing, local foods, and agriculture education where possible.
School cooperates with community organizations on nutrition-related student projects.	Yes	Partial	Policy requires cooperation; retain examples when activities occur.
Behavioral economics techniques are used in the cafeteria to encourage healthy choices and reduce waste.	Yes	Partial	Policy directs food service personnel to review and implement research-based techniques.
Consistent nutrition messages are displayed/disseminated across school settings.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed in policy.
Staff model healthy eating and avoid unhealthy food examples in lessons.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed in policy.
Health and nutrition resources are offered to parents/guardians.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed in policy.

4. Physical Activity

Assessment Item	Policy	Implementation	Notes / Evidence
Developmentally appropriate physical-activity opportunities are provided during the school day.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed in policy.

School contributes to opportunities for students to accumulate 60 minutes of physical activity daily.	No	Partial	Not stated as a specific policy goal; students receive PE and other activity opportunities.
Activities beyond PE (clubs, athletics, before/after-school activities, etc.) are offered.	No	Partial	Not specifically listed in policy; document actual offerings if used.
Physical/social environment encourages safe and enjoyable activity.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed in policy.
Extended periods of inactivity are discouraged.	Yes	Full	Policy discourages inactivity of two hours or more.
Classroom physical-activity breaks are provided.	No	Partial	Not specifically addressed in policy.
Before/after-school programs include physical activity.	No	Partial	Not specifically addressed in policy.
Community partnerships support lifelong physical activity.	No	Partial	Not specifically addressed in policy.
Physical activity is not used as punishment.	Yes	Full	Explicitly prohibited.
Physical activity is not withheld as punishment.	Yes	Full	Explicitly prohibited.
Walking/biking to school is encouraged.	No	Not in place	Not included in current policy; transportation model may limit applicability.
School physical-activity facilities are encouraged for family/community use outside school hours.	No	Not in place	Not included in current policy.

5. Physical Education

Assessment Item	Policy	Implementation	Notes / Evidence
PE program is consistent with state academic standards.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
All students participate in PE.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
PE promotes skills and knowledge for lifelong physical activity.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Students learn, practice, and are assessed on developmentally appropriate PE skills.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
PE curriculum promotes team and individual activities.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Comprehensive PE course provides planned instruction toward proficiency.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Local assessment system tracks student progress on state PE standards.	Yes	Full	Required by policy; retain curriculum/gradebook evidence.
Students are active as much as possible in PE; documented accommodations are provided.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Safe and adequate PE equipment, facilities, and resources are provided.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
PE is taught by certified health/PE teachers.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Professional development is provided for PE staff.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
PE class ratios are comparable to other courses.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Physical activity is not used or withheld as punishment in PE.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.

6. Other School-Based Wellness Activities

Assessment Item	Policy	Implementation	Notes / Evidence
Free drinking water is accessible during meals and throughout the	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.

school day.			
School nutrition staff meet applicable hiring criteria and federal requirements.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Required continuing education is provided to school nutrition staff.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Adequate space is provided for eating and serving meals.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Students have a safe and clean meal environment.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Students receive adequate time to eat and meals are scheduled at appropriate hours.	Yes	Full	Policy specifies 10 minutes sit-down breakfast and 20 minutes lunch.
Alternate breakfast service models are used to increase participation.	No	Partial	Not required by current policy; document current breakfast service model.
Students have access to handwashing or sanitizing before meals.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Food service operation is limited to authorized staff/students.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Nutrition content of school meals is communicated to the school community.	No	Partial	Not specifically stated in policy.
Students/parents participate in menu selection through taste tests/surveys.	No	Partial	Taste testing is referenced under Farm to School; parent/student menu input is not explicit.
Outside funding/programs are used to enhance wellness where possible.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
All staff receive training on wellness policy components.	Yes	Partial	Policy requires training; retain agendas/sign-in sheets or staff communications.
School-based activities are planned with wellness goals in mind.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Fundraising approval supports healthy eating/student wellness.	No	Partial	Not specifically addressed in current policy.
School community members are encouraged to be positive wellness role models.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Parents/guardians receive information supporting healthy diet and physical activity.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Healthy learning environment/indoor environmental health is maintained.	Yes	Full	Policy requires a healthy school environment consistent with applicable laws.

7. Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods and Beverages at School

Assessment Item	Policy	Implementation	Notes / Evidence
Foods/beverages offered at school are considered in light of student health and obesity prevention.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
NSLP/SBP meals comply with federal meal standards.	Yes	Full	Explicitly addressed.
Healthy food/beverage options are addressed for school-sponsored events.	No	Partial	Consider adding explicit standards for dances, celebrations, and other school events.
Competitive foods sold during the school day meet USDA Smart Snacks standards.	No	Partial	Federal requirement should be stated explicitly in the written policy; verify all sales/vending/fundraisers in practice.
Food fundraiser limits and PDE exemption procedures are addressed.	No	Partial	Not explicitly addressed in current policy.
Written local standards address foods/beverages offered free to students (rewards, parties, celebrations, shared snacks).	Partial	Partial	Policy prohibits shared classroom snacks but does not fully address rewards, parties, and celebrations.

Nonfood ideas and healthy alternatives are provided to staff and families.	No	Partial	Consider developing and distributing a short healthy celebrations/rewards guide.
Only Smart Snacks-compliant foods/beverages may be marketed or promoted to students during the school day.	No	Partial	Add explicit food and beverage marketing language to the written policy.

Progress Made in Attaining Wellness Policy Goals

- The school maintains a wellness policy that assigns responsibility for implementation and oversight to the Executive Director/designee and establishes a Wellness Committee.
- Nutrition education and promotion expectations are embedded in the policy for grades 8–12, including healthy eating, nutrition-label/media-awareness skills, evidence-based nutrition messaging, and parent resources.
- The policy establishes a standards-aligned physical education program for all students and emphasizes lifelong physical activity, safe participation, accommodations, and appropriate equipment and staffing.
- The school's meal environment expectations include free drinking water, sanitation access, adequate meal space, appropriate meal periods, minimum sit-down meal times, and compliance with federal school meal standards.
- The 2026 triennial review identified policy areas for continued improvement, especially explicit Smart Snacks requirements, food/beverage marketing restrictions, fundraising/competitive-food procedures, standards for celebrations and food rewards, and documentation of annual public/stakeholder outreach.

Recommended Action Plan for 2026–2027

Action	Key Task	Timeline	Responsible Party
1. Update written policy	Add explicit USDA Smart Snacks, competitive-food/fundraising, food and beverage marketing, celebrations/rewards, and school-event nutrition language.	By December 2026	Executive Director / Wellness Committee / Board
2. Document public notice	Post the current Wellness Policy and this Triennial Assessment on the school website and retain screenshots or copies of notices.	Fall 2026 and annually	Executive Director/designee
3. Expand stakeholder outreach	Invite food service staff, students, parents/guardians, PE/health staff, Board representation, administrators, and community members to participate in wellness review.	At least annually	Wellness Committee
4. Strengthen implementation evidence	Maintain meeting agendas, sign-in sheets, staff training records, meal-program documentation, curriculum evidence, and communications supporting assessment ratings.	Ongoing	Wellness Policy Lead
5. Review progress	Review action items and implementation status and recommend policy/program changes to the Board as appropriate.	Annually	Executive Director / Wellness Committee

Public Access and Recordkeeping

Upon final review by the Wellness Committee/administration, this assessment should be made available to the public in an accessible and easily understood manner. The school should retain the completed assessment, evidence of public posting/notification, stakeholder outreach documentation, and the current written Wellness Policy as part of its School Food Authority records.

Sources Used

- The New Academy Charter School, School Wellness Policy (current policy reviewed for this assessment).
- Pennsylvania Department of Education, Wellness Policy Assessment Tool and Report Template, Rev. March 2025.

- Pennsylvania Department of Education, Local School Wellness Policy Information.
- Federal Local School Wellness Policy requirements, 7 CFR § 210.31.

Reviewed by:	Date:
Kristen Harpster, Executive Director	September 24, 2026