



Office of the State
Superintendent of Education
Division of Health and Wellness

SY 2026-2029 LOCAL WELLNESS POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) developed this Local Wellness Policy (LWP) template to support local education agencies (LEAs) in developing high-quality LWPs. This template is structured to support LEAs in addressing all necessary LWP elements stipulated in local and federal law. This template also includes additional school health requirements and recommendations that LEAs may choose to incorporate into their policies (see *Local Wellness Policy Guide* for more detail). LEAs may choose to utilize this template when developing an LWP.

WHOLE SCHOOL, WHOLE COMMUNITY, WHOLE CHILD MODEL

This LWP template is intended to offer an outline for an LEA's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities exist for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing distractions. This LWP template is structured to align with the 10 components of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model. The WSCC model promotes a holistic approach to school health and integrates health services and programs into the day-to-day school and student life as a tool for improving academic achievement and learning. The WSCC model is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) framework for addressing health in schools. The WSCC model is student-centered and emphasizes the role of the community in supporting the school, the connections between health and academic achievement, and the importance of evidence-based school policies and practices (see *Local Wellness Policy Guide* for more detail).

The 10 WSCC components are:

1. Health Education
2. Physical Education and Physical Activity
3. Nutrition Environment and Services
4. Physical Environment
5. Social and Emotional Climate
6. Counseling, Psychological & Social Services
7. Health Services
8. Employee Wellness
9. Family Engagement
10. Community Involvement



HOW TO USE THIS TEMPLATE

This template is an optional tool to support LEAs in developing a high-quality LWP. LEAs may choose to incorporate some or all components of this template when developing their policy. LEAs must ensure all mandatory local and federal LWP components are included in their final policy (see *Local Wellness Policy Guide* for more detail).

This template is divided into 10 components in alignment with the WSCC model. Each component includes content that is color coded based whether it is a mandatory LWP element that must be implemented **and** included in the document (color: ● **yellow**), a local school health requirement, which must be implemented, that is highly recommended to be included though inclusion is not required (color: ● **green**), or additional recommended content that is not required, but encouraged to be included (color: ● **blue**). All ● **yellow** elements must be included in an LEA's LWP and all ● **green** and ● **blue** elements are recommended for inclusion. All elements, when combined together, support a high-quality, well-rounded LWP aligned to the CDC WSCC model.

In order to meet the mandatory ● **yellow** requirements of an LWP, LEAs should ensure the policy covers the following while completing this template:

- students in the school have access to healthy foods throughout the school day – both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus/day – in accordance with federal and state nutrition standards;
- students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;
- students have opportunities to be physically active before, during and after school;
- schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;
- school staff are encouraged and supported to practice healthy nutrition and physical activity behaviors in and out of school;
- the community is engaged in supporting the work of the LEA in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and
- the LEA establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, evaluation, and communication about the policy and its established goals and objectives.

This template is intended to offer a WSCC-aligned outline for an LEA's policy that would apply to all its students, staff, and schools. At a minimum, LEAs should identify specific measurable goals and outcomes within each ● **yellow** section of the template. LEAs should include additional language or modify this template, where appropriate, so that it accurately reflects specific needs (e.g., removing references to grades not served by the LEA). LEAs may choose to amend the introductory language to each WSCC component and should enter the LEA's name wherever the text reads [LEA NAME]. For support in completing the template or understanding LWP requirements, please contact OSSE at OSSE.schoolhealth@dc.gov.

LOCAL WELLNESS POLICY TEMPLATE

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES Local Wellness Policy

SCHOOL YEAR 2026-2029

This Local Wellness Policy (LWP) outlines DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. This policy applies to all students, staff and schools in DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES. Specific measurable goals and outcomes are identified within each section below.

LOCAL WELLNESS POLICY OFFICIAL(S)

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES has identified the following LEA or school official(s) responsible for the implementation and oversight of the LWP to ensure each school's compliance with the policy (7 CFR 210.31(c)(4)).

NAME	POSITION TITLE	EMAIL ADDRESS	LWP ROLE
Erika Swant	Supervisory Dietitian	erika.swant@dc.gov	Wellness Coordinator

TRIENNIAL PROGRESS ASSESSMENTS

At least once every three years, DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES will conduct a Triennial Progress Assessment and develop a report that reviews each DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES schools' compliance with this LWP. This assessment and report will include a full description of the progress made in attaining the goals of DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES's LWP.

The positions/persons responsible for managing the triennial assessment and report is Erika Swant, Supervisory Dietitian. The above referenced individual(s) will monitor DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES schools' compliance with this LWP and develop the triennial progress reports. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES schools will actively notify households/families of the availability of the triennial progress report.

ESTABLISH A PLAN TO MEASURE THE IMPACT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LOCAL WELLNESS POLICY

Federal LWP Requirement (7 CFR 210.31(c)(6)) Provide a description of the plan for measuring the implementation of the local school wellness policy, and for reporting local school wellness policy content and implementation issues to the public.

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES will evaluate compliance and effectiveness of this LWP using existing data collection tools, such as, but not limited to:

DYRS will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the Local Wellness Policy (LWP) through ongoing data collection, program reviews, and structured wellness oversight. The Wellness Steering Committee will serve as the primary body responsible for evaluating policy implementation, ensuring compliance, and guiding revisions.

DYRS will use the following data collection tools and processes to evaluate the LWP:

- Menu and meal production records
- POS meal counts
- USDA menu compliance documentation
- Local Food Tracking Logs (Healthy Schools Act)
- Nutrition education and culinary group attendance records
- Physical activity schedules and participation logs
- Health education and CPR instruction records (MAA)
- Behavioral health and counseling service delivery documentation
- Wellness Committee meeting notes and progress trackers
- Feedback gathered from students, staff, Care Coordinators, and families
- Results from internal audits, OSSE monitoring notes, and site visit reports

The Wellness Steering Committee will:

- Conduct an annual review of LWP implementation and compliance.

- Assess alignment of the policy with model wellness policies.
- Identify progress toward wellness goals and areas needing improvement.
- Ensure assessment results are made available to the public in accordance with federal requirements.
- Participate in the required triennial assessment of the LWP for the 2026–2029 school years.

The Wellness Coordinator will facilitate the work of the Steering Committee by organizing meetings, coordinating data collection, compiling assessment information, and preparing reports for public posting. The Coordinator will support the Committee's decisionmaking process but will not be solely responsible for conducting all evaluation activities.

The State Education Office (OSSE) will continue to monitor adherence to the Local Wellness Policy during routine reviews and site visits to ensure federal and local compliance.

HEALTH EDUCATION

Health education is comprised of several aspects of wellbeing, including mental health, physical fitness, sexual health and safety.¹ High-quality health education and promotion of school-based health activities can help improve students' quality of life, increase healthy behaviors, and reduce risky behaviors throughout students' lives.² DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES recognizes the connection between good health, quality of life, and readiness to learn. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES is committed to providing high-quality health education and promoting health policies and activities that result in students that exhibit healthier behaviors.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38–821.01\(1F\)](#)); ([DC Official Code § 38–824.02\(b\)](#))

Students in kindergarten through Grade 8 receive health education instruction aligned with [OSSE Health Education Standards](#).

Maya Angelou Academy provides health education instruction aligned with the OSSE Health Education Standards, as required by the Healthy Schools Act. Because DYRS facilities primarily serve middle- and high-school-aged youth, health education is delivered through age-appropriate, evidence-based curricula designed to meet OSSE standards while addressing the developmental needs of older adolescents. Instruction emphasizes topics such as physical and emotional well-being, nutrition, substance-use prevention, healthy relationships, mental health awareness, and personal safety.

DYRS and Maya Angelou Academy work collaboratively to support the implementation of health education, ensuring that instructional content is responsive to the needs of the student population and integrated with behavioral health, counseling, and wellness initiatives provided through the facility.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38–824.02\(b\)\(2\)](#))

Schools serving students in kindergarten through Grade 8 provide an average of 75 minutes of health education per week.

Maya Angelou Academy primarily serves students in Grades 6 through 12. For the small number of students in Grade 6–8, the school provides health education aligned with OSSE Health Education Standards. When Grade 6–8 students are enrolled, Maya Angelou Academy ensures they receive an average of 75 minutes of health education instruction per week, as required by the Healthy Schools Act. Because DYRS facilities rarely serve students younger than Grade 6, instructional planning is focused on middle- and high-school content and delivered through age-appropriate, evidence-based curricula.

School Safety Omnibus Amendment Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38–824.02\(b-2\)\(1\)\(A\)](#))

Students in kindergarten through Grade 12 receive age- and developmentally appropriate, evidence-based, and culturally responsive instruction on recognizing and reporting sexual misconduct and child abuse, setting and respecting appropriate personal and body boundaries and privacy rules, communicating with adults about concerns regarding body boundaries or privacy violations, the meaning of consent, developing and maintaining healthy relationships, and other appropriate topics to support healthy development of students.

Maya Angelou Academy provides age-appropriate, evidence-based, and culturally responsive instruction to students on topics related to personal safety, recognizing and reporting sexual misconduct and child abuse, setting and respecting personal boundaries, understanding privacy rules, communicating concerns to trusted adults, and developing healthy relationships. Instruction is aligned with DC requirements and is delivered through the school's health education curriculum, counseling programs, and behavioral health services.

DYRS and Maya Angelou Academy collaborate to reinforce these concepts through mental health intake screening, individual and group counseling, trauma-informed practices, and multidisciplinary support teams. Education on personal safety and healthy relationships is integrated across academic, therapeutic, and residential programming to ensure students receive consistent, developmentally appropriate guidance throughout their placement.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). Healthy Schools: Components of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCSS). Retrieved from www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/wscs/components.htm

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021). Healthy Schools: Improving School Health. Retrieved from: www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/schoolhealth.htm

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38–824.02\(b-1\)\(1\)](#))

High school health instruction provides cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) instruction in at least one health class necessary for graduation for students in grades 9-12.

Maya Angelou Academy provides CPR instruction to students in Grades 9–12 as part of required high school health education. CPR training is delivered through an age-appropriate, evidence-based curriculum aligned with OSSE Health Education Standards and integrated within at least one health class necessary for graduation. Instruction supports student understanding of emergency response skills and reinforces broader school safety and wellness practices. DYRS and MAA collaborate to ensure CPR content is accessible, relevant, and developmentally appropriate for the student population served in the secure facility environment.

Graduation Requirement ([5-A DCMR § 2203.3\(b\)](#))

Provide the necessary 1.5 Carnegie units in health/physical education to meet graduation requirement.

In order to meet high school graduation requirements, students must earn 1.5 Carnegie Units in health and physical education. DYRS and Maya Angelou Academy ensure that all students in grades 9–12 receive the required 1.5 units through appropriately structured health and PE course instruction

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

School-based physical education and physical activity programs offer the best opportunity for students to learn the key skills and gain knowledge needed to establish and sustain a healthy and active lifestyle.³ High-quality physical education improves a student's readiness to learn by contributing to motor skill development, boosting self-esteem, reducing stress and anxiety, and improving breathing and blood circulation which result in better concentration, improved behavior, and stronger academic success.⁴

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES] recognizes the connection between a physically active life and a child's positive physical, mental, and emotional development. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES understands the importance of engaging its students in opportunities and activities that are empowering, regardless of ability, developmental status, or culture. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES is committed to providing students with high-quality instruction to reinforce physically active behavior during school and throughout life.

Federal and Local LWP Requirement ([7 CFR 210.31\(c\)\(1\)](#)); ([DC Official Code § 38–826.01\(b\)\(C\)](#))

LEAs must identify specific goals for increasing physical activity and other school-based activities that promote student wellness through physical activity. In developing these goals, LEAs must review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques.

DYRS is committed to increasing youth physical activity and promoting overall wellness through safe, structured, and developmentally appropriate movement opportunities. All physical activity programming will be guided by evidence based practices and adapted to meet the security and operational needs of the facility.

Youth will have access to physical activity opportunities in outdoor yards, gymnasiums, and multipurpose rooms whenever feasible. Activities may include basketball, handball, running, calisthenics, fitness routines, and other structured movement experiences appropriate for the space and security level.

DYRS will ensure that:

- Recreation Therapy and Physical Education staff provide programming that demonstrates the connection between physical activity, nutrition, and overall health.
- At least fifty percent of scheduled physical education or gym time is dedicated to active physical movement.
- Staff appropriately modify or limit physical activity during air quality alerts, extreme heat, or other hazardous weather conditions to protect youth health and safety.
- Physical activity is never used as a form of punishment and is not withheld as punishment.

To strengthen physical activity opportunities while maintaining safety, DYRS will also strive to:

- Increase the use of structured small group activity sessions, which support safety and allow youth more frequent physical activity even during higher risk periods.
- Implement short, structured movement breaks within daily programming when feasible, particularly during long seated or classroom periods.
- Encourage trauma responsive physical activity practices that promote regulation, predictability, and youth engagement.
- Explore funding opportunities for safe, low risk equipment (e.g., foam balls, resistance bands, cones, floor markers) pending approval from secure staff and in alignment with facility safety protocols.
- Offer indoor, space limited activity alternatives during periods of restricted movement or inclement weather.
- Incorporate youth feedback to help identify preferred physical activities and reduce behavior related barriers to participation.

Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

DYRS will work to identify realistic indicators of physical activity access, which may include:

- Tracking how often youth receive scheduled courtyard time, gym access, or structured physical activity periods.
- Reviewing the frequency of incentive based physical activity events and exploring opportunities to increase their availability.
- Assessing barriers to physical activity (e.g., staffing, security alerts, space limitations) and identifying strategies to address them.
- Collaborating with Recreation Therapy, Education, and Secure Staff to refine physical activity opportunities within operational capacity.

The Wellness Coordinator will support this process by facilitating discussions, gathering available data, and coordinating with program staff, recognizing that implementation and monitoring require collaboration across multiple teams.

3 Shape America. (2019). Is it Physical Education or Physical Activity? Understanding the Difference. Retrieved from www.shapeamerica.org/publications/resources/teachingtools/qualitype/pa_vs_pe.aspx

4 US Department of Health and Human Services. *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, 2nd edition. Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services; 2018. Retrieved from health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical_Activity_Guidelines_2nd_edition.pdf

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38–821.01\(6C\)](#); ([DC Official Code § 38–824.02\(a\)](#))

Students in kindergarten through Grade 8 receive physical education instruction aligned with [OSSE Physical Education Standards](#).

Maya Angelou Academy primarily serves students in Grades 6 through 12. For the limited number of students enrolled in Grades 6–8, the school provides physical education instruction aligned with OSSE Physical Education Standards, as required by the Healthy Schools Act. Instruction for middle-school students focuses on age-appropriate fitness, movement skills, personal safety, and wellness concepts consistent with OSSE expectations and adapted to the secure-facility environment.

Because DYRS facilities do not typically serve students in kindergarten through Grade 5, physical education programming is designed with a middle- and high-school focus and implemented by qualified physical education staff in collaboration with behavioral health, recreation therapy, and school personnel.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38–824.02\(a\)\(1\)\(A\)](#)); ([DC Official Code § 38–824.02\(a\)\(2\)\(A\)](#)) Schools serving students in kindergarten through Grade 5 shall set a goal to provide an average of 150 minutes of physical education per week, and at least one recess of at least 20 minutes per day. If a school serving students in kindergarten through Grade 5 provides less than an average of 90 minutes of physical education per week, it shall submit an action plan to OSSE detailing efforts it will take to increase physical education before beginning the next school year.

N/A - No students K-5.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38–824.02\(a\)\(1\)\(A\)](#)); ([DC Official Code § 38–824.02\(a\)\(2\)\(A\)](#))

Schools serving students in grades 6-8 shall set a goal to provide an average of 225 minutes of physical education per week, and at least one recess of at least 20 minutes per day. If a school serving students in grades 6-8 provides less than an average of 135 minutes of physical education per week, it shall submit an action plan to OSSE detailing efforts it will take to increase physical education before beginning the next school year.

Maya Angelou Academy primarily serves students in Grades 6 through 12. For the limited number of students enrolled in Grades 6–8, the school provides physical education instruction aligned with OSSE Physical Education Standards, as required by the Healthy Schools Act. Instruction for middle-school students focuses on age-appropriate fitness, movement skills, personal safety, and wellness concepts consistent with OSSE expectations and adapted to the secure-facility environment.

Because DYRS facilities do not typically serve students in kindergarten through Grade 5, physical education programming is designed with a middle- and high-school focus and implemented by qualified physical education staff in collaboration with behavioral health, recreation therapy, and school personnel.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38–821.01\(6C\)](#))

At least 50 percent of physical education instruction time is devoted to moderate-to-vigorous physical activity.

Maya Angelou Academy ensures that students in Grades 6–8 receive physical education instruction aligned with OSSE Physical Education Standards, and that at least 50 percent of PE instructional time is devoted to moderate-to-vigorous physical activity. Because DYRS facilities primarily serve older youth, this requirement applies only when students in Grades 6–8 are enrolled.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38-824.03\(a\)](#))

Provide suitably adapted physical education or supplementary aids for any other student with special needs that preclude the student from participating in regular physical education instruction.

DYRS will provide suitably adapted physical education or supplementary aids for any student whose special needs prevent participation in regular physical education instruction. Adaptations may include modified activities, alternative movement options, individualized supports, or the use of assistive devices as appropriate. Recreation Therapy, Education staff, and clinical teams will collaborate to ensure that students with special needs receive safe and meaningful physical activity opportunities consistent with their abilities and needs.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38-824.03\(b\)](#))

Prohibit requiring or withholding physical activity as a means to punish students, provided that students who are not wearing appropriate athletic clothing may be prohibited from participating in physical activity until properly dressed.

DYRS prohibits requiring physical activity as punishment and prohibits withholding physical activity as a means of punishment. Students who are not wearing appropriate athletic clothing may be temporarily prohibited from participating in physical activity until properly dressed. DYRS secure staff will ensure that residents have the appropriate gym clothing before leaving their unit so they are able to fully participate in scheduled physical education, recreation, or courtyard activities.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38-824.02\(a-1\)\(1\)](#))

Provide students in grades pre-K 3 and pre-K 4 with an average of 60 minutes of daily physical activity, including two 20-minute outdoor recess periods each day weather and space permitting.

N/A - no students in pre-K 3 or 4.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38-824.01\(a-c\)](#))

It shall be the goal to engage students in physical activity for at least 60 minutes each day. Schools shall promote this goal. Schools shall seek to maximize physical activity by means including: extending the school day, encouraging students to walk or bike to school; promoting active recess; supporting athletic programs; integrating movement into classroom instruction and classroom instruction breaks; entering into shared-use agreements with organizations that provide physical activity programming for children outside of the normal day; and using physical activity as a reward for student achievement and good behavior.

To further support this goal within DYRS facilities, the agency will encourage youth participation in physical activity during gym, recreation, and courtyard periods by offering structured, staff-led activities, providing youth with activity choices, and incorporating brief movement routines at the start of physical activity blocks to promote engagement. DYRS will work with Recreation Therapy, Education staff, and Secure staff to identify feasible strategies that help increase youth participation, recognizing that safety considerations, staffing levels, and space availability may affect daily implementation. DYRS will also explore opportunities to increase the consistency of physical activity, including how often courtyard time, gym sessions, or incentive-based activity events are offered. When feasible and pending funding and security approval, DYRS will consider the use of safe, low-risk equipment to support greater engagement in physical activity.

NUTRITION ENVIRONMENT AND SERVICES

Offering nutrition education and serving healthy school meals help mitigate childhood obesity, model healthy habits, and promote life-long healthy eating patterns and food selection. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES recognizes that serving healthy meals to students through the [National School Lunch Program](#), [School Breakfast Program](#), [After School Snack Program](#), [Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program](#), [Special Milk Program](#), [The Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), [Summer Food Service Program](#), and other supplemental nutrition programs contribute to the improved nutritional diet and health of students, reduces hunger among students, and improves students' readiness to learn.

NUTRITION PROMOTION AND EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES is committed to promoting positive nutrition behaviors and habits. Posters promoting [healthy portions](#), age appropriate [nutrition information](#) for healthier living, and food service menus will be posted in public areas throughout our school(s).

Federal LWP Requirement ([7 CFR 210.31\(c\)](#))

LEAs must identify specific goals for nutrition promotion and education and other school-based activities that promote student wellness through nutrition. In developing these goals, LEAs must review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques.

DYRS will promote student wellness through evidence-based nutrition education, nutrition promotion strategies, and school-based activities that encourage healthy eating habits among all residents. Nutrition education will be integrated into the daily environment through individualized counseling, group programming, and visual educational tools available throughout the facility.

DYRS will ensure that:

- Nutrition education is provided by the Registered Dietitian to residents referred for dietary counseling or support, including guidance on healthy eating habits, food preferences, picky eating, and wellness goals.
- Nutrition facts, healthy eating tips, and food-based educational messages are included on posted menus to reinforce nutrition awareness and promote informed food choices.
- USDA-developed nutrition education posters and materials are displayed throughout the facility to create a supportive environment for healthy eating.
- Culinary and nutrition groups are offered to teach students skills related to cooking, food safety, balanced meals, and trying new foods.
- Local fruits and vegetables are incorporated into menus at least 2 times per week, and DYRS will aim for a minimum of 15% of total produce served quarterly to be locally grown or processed, measured through the Locally Grown Food Item Tracking Log.
- Secure staff who supervise and eat with residents during mealtimes receive basic nutrition information and guidance, as feasible, to help reinforce healthy eating messages and support youth during meals. This may include brief guidance, menu-based nutrition notes, or educational materials provided by the Registered Dietitian.

To strengthen nutrition promotion and expand opportunities for engagement, DYRS will also strive to:

- Encourage students to try new foods during meals and culinary programs using positive, youth-centered approaches.
- Collaborate with Recreation Therapy, Education staff, and Secure staff to identify additional opportunities for nutrition-related activities or learning experiences.
- Offer at least two facility-wide wellness or nutrition engagement events per year (such as a health fair, culinary showcase, or seasonal nutrition activity), when staffing and safety considerations allow.
- Identify community partners or local organizations that may support nutrition education or provide supplementary materials and programming.

The Wellness Coordinator will support these efforts through ongoing nutrition education, menu planning, staff collaboration, and resource development, recognizing that implementation relies on shared responsibility across multiple teams.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38-822.05\(b\)\(1\)](#))

Distribute the menu for each breakfast and lunch served, nutritional content of each menu item, ingredients of each menu item, and the location where fruits and vegetables served in schools are grown and processed. Make information available on school website, in school's office, and to parents and legal guardians upon request.

DYRS will provide required meal information, including the menu for each breakfast and lunch served, the nutritional content of each menu item, ingredients upon request, and the location where fruits and vegetables are grown and processed, in accordance with District of Columbia disclosure requirements. This information will be posted visibly within the facility for residents and staff and made available online through the agency's website. DYRS will also ensure that meal information is accessible in the school office and provided to parents or legal guardians upon request. The Wellness Coordinator will coordinate preparation of these materials while collaborating with DYRS administrative and communications staff to support online posting and public access.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38-822.01\(a\)\(1\)\(B\)\(i-ii\)](#))

Make a vegetarian food option available as a daily option for the main course for breakfast and lunch at all grade levels. Vegetarian food options shall be rotated to avoid repetition.

DYRS provides vegetarian meal options for residents as needed based on clinical assessment, dietary preference, or recommendations made by the Registered Dietitian. While a daily vegetarian entrée is not part of the standard menu cycle, DYRS ensures that any resident who requires or prefers a vegetarian diet has access to appropriate vegetarian meals. Vegetarian options may include plant-based entrées, salads, meatless proteins, or other suitable foods. When provided, vegetarian meals are varied to avoid repetition and to meet the nutritional needs of the resident. The Registered Dietitian collaborates with food service staff to ensure that vegetarian meals are balanced, safe, and meet USDA meal pattern requirements.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38-822.01\(a\)\(1\)\(B\)\(iii\)](#))

Vegetarian food options shall be clearly labeled or identified.

DYRS will ensure that vegetarian meal options are clearly labeled or identified when offered as the designated vegetarian entrée. When plant-based ingredients are incorporated into standard menu items to promote nutrition, menu labeling may remain generic to encourage participation and acceptance among residents. The Registered Dietitian will collaborate with food service staff to ensure that vegetarian entrées are consistently identifiable while supporting a positive, youth-centered approach to menu variety.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38-822.03\(b\)\(3\)](#))

Solicit input from students, faculty, and parents, through taste tests, comment boxes, surveys, a student nutrition advisory council, or other means, regarding nutritious meals that appeal to students.

DYRS routinely gathers input from residents regarding nutritious meals, menu preferences, and wellness activities through taste tests, informal feedback, and periodic surveys. In addition, both New Beginnings and the Youth Services Center have established Youth Advisory Groups that meet monthly. These groups provide structured opportunities for residents to share feedback on meals, physical activity offerings, wellness programming, and overall facility operations.

A representative from the Wellness Committee (such as the Wellness Coordinator or another designated committee member) will attend Youth Advisory Group meetings when feasible or receive meeting notes when attendance is not possible. Feedback from these groups will be incorporated into menu planning, nutrition promotion activities, and Local Wellness Policy implementation. This structure ensures youth perspectives are consistently integrated into wellness initiatives and supports a youth centered approach to continuous improvement.

Recommendation ([7 CFR 210.10\(a\)\(2\)](#))

Hang *Offer vs. Serve* posters as a guide for students choosing a reimbursable meal.⁵

DYRS does not use the Offer vs. Serve meal service method due to the supervised and controlled nature of meal delivery within the facility. Meals are served directly to students in accordance with USDA meal pattern requirements. Because residents do not self-select meal components, Offer vs. Serve posters are not necessary for guiding reimbursable meal selection. If DYRS transitions to an Offer vs. Serve model in the future, appropriate signage will be posted in meal service areas to support student understanding and compliance.

FOODS AND BEVERAGES MARKETING TO STUDENTS

All food and beverage products marketed on school grounds must, at a minimum, meet the USDA's school meal nutrition and [Smart Snacks](#) standards. Product marketing refers to any written, oral posted graphics intended to promote the sale of a food or beverage product.

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES is committed to marketing food and beverages in nutrition-promoting ways including ensuring that filtered water is available for student and staff consumption throughout the day and that water is marketed in health promoting ways that do not detract from milk promotion. This commitment will be demonstrated by taking the specific actions outlined below.

Federal and Local LWP Requirement ([7 CFR 210.31\(c\)\(3\)\(iii\)](#)); ([DC Official Code § 38-822.06\(f\)\(2\)](#))

Establish policies for food and beverage marketing that allow marketing and advertising of only those foods and beverages that meet or exceed the federal nutritional and Healthy Schools Act standards.

DYRS prohibits the marketing or advertising of any foods or beverages that do not meet USDA federal nutrition standards and DC Healthy Schools Act requirements, in accordance with 7 CFR 210.31(c)(3)(iii) and DC Code §38 822.06(f)(2). This includes brand names, logos, trademarks, slogans, product images, or promotional materials displayed through posters, signs, digital screens, equipment, or other means within the facility. DYRS does not allow commercial food or beverage promotion directed toward students.

Because DYRS is a secure residential setting where meals are served directly to residents, the facility does not engage in typical school based food marketing practices or on site food sales. Any special meals, celebratory items, or incentive foods may not be advertised or promoted to students during the school day. Staff may not promote outside foods—verbally or visually—during the school day window, including using branded packaging as part of a reward system or encouraging students to earn non compliant foods.

Food incentives that occur during after school or evening programming are exempt under DC Code §38 822.06(b)(3) and may differ from school day standards; however, such items will not be marketed or advertised during school day hours. DYRS will collaborate with Education, Mental Health, Recreation Therapy, and Secure staff to increase use of non food incentives or healthier food options when feasible while supporting youth engagement and therapeutic programming.

DYRS and Maya Angelou Academy will also ensure that food provided at special events occurring outside the school day window (including holiday celebrations, cultural programs, family visitation events, or weekend activities) is not marketed or promoted in a way that targets students during instructional hours. This distinction helps maintain compliance while supporting meaningful community and cultural events.

⁵ See Offer Versus Serve Posters for Lunch at www.fns.usda.gov/tn/offer-versus-serve-national-school-lunch-program-posters

FOODS AND BEVERAGES PROVIDED TO STUDENTS

Federal LWP Requirement ([7 CFR 210.31\(c\)\(2\)](#))

Establish standards for all foods and beverages provided, but not sold, to students during the school day (e.g., in classroom parties, classroom snacks brought by parents, or other foods given as incentives).

DYRS and Maya Angelou Academy will ensure that any food or beverages provided to students during the school day (defined as 90 minutes before school begins through 90 minutes after school ends) meet USDA Smart Snack in School nutrition standards or are part of a reimbursable meal under the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs. Non compliant foods—including restaurant meals, fast food, and high calorie snacks—will not be provided as incentives or rewards during the instructional school-day window.

Food-based incentives or special event foods that do not meet Smart Snack standards may be offered outside the school-day window. Such events include holiday celebrations, cultural programs, visitation days, movie nights, evening activities, weekend programming, or other DYRS hosted events. Weekly recognition meals or fast food incentives may also occur after school-day hours, consistent with DC Code §38 822.06(f).

DYRS and MAA will encourage the use of non food incentives and healthier behavioral supports whenever feasible, including recreation opportunities, arts or music engagement, enrichment activities, and privilege based rewards. Smart Snack compliant foods or healthier options may be used for any incentive offered during the school day.

The Wellness Committee may periodically review incentive and special event practices to support health promoting approaches while maintaining meaningful behavioral reinforcement. DYRS and MAA leadership may review scheduling or practices as needed to maintain compliance and support student wellness.

Federal and Local LWP Requirement [DC Official Code § 38-822.03\(c\)](#); ([7 CFR 210.18\(h\)\(2\)\(v\)](#))

Make cold, filtered water available free to students, through water fountains or other means, when meals are served to students.

DYRS will ensure that cold, filtered drinking water is available free of charge to all residents whenever meals are served. Each residential unit is equipped with water fountains to provide continuous access to potable water. When water fountains are unavailable, under repair, or otherwise nonfunctional, DYRS will provide water coolers or other safe alternative water sources to ensure uninterrupted access.

Secure staff on each unit are responsible for monitoring water availability, refilling water coolers as needed, and ensuring residents have continuous access to drinking water throughout the meal period. If water access is temporarily disrupted due to equipment issues or resident misbehavior, secure staff will immediately implement an approved backup method—such as providing supervised access to bottled water or relocating residents to another source of potable water—until normal access is restored.

The Wellness Coordinator collaborates with facility leadership and secure staff to identify any recurring barriers to water access and to support solutions that maintain safety, ensure compliance, and promote hydration for all residents.

FOODS AND BEVERAGES SOLD TO STUDENTS

Federal LWP Requirement ([7 CFR 210.31\(c\)\(3\)\(i-ii\)](#))

Establish standards and nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages sold to students on the school campus during the school day that are consistent with federal regulations for school meal nutrition standards and the Smart Snack in School nutrition standards.

DYRS does not sell any foods or beverages to students on campus during the school day. As a Residential Child Care Institution, DYRS provides all meals at no cost to residents through participation in the USDA School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program. The facility does not operate vending machines, school stores, à la carte service, or other point of sale food environments.

Although DYRS does not sell foods or beverages to students, the agency maintains standards and nutrition guidelines for any foods and beverages that would be sold during the school day. These standards are consistent with USDA school meal regulations and Smart Snack in School nutrition standards and ensure compliance. If DYRS ever implements food sales in the future, these standards will immediately apply.

Commissary items may be made available to students as part of the facility's level-based incentive system; however, these items are not sold and are not part of the school-day food environment. All commissary incentives are distributed outside of the instructional school day and therefore fall outside the scope of federal Smart Snacks requirements. DYRS will continue to ensure that all foods provided during the school day meet USDA meal pattern requirements and District of Columbia Healthy Schools Act nutritional standards.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38-822.06\(e\)](#))

Schools shall prohibit all third-parties, other than school-related organizations and school meal service providers, from selling food or beverages of any type to students on school property from 90 minutes before the school day begins to 90 minutes after the school day ends.

DYRS prohibits all third parties, other than school-related organizations and school meal service providers, from selling food or beverages of any type to students on school property during the school day window. The school day window is defined as starting ninety (90) minutes before the official start of the instructional school day and ending ninety (90) minutes after the official end of the instructional school day. No vending, outside food sales, deliveries, or transactions involving food or beverages may occur during this time.

DYRS does not permit external vendors or individuals to sell, distribute, or promote food or beverages to students during this period. Any approved food service activities involving third-party organizations must occur outside the school day window or be conducted solely by DYRS food service staff as part of the USDA School Breakfast Program or National School Lunch Program.

Because DYRS is a secure residential setting and does not operate school stores, vending machines, or other point-of-sale food environments, compliance with this requirement is maintained by restricting all third-party food access during school day hours. Any incentive-based food items distributed to students by DYRS staff occur outside the school day window and therefore fall under the after school exemption.

SCHOOL MEALS

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES is committed to serving healthy meals through the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program and other supplemental programs to children, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein and fat-free or low-fat dairy, that are moderate in sodium, low in saturated fat, have zero grams of trans-fat per serving (nutrition label or manufacturer's specification), and to meet the local and federal nutrition requirements and the needs of school children within their calorie requirements.

Local LWP Requirement (DC Official Code § 38-826-01(b)(2)(B))

Establish plans for increasing the use of locally grown, locally processed, and unprocessed foods from growers engaged in sustainable agriculture practices.

DYRS will continue to increase the use of locally grown, locally processed, and unprocessed foods from growers engaged in sustainable agriculture practices. DYRS incorporates locally sourced items into the menu through its food service vendor, which gives purchasing preference to foods grown or processed within the Mid Atlantic region, including Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

The Registered Dietitian has secured additional federal funding through the Child Nutrition Program Local Purchasing Formula Grant to expand local food purchasing and increase access to regionally grown fruits, vegetables, and other ingredients. These funds support DYRS's ongoing efforts to strengthen farm to institution practices and enhance the nutritional quality of meals served to residents.

DYRS also collaborates with Oasis staff to develop on site agricultural projects at New Beginnings, including a facility garden, a chicken coop, and fruit bearing trees planted throughout the grounds. When feasible and safe, foods grown on-site—such as herbs, produce, or eggs—may be used in culinary groups or incorporated into meal preparation. DYRS will also explore opportunities to develop small scale, secure gardening initiatives at the Youth Services Center, such as tabletop herb gardens or fixed planter boxes, to expand sustainability and hands on learning while meeting facility safety requirements.

These projects provide hands on nutrition education opportunities, support sustainability goals, and encourage students to engage with local food systems. DYRS will continue exploring partnerships and opportunities to expand access to locally sourced foods while working within operational, procurement, and safety requirements.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement (DC Official Code § 38-823.01)

Track procurement using the [Locally Grown Food Item Tracking Log](#).⁶

DYRS will track the procurement of locally grown, locally processed, and unprocessed foods using the Locally Grown and Unprocessed Food Item Tracking Log, as required under the Healthy Schools Act (DC Code § 38-823.01). The Tracking Log must be submitted to OSSE on a quarterly basis, consistent with state guidance and federal Farm-to-School program requirements.

To facilitate accurate tracking, DYRS will coordinate with its food service vendor to:

- Record quantities and values of all qualifying local items served
- Identify the source of each local food item (grower, processor, region)
- Complete and submit quarterly Tracking Logs to OSSE

This coordination may include integrating Tracking Log data collection into vendor production records and ensuring timely submission to DYRS for review and filing.

The Wellness Coordinator/Registered Dietitian and the Food Service Administrator/Culinary Contract Administrator will oversee the tracking process, liaise with the vendor to resolve any data gaps, and maintain documentation to demonstrate compliance. This requirement supports DYRS's commitment to strengthening farm-to-institution practices and enhancing access to local, sustainably produced foods.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement (DC Official Code § 38-822.02(a))

Serve school meals that meet or exceed the federal nutritional and HSA standards.

DYRS serves school meals that meet or exceed all USDA National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program meal pattern requirements, as well as the nutritional standards outlined in the District of Columbia Healthy Schools Act. The Registered Dietitian oversees menu creation and works with the food service vendor to ensure that all meals meet required nutrient specifications, include a variety of fruits and vegetables, and support the health and wellness needs of residents.

Meals provided at DYRS are designed to be balanced, developmentally appropriate, culturally considerate, and aligned with current dietary guidelines. DYRS will continue to monitor menu compliance, incorporate locally grown and processed foods when available, and make adjustments as needed to maintain alignment with federal and local nutrition standards.

⁶ Office of the State Superintendent of Education. (2019). Locally Grown and Unprocessed Food Item Tracking Log. Retrieved from <https://osse.dc.gov/publication/locally-grown-and-unprocessed-food-item-tracking-log>

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

According to the CDC, physical environment is defined as the school building and its contents, the land on which the building is located, and the area surrounding it.⁷ The physical learning environment has a great impact on student learning and promotes and improves learning by ensuring the health and safety of students and staff. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES recognizes the connection between physical environment and student outcomes and believes safe, positive, respectful learning environments will result in more engaged students. Additionally, DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES understands that environmental sustainability means meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.⁸

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES is committed to implementing and maintaining standards to ensure a healthy school physical environment and creating environmental sustainability practices for staff and students and recognizes its importance for both today and for years to come.

Local LWP Requirement (DC Official Code § 38–826.01(b)(2)(A))

Establish goals for improving the environmental sustainability of schools.

DYRS is committed to improving the environmental sustainability of its school and residential environments in accordance with DC Official Code § 38-826.01(b)(2)(A). DYRS will pursue environmental initiatives that are feasible within a secure facility and support both student wellness and responsible stewardship of resources.

DYRS will enhance environmental sustainability through the following goals:

- Incorporating environmentally responsible procurement practices, including prioritizing vendors that offer locally grown or processed foods and collaborating with District partners to improve sustainable purchasing, waste reduction, and composting efforts.
- Continuing to expand hands-on sustainability education through the DYRS culinary program at New Beginnings, including active composting of food scraps and promoting environmentally conscious cooking practices.
- Supporting facility-based projects that connect students with nature, such as developing and maintaining garden spaces, planting fruit trees, and safely integrating produce or eggs from the garden and chicken coop into culinary programming when appropriate.
- Reducing the environmental impact of DYRS menus by thoughtfully decreasing the frequency of red meat and increasing plant forward options where nutritionally appropriate.
- Working with the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development and zero-waste program staff to identify additional opportunities for improving waste management, recycling practices, and sustainable operations.
- Exploring opportunities to increase green spaces at DYRS facilities while ensuring all installations meet secure facility safety standards.

DYRS will continue collaborating with Education, Recreation Therapy, Secure staff, and external partners to implement sustainable practices that align with facility operations, safety requirements, and student learning needs.

Local LWP Requirement (DC Official Code § 38–826.01(b)(2)(D))

Establish goals for developing and implementing an Environmental Literacy Program.

DYRS and Maya Angelou Academy will collaboratively support the development and implementation of an Environmental Literacy Program aligned with the District of Columbia Environmental Literacy Plan. Instructional components of environmental literacy, such as understanding ecological systems, human impacts on the environment, resource conservation, and sustainability, are delivered by Maya Angelou Academy educators through classroom based learning aligned with OSSE standards.

DYRS will reinforce and support environmental literacy through safe, facility appropriate experiential learning opportunities. These include hands on sustainability activities at New Beginnings such as garden care, fruit tree cultivation, composting in culinary programming, and small scale involvement with the facility's chicken coop. DYRS will also explore feasible, secure options for introducing environmental learning experiences at the Youth Services Center, such as tabletop herb gardens or fixed planter boxes that meet safety requirements.

Both MAA instructional staff and DYRS program staff may participate in environmental literacy professional development made available through OSSE or community partners as feasible. DYRS will continue collaborating with Oasis staff, sustainability partners, and local environmental organizations to expand safe, meaningful environmental learning opportunities for youth across facilities.

These combined instructional and experiential components support student knowledge, problem solving skills, and stewardship behaviors that promote environmental responsibility and align with Healthy Schools Act requirements for environmental literacy.

7 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). Components of the Whole school, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC): Physical Environment. Retrieved from <https://osse.dc.gov/node/1113332 www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/wscs/components.htm>

8 Office of the State Superintendent of Education. (2019). 2017 DC Environmental Literacy Plan. Retrieved from osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/2017%20Environmental%20Literacy%20Plan.pdf

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CLIMATE

According to the CDC, social and emotional climate refers to aspects of students' educational experience that influence their social and emotional development.⁹ The quality and character of school life is often referred to as school climate.¹⁰ The school's climate and students' social and emotional needs play major roles in the development of students.¹¹ DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES recognizes the connection between students' social and emotional needs and their ability to learn and perform both within and outside of the classroom setting. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES understands that a positive school climate is one in which the quality and character of school life is formed through: a student-centered environment rooted in community values and input, systems of culture, gender, and LGBTQ responsive engagement, and proactive safety measures that prioritize the health and wellness of all members of the school community, including staff and families.

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES is committed to developing socially and emotionally healthy students by creating and maintaining a school climate that results in a safe, engaging, healthy, challenging, and supportive learning environment. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES understands the design, education and implementation of social and emotional learning priorities is essential to demonstrating this commitment.

Healthy Schools Act Requirement ([DC Official Code § 38-826.06](#))

Schools covered by the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), serving grades 6-12, shall participate in the biennial DC data collection.

DYRS, as a participating private school (RCCI), is not required to participate in the DC Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) under DC Code § 38-826.06. However, the agency may choose to engage in voluntary health behavior surveys or data collection processes to inform wellness initiatives as resources and program needs allow.

Recommendation

Survey students to measure broad perceptions of student access to quality mental health supports.¹²

Not required - RCCI.

However, DYRS may explore opportunities to gather student feedback on wellness and mental health supports when feasible and appropriate within a secure facility. Any such efforts would be developed collaboratively with Education, Mental Health, and Secure staff.

Recommendation

Provide a designated physical safe space for LGBTQ students.¹³

Not required - RCCI.

However, DYRS will continue to ensure that all students have access to safe and supportive environments. Where appropriate and operationally feasible, the agency may consider identifying spaces or practices that support the needs of LGBTQ youth, in collaboration with Mental Health and facility leadership.

9 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). Components of the Whole school, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC): Social and Emotional Climate. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/wscs/components.htm>

10 National School Climate Center. (2012). The School Climate Improvement Process: Essential Elements(No:4). Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED573705.pdf>

11 Durlak, JA., Weissberg, RP. (2011). Promoting Social and Emotional Development is an Essential Part of Students' Development. *Human Development*. (54)1-3. Retrieved from www.researchgate.net/profile/Roger_Weissberg/publication/239784381_Promoting_Social_and_Emotional_Development_Is_an_Essential_Part_of_Students%27_Education/links/57f97a1d08ae91deaa616b5a/Promoting-Social-and-Emotional-Development-Is-an-Essential-Part-of-Students-Education.pdf

12 Refer to Appendix A in OSSE's Local Wellness Policy Guide for related supports and resources.

13 This recommendation is intended to serve as a complement to work done by the bullying prevention task force ([DC Code § 2-1535.02](#)), with the specific goal of

COUNSELING, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The DC school behavioral health model is a coordinated system designed to promote positive school culture, mental wellness and access to high-quality services for children, youth, and their families.¹⁴ DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES recognizes the connection between reducing barriers to access and helping students and schools thrive through integrating school- and community-based providers and services using a school-wide, multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS).¹⁵

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES understands that partnerships with licensed school behavioral health professionals with education and training in social work, professional counseling, or school, clinical, or counseling psychology, whether employed by DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES or by a community-based organization that partners with the LEA, both collaborate with teachers, administrators, parents, and community-based organizations to provide a coordinated system of support that addresses prevention, intervention, and direct service needs of the school.

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES is committed to supporting students and families through the provision of Counseling, Psychological and Social Services to ensure a well-rounded environment of comprehensive health and safety are made available for all within the school environment.

Youth Suicide Prevention and School Climate Survey Amendment Act (DC Official Code § 7-1131.17(a)-(b)(1))

Ensure principals and teachers are trained to identify, approach, and refer students in psychological distress through requiring the completion of the Department of Behavioral Health's online training once every two years.

DYRS will ensure compliance with DC Code §7-1131.17 by requiring that, prior to the assumption of job duties, all direct care, medical, mental health, YDR's, SYDR's, education, contractors, and any other personnel who have regular contact with youth shall receive eight hours of initial suicide prevention and crisis management training.

In addition, all relevant staff will complete the Department of Behavioral Health's youth behavioral health online training program every two years.

This training covers:

- Recognizing warning signs and risk factors for youth suicide
- Implementing best practices for prevention, intervention, and post-intervention
- Identifying students in psychological distress
- Referring youth for behavioral health screenings and services

Completion records will be maintained in coordination with DYRS leadership and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). Where available, participation in this training will also be documented as part of staff professional development credits.

School Safety Omnibus Amendment Act (DC Official Code § 38-952.02(b)(1))

Ensure school staff are trained at the time of hiring and at minimum every two years thereafter on identifying, responding to, and reporting student-on-student acts of sexual harassment, sexual assault, or dating violence, including any mandatory reporting requirements under District or federal law.

DYRS will require that all school staff, including teachers, school administrators, counselors, and other personnel working with students, complete training on identifying, responding to, and reporting student-on-student sexual harassment, sexual assault, or dating violence. This training will be completed at the time of hiring and at minimum every two years thereafter.

Training will include information on mandatory reporting responsibilities under District and federal law, procedures for responding to disclosures or incidents, and proper referral pathways to Mental Health, Behavioral Health, and Secure staff. DYRS will maintain records of training completion and ensure coordination across school, mental health, and secure units to promote consistent implementation of safety protocols.

School Safety Omnibus Amendment Act (DC Official Code § 38-951.02(c)(1-2))

Ensure school staff are trained at the time of hiring and at minimum every two years thereafter on recognizing and reporting sexual misconduct, student sexual abuse, and child abuse and training on an annual basis for parents regarding sexual misconduct and student sexual abuse.

DYRS will ensure compliance by requiring that all school-based staff, including teachers, counselors, school administrators, mental health professionals, and any other personnel working directly with students, complete training at the time of hiring and at least once every two years.

Training will cover:

- Recognizing and reporting sexual misconduct, student sexual abuse, and child abuse
- Receiving disclosures in a supportive, trauma-informed manner
- Prevention strategies, warning signs, and impacts of abuse
- Communicating with students and parents about reporting and prevention

DYRS will offer annual informational resources for parents and legal guardians about sexual misconduct, student sexual abuse, and child abuse. These resources may include brochures, web-based materials, or presentations during family engagement events and are intended to help caregivers understand mandatory reporting requirements and how to identify signs of distress.

14 Deputy Mayor of Health and Human Services. (2019). School Mental Health Program and School Health Services Program. Retrieved from dmhhs.dc.gov/publication/school-mental-health-program-and-school-health-services-program

15 Multi-tier System and Supports Integrated Services Framework for Student Wellness. (2015). CSHA Conference. Retrieved from www.schoolhealthcenters.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Building-Framework-MH-Supports-Presentation.pdf

Recommendation

Identify specific goals for any school-based activities that promote student wellness through counseling, psychological and social services.

DYRS and Maya Angelou Academy will work collaboratively to promote student wellness through school-based counseling, psychological, and social service activities. These may include wellness workshops, therapeutic cooking demonstrations, mindfulness and grounding exercises, emotional regulation sessions, physical movement and stress relief challenges, and other behavioral health and nutrition programs designed to support student well being. Behavioral health staff, mental health clinicians, school personnel, and the Wellness Coordinator will partner to deliver structured activities that strengthen coping skills, encourage positive social interactions, and reinforce healthy lifestyle practices.

Recommendation

Provide a designated space for the delivery of behavioral and mental health services.

DYRS provides dedicated spaces for the delivery of behavioral and mental health services at both New Beginnings and the Youth Services Center. Residents have daily access to behavioral health clinicians and mental health services within these designated clinical areas. YSC recently implemented a Mental Health Clinic that operates most days to ensure consistent, coordinated care. Behavioral Health Specialists are available to residents daily and maintain on-call coverage during evenings and weekends to support timely access to mental health services.

Recommendation

Establish a policy and procedures for suicide prevention and intervention, including a defined school crisis team and safe space for behavioral and mental health service delivery.¹⁶

DYRS maintains an established suicide prevention and intervention policy that guides staff in identifying, responding to, and supporting youth experiencing psychological distress. As part of the intake process, DYRS Medical staff complete a mental health assessment, including the MAYSI screening tool, for every newly admitted youth who has not had a MAYSI within the past two weeks. This screening helps identify residents who require more urgent mental health support and ensures rapid referral to clinical services. Mental Health staff meet with each youth within the first days of admission and continue to provide individualized therapy, crisis intervention, and behavioral health group sessions throughout their placement. DYRS maintains a defined crisis response structure, including mental health clinicians, Behavioral Health Specialists, and secure staff trained to respond to psychiatric emergencies and ensure immediate safety. Both New Beginnings and Youth Services Center have designated clinical spaces for confidential behavioral and mental health service delivery. DYRS will continue to strengthen interdepartmental coordination, maintain trauma-informed crisis protocols, and ensure youth have ongoing access to comprehensive mental health support.

Recommendation:

Encourage and support behavioral health staff to participate in the School Behavioral Health Community of Practice and to engage in ongoing support and learning with peers.

DYRS and Maya Angelou Academy behavioral health clinicians collaborate regularly to promote student wellness and maintain consistent, trauma-informed care practices. Clinicians work together on shared cases through multidisciplinary meetings and coordinate programming such as Mental Health Awareness Month activities and other therapeutic initiatives. When feasible, DYRS will support behavioral health staff in engaging with broader professional learning communities, such as the School Behavioral Health Community of Practice, to enhance clinical skills, share best practices, and strengthen cross-agency collaboration. Participation in these networks complements existing DYRS-MAA teamwork and supports high quality behavioral health services for youth.

¹⁶ This acknowledgement coincides with a requirement mentioned in the Social and Emotional Climate section of this template.

HEALTH SERVICES

Health services provide preventive and actual care for a host of medical conditions and concerns within the scope of practice of school nurses, nurse practitioners, dentists, health educators, physicians, physician assistants, and allied health personnel.¹⁷ These services include but are not limited to first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automatic external defibrillator (AED) use, anaphylaxis treatment and management, and planning and management of chronic diseases such as asthma and diabetes. These services ideally combine school and community resources to meet the needs of the students, staff and community through proper care coordination.

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES recognizes the connection between coordinated care models and improved student outcomes. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES understands that registered nurses, doctors, physician assistants, allied health professionals and other qualified personnel may be among those contributing to the coordinated care students receive. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES is committed to coordinated preventive and actual care service models that meet the needs of the students, staff and school community. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES has established the following goals for implementing the Health Services component to demonstrate this commitment.

Student Health Care Act Requirement (DC Official Code § 38-602(a)-(b))

Collect annual Universal Health Certificates and Oral Health Assessments from each student.

DYRS operates under a Residential Child Care Institution (RCCI) model, which includes comprehensive medical, dental, and behavioral health screenings at intake. These screenings satisfy and exceed the requirements.

DYRS complies with the Student Health Care Act by ensuring that every youth admitted to the facility receives a comprehensive medical intake exam that fulfills the Universal Health Certificate requirement. At admission, each resident completes a full medical evaluation, including behavioral health screening such as the MAYSI, and receives a comprehensive dental exam within 14 days, which satisfies the annual Oral Health Assessment requirement. Throughout a resident's stay, DYRS medical, dental, and mental health staff provide ongoing monitoring and follow-up care. All intake exams, dental assessments, and subsequent health services are documented in the electronic health record (EHR).

Access to Emergency Epinephrine in Schools Amendment Act (DC Official Code § 38-651.04a(b)(3)); (DC Official Code § 38-651.04a (c)(2)(B))

Schools shall stock and maintain two undesignated epinephrine auto-injector twin-packs in a secure but easily accessible location and ensure at least two OSSE-certified staff members are trained annually and present during all hours of the school day.

DYRS will stock and maintain two undesignated epinephrine auto-injector twin packs in a secure but accessible location within the Medical Care Center. Medical staff are available on-site and trained to administer emergency epinephrine. Secure staff will immediately contact Medical in the event of a suspected anaphylactic reaction to ensure rapid response.

At least two Maya Angelou Academy school staff members will complete OSSE's annual undesignated epinephrine administration training and will be present during all hours of the school day.

Immunization of School Students Act (DC Official Code § 38-501); (DCMR § 5-E5300)

Ensure all schools implement the Immunization Attendance Policy and verify student compliance with District immunization requirements for enrollment and attendance.

DYRS complies with District immunization requirements by verifying each resident's immunization status at intake. Medical staff retrieve immunization records directly from the District of Columbia Immunization Information System (DCIIS), which satisfies the Immunization Attendance Policy requirements for enrollment and attendance. All immunization data are documented in the resident's electronic health record (EHR).

If required immunizations are missing or incomplete, DYRS notifies the resident's parent or legal guardian. Parents and guardians retain the right to refuse vaccinations in accordance with District law governing medical and religious exemptions. Medical staff continue to monitor immunization status throughout a youth's placement and maintain updated documentation in the EHR.

Recommendation

Provide a designated space that is recognized as the health or nurse's suite.

DYRS maintains a designated Medical Care Center at each facility, which serves as the recognized health or nurse's suite. These centers are staffed by licensed medical personnel and provide ongoing medical, dental, and behavioral health services, ensuring that students have access to a dedicated and appropriate space for health care needs.

¹⁷ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021). Components of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC): Health Services. Retrieved from www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/wscs/components.htm

Recommendation

Ensure qualified staff, inclusive of a Registered Nurse, provide care and management of health services rendered for the school environment.

DYRS ensures that qualified health personnel, including licensed nurses, provide and oversee health services within the school environment. Each facility maintains a fully staffed Medical Care Center capable of delivering clinical care, responding to emergencies, and supporting student wellness needs. Medical staff collaborate with school personnel to manage routine and emergent health concerns, ensuring students have access to appropriate, professionally supervised health services throughout the school day.

Recommendation

Share, and make publicly available, nurse hours and availability, emergency care protocol, and undesignated epinephrine use plans.

DYRS will make information about medical staff hours and availability (24/7), emergency care procedures, and undesignated epinephrine response protocols available to school leadership and posted in accessible internal locations for staff reference. Because DYRS is a secure residential environment, medical suite information will be shared through internal communication channels rather than public posting, ensuring students and staff can readily access health service guidance while maintaining facility safety and security.

Recommendation

Establish care coordination plans to increase access and referrals to primary care services and improve school-physician links following incidents.

DYRS maintains an established care coordination system to ensure students have timely access to primary care, dental care, and behavioral health services. Upon admission, residents receive comprehensive medical, dental, and mental health screenings, and staff coordinate referrals for any necessary follow-up care. Medical and behavioral health providers communicate regularly with school personnel to support continuity of care following incidents or identified health needs. All assessments, referrals, and follow-up actions are documented in the electronic health record (EHR). DYRS will continue to strengthen school-physician communication and referral pathways to ensure residents receive appropriate and consistent healthcare services.

Recommendation

Develop and implement a school preparedness system for medication storage and administration, tracking staff certifications, and students with chronic health conditions who lack clearly identifiable action plans.

DYRS maintains a secure and structured medication storage and administration system through its Medical Care Centers at each facility. All medications, including emergency medications, are stored exclusively in medical and administered by licensed medical staff. At New Beginnings, residents are escorted unit by unit to the Medical Care Center for scheduled medication administration twice daily, with additional medical visits provided throughout the day as needed (such as for insulin). At night, medical staff conduct a medication cart round. At YSC, the medication cart is used for morning and nighttime medication administration, and residents with additional needs are transported to medical during the day.

This system ensures safe medication storage, controlled access, and consistent clinical oversight. All medication administration, health encounters, and care plans are documented in the electronic health record (EHR). DYRS will continue maintaining staff training, certification tracking, and individualized action plans for youth with chronic conditions to support coordinated and compliant medication management across the facility.

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

Employee health has a direct impact on how school staff perform in their roles in the school community. Employee wellness efforts at schools have the potential to increase feelings of work satisfaction and productivity, as well as lower rates of absenteeism and medical costs related to staff stress.¹⁸ DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES recognizes the connection between healthy school employees and improved job performance and satisfaction.

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES understands that while there is no legislative requirement for employee wellness, implementing policies that promote employee wellness and improve job satisfaction may have a positive impact on student development. While there are no Employee Wellness LWP requirements, DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES establishes the following employee wellness goals:

Federal LWP Requirement (7 CFR 210.31(c)(5))

Describe the manner in which representatives of the LEA, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board (if applicable), and school administrators are provided the opportunity to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the Local Wellness Policy.

DYRS will establish and maintain a Wellness Committee that includes representatives from key areas of the school and facility, including the Wellness Coordinator, physical education staff, school health professionals, school administrators, food service staff, and other relevant program personnel. This committee will meet periodically to participate in the development, implementation, and triennial review of the Local Wellness Policy.

The Wellness Committee will provide opportunities for staff to offer input on wellness initiatives, identify needs, and propose activities that support both resident and staff wellness. Committee responsibilities will include reviewing wellness goals, monitoring progress, discussing resident health and nutrition needs, recommending enhancements, and supporting wellness programming throughout the facility.

The Wellness Coordinator will facilitate committee meetings, coordinate communication across departments, and ensure the committee actively contributes to policy updates and implementation. DYRS leadership will be informed of major recommendations to support alignment with operational and safety requirements.

Recommendation

Address and improve educator wellness through initiatives, for example offering yoga classes, immunizations, screenings and wellness campaigns, and mindfulness trainings.

DYRS is committed to supporting educator wellness and will explore opportunities to provide staff with meaningful health and wellness initiatives. These may include wellness education sessions, on-site health and wellness fairs, mindfulness or stress management activities, immunization and health screening clinics coordinated with Medical Care Center staff, and wellness campaigns that promote movement, nutrition, mental health, and self care. DYRS will collaborate across departments to identify feasible opportunities for staff engagement and promote workplace wellness that supports both employee wellbeing and the overall school environment.

Recommendation

Provide professional development trainings to address and improve staff development and preparedness, for example by facilitating implicit bias training and assessments, and cross-cultural communication training.

DYRS supports staff development and preparedness by providing access to professional development opportunities through the DC Human Resources (DCHR) Learning and Development Center. Staff may participate in trainings related to cultural competency, trauma-informed practices, communication skills, and other wellness related topics as offered by DCHR or DYRS leadership. DYRS will continue to explore additional opportunities to enhance staff skills and preparedness, such as implicit bias awareness, cross-cultural communication training, and wellness focused professional development, as feasible within agency resources and operational requirements. The Wellness Coordinator will collaborate with DYRS leadership to identify supplemental training options that support educator wellness, staff development, and a positive school environment.

Recommendation

Take action to address and improve staff mental health, for example by informing and actively promoting Employee Assistance Programs and other community behavioral health resources available to staff throughout the school year.

DYRS recognizes that staff mental health is an essential component of a healthy and supportive school environment. DYRS actively promotes mental health resources available to employees, including the District's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and community behavioral health supports. DYRS will continue to share information about these resources throughout the year and provide opportunities for staff to learn more about mental health, stress management, and available supports. As feasible, DYRS may offer wellness-focused activities or awareness events to help increase understanding of mental health needs and reduce stigma, fostering a safe and supportive workplace for all staff.

¹⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). Preventing Chronic Disease. Absenteeism and Employer Costs Associated with Chronic Diseases and Health Risk Factors in the US Workforce. Retrieved from www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2016/15_0503.htm

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Engaging family members in school programs and services is a priority that may have a lasting impact on students as they grow. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES understands that welcoming participation from families when developing and implementing LWP goals supports the creation of an effective, comprehensive and robust local wellness policy that will meet the needs of the school community and the students it serves. By allowing families to participate in the development, implementation and evaluation of this wellness policy, DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES acknowledges the connection between family involvement, in connection with teachers, and other school staff, and ensuring students receive a well-rounded, comprehensive education that can serve them within and outside of the classroom setting. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES is committed to engaging family members in our LWP development, wellness committee participation, policy implementation and other health and wellness requirements and initiatives.

Federal LWP Requirement (7 CFR 210.31(c)(5))

Describe the manner in which parents and legal guardians are provided the opportunity to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the Local Wellness Policy.

DYRS will provide parents and legal guardians multiple opportunities to participate in the development, implementation, and review of the Local Wellness Policy. The updated Wellness Policy will be posted online with an option for families to submit comments through an electronic form or other secure platform. Care Coordinators will also share the policy with families and provide a link to an anonymous feedback form for those who wish to contribute. DYRS may offer additional opportunities for family input during triennial reviews or wellness committee updates, ensuring ongoing and accessible avenues for family participation. DYRS also supports ongoing family engagement activities connected to student wellness. DYRS will continue to explore additional family involvement opportunities to support resident health, strengthen family connections, and gather input relevant to the Local Wellness Policy.

Recommendation

Educate families on behaviors for contagious disease prevention and response and include guidelines for when to keep sick children at home and when they can return to school.

DYRS may provide families with information about contagious disease prevention and response as part of its ongoing communication with parents and legal guardians. When feasible, DYRS will share educational materials or guidance regarding common communicable diseases, recommended prevention behaviors, and general guidelines.

Recommendation

Have communication protocols in place to notify families of positive contagious disease cases that protect the privacy of affected individuals and their families consistent with DC Health guidelines.

When feasible and appropriate, DYRS may notify families of confirmed contagious disease cases in accordance with DC Health guidance. Notifications will be made through established care coordination channels and will include general information about the illness, recommended prevention measures, and steps taken by DYRS to protect resident health. All communication will protect the privacy of affected individuals and their families, and will not disclose personally identifiable health information. DYRS will continue collaborating with Medical Care Center staff to ensure that disease-related communication is accurate, timely, and consistent with public health standards.

Recommendation

Inform parents of all hygiene and cleaning practices introduced, including reinforcing proper hand hygiene, mask wearing, and other health practices while students are at home.

DYRS may provide families with information on hygiene and contagious disease prevention practices used within the facility. When feasible, Care Coordinators may share guidance with parents and legal guardians, such as proper hand hygiene, general illness prevention strategies, and recommendations. Resources may also be made available through electronic communication, printed materials, or links to DC Health guidance. These efforts aim to support family understanding of basic health practices while maintaining the safety and privacy needs of the secure facility environment.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Engaging community stakeholders in the LWP process may provide strong support for the school community both during operating hours and when the school itself is closed. Advisory neighborhood commission members, local business owners, area law enforcement and public works professionals are just a few community stakeholders that may provide valuable support and insight to creating the safe, healthy learning environment our students need to thrive in an academic setting. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES recognizes and values the role the community plays in the safe and healthy development of our students. DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES is committed to accepting and implementing feedback and support from the community and works to engage members of the community-at-large in our students' development.

Federal LWP Requirement (7 CFR 210.31(c)(5))

Describe the manner in which community members are provided the opportunity to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the Local Wellness Policy.

DYRS will provide community members with opportunities to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review of the Local Wellness Policy. Community participation may include engagement from the DYRS Parent Watch liaison, community partners supporting nutrition, gardening, sustainability, and behavioral health initiatives, as well as representatives from collaborating agencies and contracted service providers.

These community partners may offer input through wellness committee meetings, electronic feedback forms, or consultation with the Wellness Coordinator during policy review cycles. DYRS will also invite feedback from external partners involved in nutrition procurement, local purchasing, environmental sustainability projects, and youth programming. OSSE representatives will continue to review and monitor the Local Wellness Policy as part of their routine oversight.

This collaborative approach ensures that the Local Wellness Policy reflects the needs of residents, families, staff, and the broader community connected to DYRS programming.



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