

Triennial Assessment Report: Cloudcroft ES/MS (4/2026)

District: CLOUDCROFT MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS

Introduction

Cloudcroft Municipal Schools recently conducted its first triennial assessment of the Local Wellness Policy. A triennial assessment is a review completed every three years to evaluate how well a school district supports student health and well-being. This process examines areas such as nutrition, physical activity, and overall wellness practices to ensure they align with current standards and meet the needs of our community. It also measures how effectively the policy is being implemented across schools and identifies opportunities for improvement.

This assessment included input from a variety of school staff to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of our wellness efforts. Contributors included our nutrition expert, physical education teachers, administrators, school counselors, and school health office staff, all of whom provided valuable insight into current practices and future goals.

Strong Policies and Aligned Practices

Cloudcroft Municipal Schools demonstrates a strong, district-wide commitment to fostering health and wellness, embedding these priorities across multiple disciplines and daily practices. One of the district’s most notable areas of success lies within its nutrition program. CMS nutrition staff consistently exceed the annual continuing education and training requirements established by the USDA, reflecting a dedication to professional growth and the delivery of high-quality services. All foods served within the district fully meet national USDA standards, ensuring that students have access to balanced, nutritious meals each day.

Beyond meal service, CMS carefully monitors all foods and beverages sold on campus during the school day. The items align with Smart Snacks standards, reinforcing a consistent message about healthy choices. Water is readily available to both students and staff throughout the school day, supporting hydration and overall health. In addition, high-caffeinated beverages are not permitted on school grounds during the school day due to associated health risks, further demonstrating the district’s commitment to student and staff well-being. This commitment extends into the classroom and home environment, where teachers and parents are encouraged to provide healthier snacks that meet the Smart Snack requirements, during celebrations and events. Nutrition education is also an integral part of the student experience, equipping students with the knowledge and skills needed to make informed, healthy decisions about what they eat.

Physical wellness is equally prioritized across CMS schools. Students are provided with regular physical education classes as well as multiple opportunities for movement throughout the school day. This emphasis on physical activity contributes not only to improved physical health, but also supports better concentration, enhanced classroom performance, and more positive moods among students.

CMS further strengthens its wellness efforts through collaboration and continuous improvement. The School Health Advisory Committee meets twice annually to review and refine wellness policies and practices. These meetings are open to parents and community members, encouraging broad participation and valuable input. Transparency is also a key component of the district’s approach, with the wellness policy readily accessible to the public via the school website.

Through these coordinated efforts, CMS has established a comprehensive and effective approach to student and staff wellness, demonstrating measurable success in meeting and exceeding its wellness policy goals.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR4	Is free (i.e., no cost to students) drinking water available to students during meals?	2	2	★
FR5	Do all school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff meet or exceed the annual continuing education/training hours required by the USDA’s Professional Standards requirements?	2	2	★
FR7	Do all a la carte foods and beverages sold in the cafeteria meet Smart Snacks standards?	2	2	★
FR8	Do all foods and beverages sold in vending machines meet Smart Snack standards?	2	2	★
FR9	Do all foods and beverages sold in school stores during the school day meet Smart Snack standards?	2	2	★
FR10	Are there fundraisers that sell foods or beverages to be consumed during the school day? If yes, do the foods and beverages sold meet Smart Snacks standards?	2	2	★

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FR12	Is there food or beverage marketing on the school campus during the school day? If yes, do the marketed items meet Smart Snacks criteria?	2	2	☆
FR15	How is the wellness policy made available to the public?	2	2	☆
NES10	Are foods or beverages containing caffeine sold at the high school level?	2	2	☆
NES14	Do students have consistent and easy access to free drinking water throughout the school day?	2	2	☆
NE2	Do all elementary school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	2	2	☆
NE3	Do all middle school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	2	2	☆
PEPA2	Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is aligned with national and/or state standards?	2	2	☆
PEPA13	Is there daily recess for all grades in elementary school?	2	2	☆
PEPA18	Do teachers ever use physical activity as a punishment?	2	2	☆
PEPA19	Do teachers ever withhold physical activity as a classroom management tool?	2	2	☆
IC1	Is there an active district-level wellness committee?	2	2	☆

Create Practice Implementation Plan

CMS has demonstrated strong implementation of its Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP), reflecting the district's commitment to health and wellness. As a rural district, CMS faces unique challenges in increasing physical activity opportunities before and after school due to long travel times for many students. To ensure full compliance with all policy elements, CMS will build on its strengths through targeted planning and collaboration.

To improve community engagement in physical activity, the district will partner with staff and community members to organize events such as fun runs scheduled at accessible times. While school facilities are already available, these structured opportunities will help increase participation despite transportation barriers.

To address gaps in nutrition education at the high school level, CMS will collaborate with high school administrators and teachers to integrate nutrition concepts across multiple subject areas.

Ongoing monitoring by the district wellness committee will ensure these efforts remain effective and aligned with LSWP requirements, supporting continuous improvement and sustained compliance.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
NE4	Do all high school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	2	1	

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PEPA11	 Are there opportunities for families and community members to engage in physical activity at school?	1	0	
PEPA12	 Are there opportunities for all students to engage in physical activity before and after school?	2	1	
IC2	Is there an active school-level wellness committee?	2	0	

Update Policies

Following the completion of the district's initial triennial wellness policy assessment, CMS identified a clear need to strengthen and revise its existing policy to ensure full alignment with all federally required components. The assessment, which compared the district's policy to a model wellness policy, revealed that much of the existing language was vague and lacked specificity. As a result, expectations were difficult to evaluate, measure, and enforce consistently across schools. Additionally, several federally required practices were found to be in place operationally but were not formally documented within the written policy. For example, while the district successfully offers breakfast to all students, this important practice was not reflected in the policy language. The low score received on the policy assessment underscored the urgency of conducting a comprehensive update. In response, CMS initiated a collaborative revision process involving key stakeholders, including district administrators, nutrition staff, and members of the School Health Advisory Committee. These meetings focused on identifying gaps, clarifying expectations, and ensuring that all federally required elements—such as nutrition standards, physical activity guidelines, public involvement, and policy evaluation procedures—were explicitly addressed.

As a result of this work, the wellness policy has been revised to include clear, specific, and measurable language. This updated language not only meets federal requirements but also accurately reflects the health and wellness practices already implemented across the district. By aligning written policy with actual practice, CMS has created a more transparent and accountable framework for promoting student and staff wellness.

Looking ahead, CMS plans to continue strengthening its wellness policy through ongoing review and School Health Advisory Committee engagement. Future updates may include expanding language around nutrition education, increasing opportunities for physical activity, and further promoting staff wellness initiatives. The district is committed to regularly evaluating the policy to ensure it remains relevant, enforceable, and reflective of best practices in supporting lifelong health and well-being for the entire school community.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR1	Does the district have specific goals for nutrition education designed to promote student wellness?	1	2	
FR2	Do your National School Lunch Program meals (and, if applicable, School Breakfast Program meals) meet all federal standards for meal patterns, nutrient levels, and calorie requirements for the grade levels served?	1	2	
FR6	Do all competitive foods and beverages sold to students during the school day meet or exceed the USDA's nutrition standards, commonly called Smart Snacks?	1	2	
FR13	Which groups are represented on the district-level wellness committee?	0	2	
FR14	Is there an official who is responsible for the implementation and compliance with the wellness policy at the building level for each school?	0	2	
FR16	Is wellness policy implementation evaluated every three years?	1	2	
FR17	What is included in the triennial assessment report to the public?	0	2	

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FR18	Has the wellness policy been revised based on the previous triennial assessment?	1	2	
NES1	Does the district offer breakfast every day to all students?	0	2	
NES4	Does your school use strategies to maximize participation in the school breakfast program and/or school lunch program?	1	2	
NES5	Are marketing strategies used to promote healthy food and beverage choices in school?	0	2	
NES6	Do students have at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they are seated?	0	2	
NES8	Do you know where to access the USDA Smart Snacks nutrition standards to check and see if an item can be sold in school during the school day?	1	2	
NES13	Do teachers or school staff give students food as a reward?	1	2	
NE1	Are skills-based, behavior-focused, and interactive/participatory methods used in nutrition education to develop student skills?	1	2	
NE5	Is nutrition education integrated into other subjects beyond health education?	1	2	
NE7	 Does nutrition education address agriculture and the food system?	0	2	
PEPA1	 Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is implemented consistently for every grade?	1	2	
PEPA3	How does your physical education program promote a physically active lifestyle?	1	2	
PEPA7	Are all physical education classes taught by state certified/licensed teachers who are endorsed to teach physical education?	1	2	
PEPA9	What percentage of students do you estimate do not take PE each year due to exemptions?	0	2	
PEPA10	What percentage of students do you estimate do not take PE each year due to substitutions?	0	2	
PEPA14	 Do teachers provide regular physical activity breaks for students in the classroom?	1	2	
PEPA15	Does the district have "joint-use" or "shared-use" agreements?	0	2	

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PEPA17	 Are teachers encouraged to use physical activity as a reward for students?	0	2	
EW1	 Are there strategies used by the school to support employee wellness?	1	2	

Opportunities for Growth

CMS is committed to continuously strengthening its Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP) by updating both policy language and practices to ensure full alignment with all federally required components. As part of this effort, the district has taken proactive steps to improve clarity, consistency, and implementation across all school sites.

To support compliance with Smart Snacks in School standards, CMS has developed and distributed a list of approved foods and beverages that meet federal requirements. This resource is accessible to both staff and families through the student handbook and the district website, helping to guide appropriate food choices brought onto campus. While New Mexico law permits exemptions for school-sponsored fundraisers, CMS carefully monitors these events to ensure the number of exempt fundraisers remains within allowable limits.

CMS also prioritizes high-quality physical education as a core component of student wellness. All physical education classes are taught by licensed educators with physical education endorsements, and staff are encouraged to participate in ongoing professional development each year. Students are provided physical education opportunities in accordance with New Mexico Public Education Department requirements, ensuring consistent access to standards-based instruction.

As a rural district, CMS recognizes the challenges associated with long student travel times, which can limit opportunities for walking or biking to school. To address this, the district incorporates alternative opportunities for physical activity during the school day, including field days, fun runs, and other organized events as scheduling allows. These activities help promote student engagement in physical activity despite logistical constraints.

Through these updates and ongoing efforts, CMS aims to ensure that all federally required wellness policy elements are clearly defined, consistently implemented, and regularly reviewed. The district will continue to evaluate its practices, seek stakeholder input, and identify additional opportunities to promote student health and wellness.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR11	Does your district regulate foods and beverages served at class parties and other school celebrations in elementary schools?	1	1	
NES7	 In your district, is it a priority to procure locally produced foods for school meals?	0	1	
NES9	Are you familiar with any state laws allowing exemptions for school-sponsored fundraisers during which foods and beverages do not have to meet Smart Snacks?	1	1	
NE6	Do school nutrition services staff members use the following methods to collaborate with teachers to reinforce nutrition education lessons taught in the classroom?	0	0	
PEPA4	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in elementary school receive?	0	0	
PEPA5	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in middle school receive?	0	0	
PEPA6	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in high school receive?	0	0	

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PEPA8	Is ongoing professional development offered every year for PE teachers that is relevant and specific to physical education?	0	0	
PEPA16	What proportion of students walk or bike to school?	0	0	
EW2	Are school staff encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors in front of students?	1	1	

Conclusion

Cloudcroft Municipal Schools has completed its first triennial assessment of the Local Wellness Policy, providing a clear picture of current strengths and areas for growth in supporting student and staff health. Overall, the district demonstrates a strong commitment to wellness through high-quality nutrition services, consistent access to physical education, and ongoing efforts to promote healthy choices in schools. Many required wellness practices are already being successfully implemented across the district, even when they were not previously documented in policy language.

The assessment also highlighted opportunities to improve clarity, consistency, and access to wellness practices. In response, the district has begun revising its policy to ensure it is more specific, measurable, and fully aligned with federal requirements. CMS is also working to expand physical activity opportunities in creative ways that address rural transportation challenges and to strengthen nutrition education.

Moving forward, CMS will continue to collaborate with staff, families, and community members through the School Health Advisory Committee and other partnerships. These ongoing efforts will help ensure the wellness policy remains up to date, effectively implemented, and reflective of the district's shared commitment to supporting the health and well-being of all students.

Key



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



Create Practice Implementation Plan - District has a strong or weak policy, but practice implementation is either absent or limited



Update Policies Update Policies - District is fully implementing a practice but there is no or only weak language in the written policy, or the district is partially implementing practices and there is no language in the policy



Opportunities for Growth - District has either not addressed the topic in policy or practice; or has only addressed the topic in a very limited way

For more resources, visit: wellsat.org/resources

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