Triennial Assessment Report: FY26 Fowler Elementary District (9/2026)
District: FOWLER ELEMENTARY DISTRICT (4273)

Introduction

Dear Fowler Elementary School District #45 Families and Community Members,
Our district is committed to fostering a healthy, supportive learning environment that promotes students' overall well-being, nutrition, and physical development. To ensure our commitments translate into meaningful action, Fowler Elementary School District #45 completed its required triennial assessment of the Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP) in September 2026. Using the standardized Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT), we evaluated both our written policy language and our actual day-to-day school practices. Overall, our assessment demonstrates strong compliance with federal requirements, achieving a Total Policy Comprehensiveness score of 65 and a Total Policy Strength score of 49. We maintained 100% compliance across essential federal standards such as offering free breakfast and lunch to all students under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), providing free drinking water in cafeterias, and enforcing strict nutrition standards for competitive foods and marketing. Compared to prior evaluation cycles, this assessment highlights significant progress, including the adoption of House Bill 2164 (Arizona Healthy Schools Act) to ban ultra-processed foods starting in the 2026-2027 school year and the installation of campus bottle-filling stations. This evaluation was conducted collaboratively by the Local Wellness Committee. Active stakeholders involved in the review process included district food service leadership, school health professionals, physical education teachers, school administrators, Governing Board members, and community representatives.

Strong Policies and Aligned Practices

This section highlights areas where Fowler Elementary School District #45 has established strong written policy language (Score 2) and is fully executing aligned practices (Score 2) across our campuses.

Federal Requirements Met in Full Alignment:
FR2: Reimbursable school meals meet all USDA meal patterns, nutrient levels, and calorie standards.
FR4: Free drinking water is continuously accessible to students during meal times.
FR5: School nutrition directors, managers, and staff meet or exceed annual USDA professional development training hours.
FR6, FR7, FR9, FR10: Competitive foods and beverages sold on campus- including a la carte items, school store items, and school-day fundraisers- strictly comply with USDA Smart Snacks standards.
FR12: Campus food and beverage marketing is restricted exclusively to items meeting Smart Snacks criteria.
FR13: All required stakeholder groups participate on the district-level wellness committee.
FR14: Designated building-level officials are held accountable for policy implementation and compliance.
FR15, FR17: The LSWP and triennial assessment results are made publicly accessible on the district website.
FR16, FR18: Triennial evaluations are systematically conducted every three years, and policies are revised based on assessment findings.
Narrative of Success & Continuous Improvement:
Our greatest success lies in our meal access, food environment, and operational transparency. By participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), all enrolled students receive breakfast and lunch at no cost without needing household applications, removing socioeconomic barriers to daily nutrition. Additionally, our district successfully expanded free drinking water availability by installing dedicated bottle-filling stations across campuses. Compared to previous assessment cycles, our food service staff training hours and marketing restrictions have matured from basic compliance to fully integrated daily operations.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
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?	**2**	**2**	☆
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**	☆
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?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR7	Do all a la carte foods and beverages sold in the cafeteria meet Smart Snacks 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**	☆
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**	☆
FR13	Which groups are represented on the district-level wellness committee?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR14	Is there an official who is responsible for the implementation and compliance with the wellness policy at the building level for each school?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR15	How is the wellness policy made available to the public?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR16	Is wellness policy implementation evaluated every three years?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR17	What is included in the triennial assessment report to the public?	**2**	**2**	☆
FR18	Has the wellness policy been revised based on the previous triennial assessment?	**2**	**2**	☆
NES1	Does the district offer breakfast every day to all students?	**2**	**2**	☆
NES4	Does your school use strategies to maximize participation in the school breakfast program and/or school lunch program?	**2**	**2**	☆
NES5	Are marketing strategies used to promote healthy food and beverage choices in school?	**2**	**2**	☆
NES6	Do students have at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they are seated?	**2**	**2**	☆
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?	**2**	**2**	☆
NES11	Do all foods or beverages SERVED (not sold) to students after the school day on school grounds (including aftercare, clubs, and afterschool programming) meet federal nutrition standards (e.g., CACFP or Smart Snacks)?	**2**	**2**	☆
NES12	Do all foods or beverages SOLD (not served) to students after the school day on school grounds (including aftercare, clubs, and afterschool programming) meet federal nutrition standards (e.g., CACFP or Smart Snacks)?	**2**	**2**	☆
NES14	Do students have consistent and easy access to free drinking water throughout the school day?	**2**	**2**	☆

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NE1	Are skills-based, behavior-focused, and interactive/participatory methods used in nutrition education to develop student skills?	**2**	**2**	☆
NE2	Do all elementary school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	**2**	**2**	☆
NE3	Do all middle school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	**2**	**2**	☆
PEPA3	How does your physical education program promote a physically active lifestyle?	**2**	**2**	☆
PEPA13	Is there daily recess for all grades in elementary school?	**2**	**2**	☆
IC1	Is there an active district-level wellness committee?	**2**	**2**	☆

Create Practice Implementation Plan

This section identifies areas where our district possesses policy guidelines, but daily practice implementation is either limited or inconsistent across campuses.
Federal Requirements Included:
FR1: Specific goals for nutrition education designed to promote student wellness (Policy Score: 2 | Practice Score: 1).
FR11: Regulation of foods and beverages served during classroom parties and celebrations in elementary schools (Policy Score: 2 | Practice Score: 1).
Implementation Improvement Strategies:
Nutrition Education (FR1): While our policy outlines sequential nutrition education, classroom integration is inconsistent. We will establish quarterly interactive nutrition activities and standard lesson toolkits for teachers.
Class Parties & Celebrations (FR11): To align classroom practice with our written policy, the district will publish an approved "Healthy Celebrations List" for teachers and parents, offering non-food rewards and Smart Snack-compliant options.
Responsibility & Oversight:
The Superintendent, in collaboration with School Principals and the Coordinators of Food Services, will oversee the creation and monitoring of the Practice Implementation Plan.
Timeline & Evaluation:
Plan Creation Date: June 2027.
Plan Implementation Date: August 2027.
Success Assessment: Measured via bi-annual building-level compliance audits conducted by food service coordinators and feedback surveys submitted to the Local Wellness Committee during quarterly meetings.

		Policy Score	**Practice Score**	
FR1	Does the district have specific goals for nutrition education designed to promote student wellness?	**2**	**1**	
FR11	Does your district regulate foods and beverages served at class parties and other school celebrations in elementary schools?	**2**	**1**	
PEPA14	 Do teachers provide regular physical activity breaks for students in the classroom?	**2**	**1**	

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Update Policies

This section addresses areas where district practices are being performed in schools (Scores 1 or 2), but written policy language is weak or completely missing (Scores 0 or 1).
Federal Requirements & Priority Items Included:
Federal Requirements: None. (All federal items FR1–FR18 have strong written policy scores of 2).
District Priority Items (Non-Federal):
PEPA1 & PEPA2: Written PE Curriculum & Alignment with State/National Standards (Policy: 1/0 | Practice: 2/2).
PEPA15: Joint/Shared-Use Agreements for physical activity facilities (Policy: 0 | Practice: 2).
EW1: Employee Wellness strategies and support (Policy: 0 | Practice: 2).
IC2: Establishment of active building-level wellness committees (Policy: 1 | Practice: 2).
NE5 & NE6: Integrating nutrition education into core subjects and food service collaboration (Policy: 1/1 | Practice: 1/2).
Action Plan for Policy Updates & Practice Enhancement:
Policy Language Responsibility: The District Local Wellness Committee, chaired by the Superintendent's designee, will draft updated policy language.
Timeline for Policy Updates: Policy revisions will be drafted by June 2027, submitted to the Governing Board for a first reading in August 2027, and targeted for formal adoption by August 2027.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
NE6	Do school nutrition services staff members use the following methods to collaborate with teachers to reinforce nutrition education lessons taught in the classroom?	**1**	**2**	
PEPA1	Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is implemented consistently for every grade?	**1**	**2**	
PEPA2	Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is aligned with national and/or state standards?	**0**	**2**	
PEPA5	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in middle school receive?	**0**	**2**	
PEPA15	Does the district have “joint-use” or “shared-use” agreements?	**0**	**2**	
PEPA17	Are teachers encouraged to use physical activity as a reward for students?	**0**	**2**	
PEPA18	Do teachers ever use physical activity as a punishment?	**0**	**2**	
EW1	Are there strategies used by the school to support employee wellness?	**0**	**2**	
IC2	Is there an active school-level wellness committee?	**1**	**2**	

Opportunities for Growth

This section identifies unaddressed or minimally addressed wellness components where both policy and practice scores reflect significant room for growth (Scores 0 or 1).
Federal Requirements & Priority Items Included:
Federal Requirement: NES9 (Fundraiser Exemptions) - Policy: 1 | Practice: 1.

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District Growth Priorities:
PEPA4 & PEPA5: Mandatory minimum physical education minutes per week for Elementary and Middle School grades (Policy: 0/0 | Practice: 0/2).
PEPA7 & PEPA8: Requirements for certified PE teachers and PE-specific professional development (Policy: 0/0 | Practice: 1/1). PEPA16: Active Transport / Safe Routes to School initiatives (Policy: 0 | Practice: 1).
NES7: Local food procurement / Farm-to-School priorities (Policy: 0 | Practice: 1).
Implementation & Policy Update Plan:
Practice Implementation Plan:
Establish guidelines for physical education instructional minutes for K-8 students.
Partner with local municipal public safety agencies to explore Safe Routes to School mapping.
Incorporate local food sourcing targets into food service vendor contracts.
Responsible Parties: Director of Curriculum (for PE minutes/staffing), Director of Food Services (for local food procurement), and District Wellness Coordinator.
Implementation Timeline: Practice plan developed by June 2027; implemented at the start of the 2027-2028 school year (August 2027).
Success Assessment: Annual review of PE master schedules, food service purchasing logs, and student participation in active transport.
Policy Update Responsibility & Timeline: Drafted by the Local Wellness Committee by June 2027; adopted by the Governing Board in August 2027.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
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**	
NES13	Do teachers or school staff give students food as a reward?	**0**	**1**	
NE5	Is nutrition education integrated into other subjects beyond health education?	**1**	**1**	
NE7	Does nutrition education address agriculture and the food system?	**0**	**1**	
PEPA4	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in elementary school receive?	**0**	**0**	
PEPA7	Are all physical education classes taught by state certified/licensed teachers who are endorsed to teach physical education?	**0**	**1**	
PEPA8	Is ongoing professional development offered every year for PE teachers that is relevant and specific to physical education?	**0**	**1**	
PEPA11	Are there opportunities for families and community members to engage in physical activity at school?	**0**	**1**	
PEPA12	Are there opportunities for all students to engage in physical activity before and after school?	**0**	**1**	
PEPA16	What proportion of students walk or bike to school?	**0**	**1**	

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PEPA19	Do teachers ever withhold physical activity as a classroom management tool?	**0**	**1**	
EW2	Are school staff encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors in front of students?	**0**	**1**	

Conclusion

Fowler Elementary School District #45 remains dedicated to nurturing healthy, thriving students. Our FY26 Triennial Wellness Assessment confirms that our district excels in providing universal free meals through the CEP, ensuring free drinking water access, maintaining strict standards for competitive foods, and taking proactive action against ultra-processed foods.
To build upon this strong foundation, our action plan focuses on three clear goals over the coming school year:
Formalize Practices in Written Policy: Update official policy to reflect excellent active practices, including our PE curriculum alignment, joint facility use, and staff wellness programs.
Enhance Classroom Practices: Standardize nutrition education across grade levels and support healthy classroom celebrations.
Expand Opportunities: Establish defined physical education minute guidelines, support Safe Routes to School, and promote local food procurement.
We encourage families and community members to attend our quarterly Local Wellness Committee meetings. Meeting dates and ongoing wellness updates are published on the district's website at https://www.fesd.org/food-services.

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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