

Triennial Assessment Report: 2025 Triennial Assessment (6/2025)

District: GREAT HEARTS TEXAS

Introduction

Overall, Great Hearts Texas has a solid Wellness Policy that prioritizes healthy food through the National School Lunch Program, supporting students' access to meals, and promoting a lifelong active lifestyle. The results of this Triennial Assessment will help Great Hearts Texas continue to improve and encourage health activity and eating habits for our students.

Strong Policies and Aligned Practices

Every year, Great Hearts has worked to improve the meal program through continuing education, soliciting parent and student feedback, and promoting the Free and Reduced Lunch Application, so all students have access to good food that they love. As our schools have expanded, so have our playgrounds, PE spaces, and sports facilities. This has allowed our PE and athletic programs to flourish and expand to include more students and to promote fun and lifelong physical activity.

		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	★
FR3	Does your school take steps to protect the privacy of students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals?	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	★

Triennial Assessment Report: 2025 Triennial Assessment (6/2025)
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FR7	Do all a la carte foods and beverages sold in the cafeteria meet Smart Snacks standards?	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	☆
NES1	Does the district offer breakfast every day to all students?	2	2	☆
NES2	Does your school take steps to address feeding students with unpaid meal balances without stigmatizing them?	2	2	☆
NES3	Does your school or district provide information to families about eligibility for free or reduced-price meals?	2	2	☆
NES4	Does your school use strategies to maximize participation in the school breakfast program and/or school lunch program?	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	☆
NES14	Do students have consistent and easy access to free drinking water throughout the school day?	2	2	☆
PEPA3	How does your physical education program promote a physically active lifestyle?	2	2	☆

Triennial Assessment Report: 2025 Triennial Assessment (6/2025)

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Create Practice Implementation Plan

While it is in areas of our classroom lessons, one area of growth is the adoption of a formal nutrition education curriculum that also aligns with a classical liberal arts education. Another area of opportunity is integrating more movement both in the classrooms, and before and after school, especially for our teenagers. We need to encourage our staff to model healthy lifestyles and to show the students how small changes can make a significant difference in wellbeing.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR1	Does the district have specific goals for nutrition education designed to promote student wellness?	2	1	
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	1	
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	1	
NES13	Do teachers or school staff give students food as a reward?	1	0	
NE1	Are skills-based, behavior-focused, and interactive/ participatory methods used in nutrition education to develop student skills?	2	1	
NE2	Do all elementary school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	2	1	
NE3	Do all middle school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	2	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?	1	0	

Triennial Assessment Report: 2025 Triennial Assessment (6/2025)
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PEPA1	 Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is implemented consistently for every grade?	2	1	
PEPA2	Does the district have a written physical education curriculum that is aligned with national and/or state standards?	2	1	
PEPA5	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in middle school receive?	2	1	
PEPA6	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in high school receive?	1	0	
PEPA8	Is ongoing professional development offered every year for PE teachers that is relevant and specific to physical education?	2	1	
PEPA12	 Are there opportunities for all students to engage in physical activity before and after school?	2	1	
PEPA14	 Do teachers provide regular physical activity breaks for students in the classroom?	2	1	
EW2	Are school staff encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity behaviors in front of students?	2	0	
IC1	Is there an active district-level wellness committee?	1	0	

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Update Policies

While we are strong in adhering to the following policies, Great Hearts will update the Wellness Policy to reflect our current practices.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR18	Has the wellness policy been revised based on the previous triennial assessment?	0	2	
NES10	Are foods or beverages containing caffeine sold at the high school level?	1	2	
PEPA13	Is there daily recess for all grades in elementary school?	1	2	
PEPA18	Do teachers ever use physical activity as a punishment?	0	2	

Opportunities for Growth

As Great Hearts Texas will review the topics below, as pertains to our culture, and present recommendations to district administration for consideration. Any missing Federal requirements will be addressed and implemented.

		Policy Score	Practice Score	
FR11	Does your district regulate foods and beverages served at class parties and other school celebrations in elementary schools?	0	0	
NES5	Are marketing strategies used to promote healthy food and beverage choices in school?	1	1	
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?	1	1	

Triennial Assessment Report: 2025 Triennial Assessment (6/2025)
District: GREAT HEARTS TEXAS

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	
NE4	Do all high school students receive sequential and comprehensive nutrition education?	1	1	
NE5	Is nutrition education integrated into other subjects beyond health education?	1	1	
NE7	 Does nutrition education address agriculture and the food system?	1	1	
PEPA4	How many minutes per week of PE does each grade in elementary school receive?	1	1	
PEPA7	Are all physical education classes taught by state certified/licensed teachers who are endorsed to teach physical education?	1	1	
PEPA11	 Are there opportunities for families and community members to engage in physical activity at school?	1	1	
PEPA17	 Are teachers encouraged to use physical activity as a reward for students?	1	1	
PEPA19	Do teachers ever withhold physical activity as a classroom management tool?	1	1	
EW1	 Are there strategies used by the school to support employee wellness?	0	1	

Triennial Assessment Report: 2025 Triennial Assessment (6/2025)

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Conclusion

In summary, Great Hearts Texas strives to nourish and cultivate our students so they can be healthy and active. This assessment reveals where we are strong and where we have opportunities to grow. Great Hearts will use this assessment as a tool to improve our campuses wellness so students can be ready to learn and explore great things.

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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Triennial Assessment - Wellness Plan Assessment - Goals Assessment

Nutrition Goal 1: GH food service staff, teachers, and other personnel shall consistently promote healthy nutrition messages in cafeterias, classrooms, and other appropriate settings, as well as the participation in the school meal programs.

Objective 1: Provide nutritional information to students and staff regarding nutritional content of food served at school and promote participation in the meal program.

Action Steps	Obsevatons
Signage educating students on the components of a reimbursable meal will be displayed in the serving line or at the POS.	All service lines have signs promoting meal components and how to build a reimbursable meal.
Ensure that the FRL status is not visible at the POS, use a cashless system, and verify all staff that has access to FRL statuses has taken the Civil Rights training.	The point of sale does not display the student's eligibility. Every student pays "on account," so there is no way to know the amount a student is paying for a meal. Civil Rights certificates are collected at the district level for district staff and campus DCOs. Campus level personnel certificates are kept on campus.
Review and coordinate with campuses regarding the negative balance policies.	Negative balances are presented to the DCOs at every DCO meeting, with comparisons from previous years and a line graph to show trends. Also, students are not limited when purchasing a reimbursable meal, but cannot purchase a la carte if the balance would be over -\$5.00 as a result of the purchase. This allows for the student to receive a meal without stigma, while keeping the negative balances managable. It also means that any negative balances the school has to cover is for actual meals, and not "extras."
At least one mid-year survey regarding the food program will be emailed to parents for feedback.	Mid-year surveys were completed for most years, however, parent feedback is always on the Advisory Committee meeting agendas. We also respond to every parent email or comments, and use that feedback to help us make meaningful adjustments in our program that would encourage more participation.
Progress: Meeting Goals	Next Steps: explore more ways to engage students: taste testing, special seasonal food highlights, etc.

Nutrition Goal 2: Students will receive nutrition education that fosters the adoption and maintenance of healthy eating behaviors and the understanding of how a student's environment affects their nutrition and health.

Objective 1: Deliver an effective K-12 nutrition curriculum consistently across all grades.

Action Steps	Obsevatons
District to develop nutritional education requirements for campuses	Students receive some nutrition education in their PE and science classes, however, a formal, coheisive curriculum has not been established. Academic Administration notified of this requirement.
Encourage each campus to have a Gardening Club whenever possible.	Many campuses have Gardening Clubs
Progress: Partially Meeting Goals	Next Steps: Research a nutrition education curriculum that is copmpliant with TEA requirements and fits in with the school culture.

Nutrition Goal 3: Educational nutrition information and the Free & Reduced Meal program will be directly shared with families (through email) and the general public (through the website) to positively influence the health of students and community members.

Objective 1: Provide healthy eating educational and FRL information to families directly through campus newsletters and website.

Action Steps	Obsevatons
Website links to nutritional information and articles on child	SLA sends out parent newsletters that cover these topics.
District to provide periodic articles for the campus newsletters regarding healthy eating, seasonal fruits and vegetables, and other wellness information.	SLA sends out parent newsletters that cover these topics.
Promote the FRL applications and encourage families to apply by emailing them directly, newsletters, and website links.	CNP sends out several FRL emails at the beginning of the year, as well as reminders for those whose carryover eligibility is expiring. Campuses include reminders in their newsletters, make phone calls, and assist families in applying.
Progress: Meeting Goals	Next Steps: Continue to work with SLA regarding newsletters. Explore tools to assist campus in reaching out to their families and encourage FRL applications. Add educational information to the CNP website for the general public.

Triennial Assessment - Wellness Plan Assessment - Goals Assessment

Physical Activity Goal 1: Great Hearts will provide an environment that fosters safe and enjoyable fitness activities for all students, including those who are not participating in competitive sports.

Objective 1: Provide a safe school structure and classroom learning environment that supports opportunities for students to be active during the school day.

Action Steps	Obsevatons
The Physical Education program provides adequate space and equipment and conforms to all applicable safety standards.	Most schools now have gyms and athletic fields, so there is more space for PE and other outdoor activities. The gyms also allow more activities on days with inclement weather.
Physical Education instructors are required to receive professional development and training specifically for physical fitness/education.	Campus results were mixed, so there is progress, but not universally so.
Recess should be outside whenever possible.	Recess is held outside when weather allows.
Progress: Partially Meeting Goals	Next Steps: Verify professional training offered to athletic staff.

Physical Activity Goal 2: Great Hearts will encourage teachers to integrate physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.

Objective 1: Identify and prioritize ways to integrate movement into the student learning environment.

Action Steps	Obsevatons
Classroom physical activity opportunities will be offered daily during the school day. At minimum, students should be able to stand and stretch every hour if they do not change classrooms.	Most classes do well with allowing movement, or building it in their schedule.
An athletic and academic field days are offered for the entire student body on a yearly basis.	Campuses have athletic and academic field every year.
Students are given at least 15 minutes daily for supervised physical activity.	Elementary students have at least one recess every day. Elementary, Middle, and some High Schoolers take PE. High Schoolers also have a break in their Humane Letters class where they will go outside. Many will play basketball or other games.
Campuses are encouraged to set specific guidelines on when removing recess can be used as a discipline option.	Campus Admin reports that teachers do not remove recess as a disciplinary option, however, teachers and parents report that they do (or at least have the perception that they do).
Progress: Partially Meeting Goals	Next Steps: seek official guidance from the Executive Team regarding a policy to either remove or restrict using the option for recess removal as a disciplinary action.

Physical Activity Goal 3: Great Hearts will make appropriate before and/or after school physical activity programs available and will encourage

Objective 1: Each campus will offer clubs that incorporate physical activities for each grade level.

Action Steps	Obsevatons
Campus are encouraged to offer several Clubs with opportunities for physical activity for all grades. If there is a high demand for a certain club, campuses are encouraged to expand those offerings to include more students.	Campuses offer a variety of clubs each semester. They include dancing, sports, running, gardening, and orther activities
Progress: Meeting Goals	Next Steps: Encourage participation and expand access if needed

Physical Activity Goal 4: Great Hearts will encourage parents to support their children's participation, to be active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.

Objective 1: Campuses will promote school-wide family events that focus on physical activity.

Action Steps	Obsevatons
Campuses will provide at least 1 opportunity per school year for families to participate in organized, physically active activities, such as family dances, hikes, fun runs, etc.	Campuses offer a variety of clubs each semester. They include dancing, sports, running, gardening, and orther activities
Progress: Meeting Goals	Next Steps:

Triennial Assessment - Wellness Plan Assessment - Goals Assessment	
Other Goal 1: Great Hearts shall allow sufficient time for students to eat meals in facilities that are clean, comfortable, and safe.	
Objective 1: The district shall allow sufficient time for students to eat meals.	
Action Steps	Obsevatons
After obtaining food, students will have at least 20 minutes scheduled for lunch.	Some campuses have extended their lunch periods, and some have not. We still have 20 minutes (total time) lunch periods, but more schools are starting to schedule 25-30 minute lunches than before.
Objective 2: Students shall have an eating environment that is safe and clean.	
Action Steps	Obsevatons
•Clean tables between lunch periods. •Have cleaning staff on hand to help clean up, mop up spills, and sweep up food on the floor.	Campuses are keeping the cafeteria clean and inviting during lunch.
Progress: Partially Meeting Goals	Next Steps: Explore options to set a Great Hearts policy for a minimum lunch period. Also explore options for creating more efficient serving lines.

Other Goal 2: Great Hearts shall promote employee wellness activities and involvement at suitable school activities.	
Objective 1: The campuses shall allow and encourage staff members to join all activities that are also promoted for families to encourage physical activity and nutritional education.	
Action Steps	Obsevatons
Include staff in communication that promotes all campus activities involving physical activities.	Staff is solicited for sponsoring clubs, chaperoning dances, and helping with other school events.
Objective 2: Great Hearts should promote employee wellness at all levels – from employee to campus to district.	
Action Steps	Obsevatons
•Solicit feedback through poll, comments, or “feature” request from employees on what possible wellness perks they are interested in (discount on gym memberships, discount on food or weight loss programs, etc.). •Coordinate with either the campus (if a local perk) or district (if more global) to discuss implementing.	We have not solicited feedback from staff regarding potential wellness perks. One campus does offer a gym membership to employees that opt to park across the street from the school instead of in the (limited) school parking lot.
Progress: Partially Meeting Goals	Next Steps: Work with HR to see if they have any input or insights regarding potential wellness perks and/or employee surveys.