

Jefferson School District 251

2026-27 Wellness Program Annual Report

The district continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to student wellness through nutrition education, physical activity opportunities, healthy meal programs, and whole child supports across all schools. This year's review found that schools are moving beyond compliance and implementing wellness initiatives that meet the unique needs of their students while maintaining alignment with District wellness goals.

High School Overview

Strengths

- Continued implementation of Smart Snacks standards and healthier vending options.
- Strong support for student physical, mental, social, and emotional wellness through extracurricular activities, counseling, and student support programs.
- Increased focus on providing healthier food choices throughout the school day.
- Recognition of operational challenges associated with maintaining healthy food programs.

Needs

- Reduced revenue from vending machines and snack sales as healthier items have not sold as well as traditional offerings.
- Need for greater student engagement and input regarding wellness initiatives and food choices.

Focus Areas for 2026-27

- Identify healthy snack and beverage options that students are more likely to purchase.
- Increase student feedback and participation in menu and snack selection.
- Continue balancing nutrition goals with financial sustainability of vending and school store programs.
- Monitor and evaluate sales data to identify successful healthy offerings.

Middle School Overview

Strengths

- Strong participation in physical education, athletics, clubs, and extracurricular activities.
- Continued emphasis on nutrition education and student wellness.
- Active efforts to connect wellness concepts to student learning and daily activities.

Needs

- Increase student interest in selecting fresh fruits and vegetables during school meals.
- Address reports that some students participating in after-school intervention programs remain hungry at the end of the school day.
- Continue building staff awareness of health and nutrition practices.

Focus Areas for 2026-27

- Work with food services to promote fresh fruits and vegetables through education, presentation, and student engagement.
- Explore opportunities to provide healthy after-school snack options for students participating in interventions and extended learning activities.
- Continue strengthening school wellness goals and measuring progress annually.
- Increase staff and student awareness of healthy nutrition habits.

Elementary School Overview

Strengths

- Consistent physical education, recess, and movement opportunities throughout the school day.
- Strong nutrition education and participation in healthy meal programs.
- School-specific wellness initiatives such as fitness events, greenhouses, structured recess, and fresh fruit and vegetable programs.
- Strong emphasis on protecting recess and promoting active lifestyles.

Needs

- Increase participation in school meal programs by offering menu options that appeal to a broader range of students
- Expand opportunities for physical activity beyond current recess and PE programs.
- Continue evaluating meal offerings to ensure students are both nourished and satisfied.

Focus Areas for 2026-27

- Develop second entrée options when feasible to encourage greater participation in school meals.
- Continue exploring menu items that students are more likely to select and consume.
- Increase opportunities for physical activity during and beyond the school day.
- Pilot and evaluate new menu items while gathering student feedback to guide future offerings.
- Continue promoting healthy eating habits and active lifestyles through school wellness activities.

Districtwide Priorities for the Upcoming Year

1. **Increase student participation in healthy meal and snack programs** through menu innovation and student feedback.
2. **Promote healthy food choices while maintaining program sustainability**, particularly at the secondary level.
3. **Expand opportunities for physical activity**, especially within elementary schools.
4. **Support students' nutritional needs throughout the school day**, including exploring healthy snack options for students participating in after-school interventions.
5. **Establish measurable wellness goals** at each building and monitor progress annually.
6. **Continue sharing successful wellness practices across schools** to strengthen districtwide implementation.

Overall Conclusion

The annual review demonstrates that Jefferson School District 251 maintains a strong foundation for student wellness. Schools continue to provide meaningful opportunities for healthy eating, physical activity, and whole-child support. Moving forward, the district's focus will be on increasing student participation in wellness initiatives, improving the appeal and sustainability of healthy food offerings, expanding physical activity opportunities, and ensuring all students have access to nutritious foods that support learning and well-being.

Wellness Committee,

October 2026