Welcome to our live webinar on “Local School Wellness Policy”. My name is Zainab Rida, Director of Nebraska Team Nutrition Services program of the Nebraska Department of Education. I am very happy and pleased to be here to present this webinar on the final rules of the USDA Local Wellness Policy which is part of the “2010 Healthy Hungry Kids Act”. I would like to inform you that Team Nutrition is providing these series of webinars to help you get started with your School Wellness Policy. We will present related topics every Wednesday at 2:00 P.M. until the second week of November. We will try to cover each element of the “Local Wellness Policy”, share the final requirements, resources and examples of policy language of each element.

On July 29th of this year the USDA Food and Nutrition Services finalized regulations to create a framework and devise guidelines for written wellness policies established by local educational agencies.

The final rule requires all the LEA’s to begin developing and revising local wellness policies during the school year 2016-2017. LEA’s must fully comply with the final rule by June 30, 2017.
• I am very pleased to be joined today by Lynn Goering, National School Lunch Specialist, Kristen Hooska, Extension Educator.
• We have an exciting agenda plan for you today that will allow you to get a running start on revising your School wellness policy before June 30th 2017 deadline.
• Lynn will go through the administrative review and the expectation of State agencies from the schools regarding SWP.
• Kristen will provide you with free and evidence based and practice based resources that help you meet SWP requirement.
A wide variety of research has demonstrated the positive correlation between health and learning, and those two things are mutually reinforcing.

There’s little disagreement that, whether we’re talking about improved nutrition or increased physical activity, students with health promoting behaviors perform better academically than those with poor health behaviors. Simply put, healthy students are better students. Though schools have always played a role in keeping students nourished and physically active.

Because of continual research and study, we are learning more and more about the opportunities possible to create a culture of wellness within our schools as well as the persistent hurdles and inequities that prevent it. For instance, we’re learning more about the human brain and its connection to school wellness. Specifically, we’re discovering the measurable neurophysiological role that nutrition and physical activity may play in improving academic achievement for all — not just some — children.
We are not expecting all the local educational agencies to start from scratch; however, our records indicate that in 2010-11, 99% of students that are enrolled in public school districts that have SWP in place. Studies show that not all the children are benefiting from these documents since there is no enforcement. It didn’t matter whether the SWP is strong or not because there is no implementation, evaluation, and review and update.

With the release of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010, there are new USDA regulations for local school Wellness policies. These regulations expand on the requirements set in 2004, which primarily mandated that schools simply develop a wellness policy. The act strengthens the requirements for the local school wellness policies and puts more emphasis on policy implementation, periodic review, and updates.
As you all know schools play critical role in promoting student’s health preventing obesity and combating problems associated with poor nutrition and in physical activity. Local wellness policies are an important tool for parents, local educational agencies (LEAs) and school districts in promoting student wellness, preventing and reducing childhood obesity, and providing assurance that school meal nutrition guidelines meet the minimum federal school meal standards.

The new regulations require districts to include the following elements and making sure schools implement the local policy, monitor and evaluate the policies, and periodically update the community on the status of the policy.

- Public Notification
- Nutrition guidelines
- Nutrition Education
- Nutrition Promotion
- Public Notifications
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Physical Education and Physical activity

As I have mentioned earlier, NE TN will provide more in-depth information about each elements as well as sample of policy language and resources. I would really encourage you to join us every Wednesday at 2:00 to get more information about each element.
This comparison chart compares between 2004 and 2010 SWP requirements. The HHFA2010 adds a new section which expands the scope of SWP by bringing additional stakeholders to help in development, implementation and review LSWP and required public update on the content of implementation of SWP.

USDA agrees that schools play a powerful role in preparing students for a successful future, and believes that the guidance outlined in this final rule will further support efforts to create a school environment that teaches, supports and encourages students to develop lifelong healthy habits. NDE/TN recognizes that the first few years of implementation may be a period of transition as strengthening local school wellness policies may involve significant changes for some LEAs. During this transition period, NE TN is willing to focus on providing guidance and technical assistance to help LEAs move toward compliance. We would like to work closely with LEAs experiencing challenges to help them resolve unique issues. In order to assist LEAs in implementing these requirements, TN will continue to provide support to Schools. This will include identifying best practices and success stories and sharing other technical assistance materials that will assist LEAs in developing, updating, and assessing their policies. Let’s take a look at each element and compare the differences between 2004 and 2010.
Public notification was not required in 2004 of WIC reauthorization; however, 2010 of HHFKA is required to inform and update the public including parent, students, and others in the community about the content and implementation of the LSWP.

Measuring implementation in 2004 was only required to establish a plan whereas in 2010 LEAs are required to periodically measure and make available to the public an assessment on the implementation of LWP, including the extent to which schools are in compliance with LWP, the extent to which the LWP compares to model LWP, and a description of the progress made in attaining goals of LWP.

And finally, local designation are required to ensure that each school complies with the LWP. LEAs need to designate one or more officials to measure the implementation of LWP.

Now I am going to turn it over to Lynn to discuss how NDE monitors SWP.
Thank you Zainab. My name is Lynn Goering and I am one of the 7 program specialists who work with the National School Lunch program. I’ll be sharing a brief overview of how the Nebraska Department of Education monitors school wellness policies.

And then I will turn it over to Kristen who will talk about the many resources available to schools through Team Nutrition.

During my presentation, for the sake of simplicity I’ll refer to Department of Education Nutrition Services as simply the State Agency, state staff or use the initials SA on the slides.

How does the SA assess or evaluate compliance?

The first way is through the Annual sponsor application. Question #43 asks for the date the wellness policy was adopted or amended, please make sure that this date matches the most recent update of your policy. And Question #44 captures or confirms information about 4 basic elements or requirements for wellness policies:

- Does the policy include goals
- Does the policy include nutrition guidelines for ALL foods
- Does the policy ensure that meals will comply with the new meal pattern of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act
- And last, does the policy have a plan to measure and evaluate results?

All 4 of these items will be discussed in the webinars that are scheduled in the next few weeks.
The 2nd way the SA assesses or evaluates compliance is through the Administrative Review process, which operates on a 3 year cycle. The Admin Review is a comprehensive evaluation of the school meals program, and covers a variety of modules or areas.

One of these is wellness. First the district will provide a copy of the current School Wellness Policy. And the state will review it to determine whether the policy includes:

- Goals for nutrition education, physical activity, nutrition promotion, and other activities to promote wellness.
- Nutrition guidelines for all foods available on the school campus
- A plan for measuring implementation
- Designation of one or more officials in charge of school compliance oversight

As I mentioned on the previous slide, upcoming webinars will provide more indepth discussion and information on these areas there are 6 additional review questions in the wellness module, which we will go through now.
How does the public know about the School Wellness Policy?

- Public awareness
- Examples: link to website, back-to-school-packet

**Question 1**

How does the public know about the Wellness Policy?

The Policy must be made available to the public.

State staff will ask the district to describe how the Policy is made available. For example, the Policy could be on the public section of the school’s website or distributed with other information in the back to school packet).
When and how does the review and update of the Wellness Policy occur?
The School Wellness Policy must be reviewed and updated on a periodic basis.

The SA will ask for documentation demonstrating how this requirement is met.

For example, if the Policy was updated at an annual meeting, meeting minutes would be the appropriate documentation.
A common observation when conducting an administrative review is that the wellness policy does not reflect actual wellness practices and advancements that are occurring within the school.

For example, Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act regulation changes and other best practices have been implemented by schools, but language has not been added to the school policy to reflect those changes.

Compliance with the New meal pattern belongs in the wellness policy— and models a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

Menu Marketing your food service— does your policy clearly describe and highlight all the healthy, attractive choices?

Entrée choices— many schools offer a nice selection of alternates, which brings more students into the lunch program, eating well-balanced meals.

Most schools have implemented offer verses serve which is a practice that supports positive, no pressure meal time, and allows students to make choices from the offered menu. No longer are students forced to take one bite, or eat foods they don’t care for.

Alacarte or Smart snacks or items for sale during the school day, comply with calorie, fat and sugar standards— vending machines have been revamped.

And Many schools have re-evaluated Fundraising activities, and now either sell healthier options or have switched to non-food items to raise money.
The addition of lovely, self serve choices from Fruit and Vegetable bars fits perfectly with wellness, and should be added to your policy.

Many schools have other practices in place that recognize the different nutritional and feeding needs of students with regard to breakfast including Grab and Go breakfast AND breakfast after the bell.

The use of 2nd chance breakfast recognizes that MS and HS age kids get hungry later, but still need breakfast. Schools that offer sack lunches for field trips – are providing a benefit to the parent as well as the student, ensuring a convenient, fresh, healthy lunch – even on the day of a field trip.
Update Your Policy

• Recess before lunch
• Nutrition Education posters
• No soda in sack lunches
• No “fast” food brought in
• Student handbook

Other examples of policy items already in place or items that your school might want to implement:

Recess before lunch which is backed up by research as being successful to increase intake and decrease plate waste

displaying attractive and educational posters in the cafeteria and school halls will to spark student interest in nutrition and physical activity
If other practices are in place such as –
No soda is allowed in sack lunches, OR No “fast” food brought in, or allowed in the cafeteria
Put these in writing
And Utilize the Student handbook to distribute and highlight school practices
Who is involved in reviewing and updating the School Wellness Policy?

Parents, students, PE teachers, school health professionals, food service and other school personnel, school administrators, the school board, representatives of the SFA, and the general public must all be permitted to contribute to the development, implementation, review, and update of the Local School Wellness Policy.
HOW are potential stakeholders made aware of their ability to participate in the development, review, update, and implementation of the School Wellness Policy?
How are new committee members made aware of the opportunity and recruited?
You will be asked to show documentation
For example, your school might send out a district-wide email or post flyers in various locations to notify potential stakeholders about the opportunity.

The NDE website has a number of resources, including sample wording for outreach. Zainab and Kristen cover this area in the upcoming webinars.
Provide a copy of the most recent assessment on the implementation of the Local School Wellness Policy.

During a review state staff will ask for a copy of the most recent assessment.

NDE Team Nutrition has developed an assessment tool which will be covered in this webinar series.
How does the public know about the results of the most recent assessment of the implementation of the School Wellness Policy?

The assessment must be made available to the public.

How this is done is up to the school to decide. NDE Team Nutrition also has templates and other resources to help schools accomplish this requirement.

At the time of your review, provide a description or documentation to show how results are shared.

That wraps up the information on wellness and the administrative review, and I’ll turn it over to Kristen.
Hello Everyone – My name is Kristen Houska and I am the new Team Nutrition Coordinator through Nebraska Extension. I will be detailing some of the resources you can access through Team Nutrition and the Department of Education to help you with your wellness policy.
Become a Team Nutrition School! This allows you to receive newsletters on health related topics that you can copy and paste into your school’s newsletter or email blast.
Also, as a Team Nutrition school you are able to apply for national wellness awards such as Health US School Challenge. Your school can be awarded ($500.00 – Bronze), ($1,000. – Silver, $1,500.) – (Gold and $2,000.) – (Gold with distinction through HUSSC). Show everyone the wonderful things your school is doing by promoting your wellness efforts with Team Nutrition.
Signing up to be a Team Nutrition School is very easy. Just click on the ‘Become a TN School’ link, enter the information needed and submit. All you will need is to add your school name, address and total enrollment.
You can also search to see if you are already a Team Nutrition School by using this database. If you are a partner working with a school you can check to see who their point person is for their wellness efforts, or to see if they have signed up to be a Team Nutrition school you can do so by entering in their information here.
The Team Nutrition website is a great resource for School Wellness Policy. You do not need to start from scratch on any of your wellness efforts. Team Nutrition has example wellness policies for you to access along with Best Practices regarding wellness policy elements.
The Team Nutrition website has a whole page of model policies for schools and partners to access. You can compare your current wellness policy with the approved model policies on the website.
Moodle has recorded presentations on each element of School Wellness Policy and resources for each element.
Another good place for School Wellness Policy resources is the Nebraska Department of Education website. During each School Wellness Policy webinar we will address resources further for each element. Thank you.
When we communicate about the School Wellness Policy do we need to include the non-discrimination statement?
Answer: As long as it is posted on your website somewhere or if your wellness policy is located on your website you may use the short version.

Can you share the URL for the model policy?
Answer: http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/school-wellness-resources-2

We have worked with Alliance for a Healthier Generation Policy can we use this model policy to develop our school wellness policy?
Answer: Yes, Alliance for a Healthier Generation has developed a model policy available it is acceptable for school use, it located on the NDE website as well as the USDA website.

Where is the shortened version of the non discriminatory statement.
Answer: If you go to the NDE website Nutrition Services on the left side you will click on “Forms and Resources” where you will find a menu of topics: click on “Civil Rights” and it is located in that section.

Is there a simple way to communicate the new healthy smart snack?
Answer: Yes, the USDA has developed a new brochure. It is available on the USDA website or you can contact Nutrition Services and they can order these for you at no cost.