

Goals to Promote Wellness

Healthy Eating, Increased Physical Activity, and Safe Behavior

Students are healthier and safer.

Vision Statement

We envision that over the term of this Strategic Plan our students will become healthier eaters, become more physically fit, engage in fewer in risk behaviors, and engage in less bullying behavior. We also see a greatly improved learning environment and community with healthy learners who are physically and emotionally safe.

The connection between good health and learning is well established. Good health is supported by good nutrition and physical fitness. The connection between youth risk behaviors and learning is also clearly established and students who report having fewer ASSETS (protective factors) are more likely to struggle as learners and are more likely to drop out of school. Bullying is too common in today's communities and bullying and other intimidating behaviors threaten students' physical and emotional safety. Feeling safe is essential to learning and all students have a right to feel safe in school.

Opportunity for Improvement

The District recently put an administrative Wellness Policy into place. The policy addresses three areas of health and wellness; these are (1) Nutrition, (2) Physical Activity, and (3) Youth Risk Behaviors. In the elementary, middle, and high school grades, there are a number of programs within the curriculum that address each of these three areas. However, wellness has not been addressed in a comprehensive manner by the District. This has resulted in a patchwork of programs, many programs effective in their own right, but the PK-12 continuum of efforts is not coordinated.

By 10th grade, 30% of our students are overweight or obese. This mirrors state statistics. We know that many students do not get enough physical exercise. Results of the *Youth Risk Behavior* and *ASSETS* surveys suggest that we need to strengthen the protective factors available to our youth. Bullying persists as a problem in our school system and community.

Root Cause: Baseline data in incomplete

Data on health factors, risk factors, and bullying behavior is incomplete and not centralized, making a baseline difficult to determine.

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
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Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
Build central database for data on health factors, risk behaviors and assets, and bullying behavior.	Extract data from school health database, from Youth Risk Behavior Survey (bullying, overweight and sedentary questions) and Assets Survey (Caring School and Community and Peaceful Conflict Resolution questions).

Root Cause: Lack of a comprehensive approach to health and wellness

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
Collaborate with Newburyport community organizations to help develop a community-wide and comprehensive understanding of health and wellness in Newburyport.	Implement the School Committee and Administrative Wellness Policies. Charge the Health and Wellness Advisory Council and the district Prevention Specialists to develop student health goals, strategies and benchmarks for nutrition, physical activity, risk behaviors, and life-long health. Include in all three goals: physical activity, eating and behavior.

Root Cause: Community is complacent regarding healthy behaviors and eating habits

There is a lack of awareness and complacency in our community regarding healthy eating habits.

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
Educate the Newburyport community on youth health and wellness.	Introduce wellness website for use by the community. Include in all three goals: physical activity, eating and behaviors. Expand community knowledge of the 40 assets. Partner with NYS.

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
Educate Newburyport Public School staff on Youth Health and Wellness.	Introduce all staff to 40 assets. Support study groups or workshops for credit/PDPs for intermediate training.

Root Cause: Risk behaviors persist

Students continue to participate in risk behaviors such as alcohol consumption and drug use

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
Collaborate with Newburyport community organizations to help develop a community-wide and comprehensive understanding of health and wellness issues for Newburyport youth.	See charge to health-wellness advisory council in the “Increased Physical Education and Activity” goal.

Root Cause: Students and parents don't fully understand legal ramifications

Students don't fully understand legal ramifications of underage drinking and drug use.

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
Expand and develop education regarding legal impact of underage drinking.	Repeat NHS Senior Week required parent and student education programs annually, continuing to coordinate with local police and NYS to educate NHS students and their parents on underage drinking. Expand to Middle School. Partner with NYS.

Root Cause: Community tolerates under age drinking

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
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Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
Begin a discussion within the Newburyport community on the topic of underage drinking. Explore beliefs and behaviors, and the impact those behaviors have on youth with respect to drinking. Assess ways to improve beliefs and behaviors.	Complete parent/community survey sponsored by the Beacon Coalition. Disseminate results to community.

Root Cause: Risk behaviors aren't well talked about

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
Continue to gather data and communicate the data on risk behaviors, including alcohol consumption, drug use, tobacco use, and sexual activity.	<p>Work with NYS and others to promote a community-wide discussion of the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey.</p> <p>Promote a community-wide discussion of the results of the Youth Assets Survey.</p>
Educate and enable students to resist risk behaviors on a life-long basis. Work to continuously freshen the message. Repetition of the same message results in students not hearing and apathy.	

Root Cause: Limited opportunity for physical activity for older students

Beginning at about seventh grade, the primary opportunity for physical activity, outside of scheduled PE classes, is interscholastic sports. Regular physical activity is essential for healthy students who are ready to learn to their fullest potential. This goal recognizes that fact and sets an objective to increase overall student participation in physical activities. There are many forms of physical activity, including interscholastic sports and physical education classes, but also activities outside the District, such as dance, tai chi, yoga, organized sports programs, and a personal training practice. This goal encourages all of these and other forms of physical activity.

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
Institute an intramural program at Upper Elementary, Middle and High School.	NHS Athletics Study Committee evaluates adequacy of .6 FTE Athletic Director position.
Maintain and grow opportunities for unique, personal and fun physical activities at all levels. Utilize partnerships with local organizations, as necessary to accomplish this.	
Make physical activity a part of a student's personal record. Make a record of student achievements in this area.	Recommend an action plan for implementing a co-curricular transcript that includes documenting sustained participation in physical activities, for example, competitive swim, dance performance, rock climbing club, fencing class.
Collect data on student participation in physical activity. Use data to drive decision making.	

Root Cause: Narrow range of opportunities for physical activity

Wide range of interests, but relatively narrow array of opportunities

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
Begin offering programs in the unaddressed areas of interest, through intramurals, external partnerships and other mechanisms.	Determine areas of interest that are not being addressed. Partner with Newburyport Youth Services to accomplish this.
Expand participation in existing programs.	

Root Cause: Many athletic opportunities emphasize skill and not participation

Our current high performance environment emphasizes skill rather than participation in sports, especially for older students. Such an environment forces a narrowing of activities for many students, except for the very skilled, often resulting in zero participation in physical activities.

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
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Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
Expand physical activity programs that focus more on participation and exercise, and that do not limit participation on the basis of skill or performance.	

Root Cause: Lack of “fun” sport opportunities

Many students don't find a sport in which they have “fun.”

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
See strategies above. Activities enjoying a large level of participation are usually fun. Being “fun” is necessary for good participation.	Continue to collaborate with NYS and the YWCA to identify and carry out youth activities. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ski bus • Gym memberships • Open gym and training room for all students Include the concept of “open gym” on the FY09 NHS athletics study.

Root Cause: Limited opportunities for life-long physical activities

Students don't have access to many activities which teach or encourage life-long fitness

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
Increase educational focus on life-long health.	
Expand opportunities that support life-long health.	

Root Cause: Persistence of bullying

There is a persistence of bullying and other intimidating behaviors in all communities, Newburyport included.

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
<p>Establish policies and coordinate anti-bullying programs across all grade levels.</p> <p>Establish Professional development for teachers in recognizing and discouraging intimidating behaviors.</p> <p>Educate students and parents in the persistence of bullying and how to recognize and discourage intimidating behavior.</p> <p>Offer programs to help offenders reduce and eliminate their behavior.</p>	<p>Establish a clear definition of bullying.</p> <p>Establish a policy on anti-bullying.</p> <p>Establish, coordinate, and expand anti-bullying programs at Molin and Nock.</p> <p>Carry out parent workshops to educate parents on forms of bullying, the School's programs to reduce bullying, and steps parents can take to help reduce bullying.</p>
<p>Gather data on the amount and type of bullying behaviors.</p>	