

Local Wellness Policies: What Parents Should Know

In 2004, a federal law was passed that requires all school districts to establish local wellness policies by the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year. This law recognizes the critical role that schools must play in helping to raise healthy kids. The local wellness policies require school districts to:

- Create nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages available to students during the school day, in efforts to promote good health and reduce childhood obesity.
- Create goals for nutrition education and physical activity that promote student wellness.
- Create a plan for ensuring the policies are implemented.

Why are the wellness policies important?

- In the past thirty (30) years, childhood obesity has **more than doubled** for preschool children age 2-5 and youth 12-19. It has **more than tripled** for children age 6-11.
- Nearly **40 percent** of California children are not physically fit.
- With the high incidence of childhood obesity, type II diabetes has sky rocketed in children.
- 80% of obese children will become obese adults.
- Obesity side effects include: poor health, other serious health risk factors, poor self esteem, peer ridicule, lack of productivity, inability to take full advantage of an active life style.

Action For Parents:

- Show your support for the positive and healthy changes that the school district makes when the local wellness policies are adopted.
- Tell your children and other parents why this policy is important.

What changes will you see:

All foods and beverages available to students and staff on school campuses during the school day, which is defined as, from 1 hour before the first bell in the morning until 1 hour after the last bell at the end of the day, must be compliant as specified by law.

- Teachers will not use candy for rewards.
- Teachers will not withhold physical activity as punishment.
- Classroom parties will not involve cupcakes, cakes, candy, or sugary beverages.

Fundraising activities:

To support children's health and school nutrition education efforts, school, teacher, or parent group sponsored fundraising activities will not involve food or beverages or will only use foods and beverages that meet nutrition and portion size standards, as specified on the back of this flyer. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity.

If school, teacher, administrator, or parent group sponsor fundraising activities that do not comply with nutrition standards that are specified by law, the fundraising event must meet one of the following conditions:

- It takes place off and away from school premises.
- It takes place prior to one hour before the first bell in the morning and at least one hour after the last bell at the end of the school day.