



Promoting Health in Minnesota Schools:

HEALTHY FUNDRAISING

As society becomes more aware of and concerned with children's health issues, communities are turning to schools to provide an environment that promotes both healthy eating and physical activity.¹ School policies supporting healthy eating and physical activity are an important component of school efforts to promote the health and well-being of school children. Evidence shows that good nutrition and physical activity are linked to academic achievement.² A strong healthy fundraising policy can help create and promote healthy habits and behaviors.

How do schools use fundraising?

School fundraisers have long been a part of going to school. Sports and other extracurricular activities have been supported by fundraising for decades. Recently, schools have turned to fundraisers to help pay for basic programs and other projects.³ Each year, fundraising revenues run into the billions of dollars.⁴ In years past, fundraisers involve the sale of foods that are high in fat, sugar, salt, and calories,⁵ such as:

- Chocolates
- Candy
- Cookies
- Fast food
- Cakes
- Pastries
- Pizza
- Doughnuts

This can create a mixed message for schools trying to teach healthier lifestyle habits.⁶

What is healthy fundraising?

Healthy fundraising involves the sale of healthy foods and non-food alternatives. This fundraising can support nutrition education that is being taught in the classroom.⁷ Healthy fundraising options can include:

- Fresh fruit
- Nuts
- Popcorn
- Trail mix
- Book fairs
- Field trips
- Calendars
- Clothing
- Magazine subscriptions
- Gift wrap
- Candles
- Coupon books
- Gift certificates
- Car washes

Why is healthy fundraising important?

Schools should be places where healthy eating and active living are promoted.⁸ The traditional “bake sale” promotes the consumption of unhealthy foods; often, families are put in a position where they feel forced to buy junk food in order to support their school, neighbors, or friends. Healthy fundraising establishes consistency between the school’s wellness policy and its fundraising activities. In addition to supporting nutrition education and promoting improved eating habits, healthy alternatives can also be practical and profitable.⁹

Do any federal or Minnesota laws impact school fundraising activities?

Products sold to students on the school campus during the school day must meet the Smart Snack nutrition standards.¹⁰ For the purpose of these nutrition standards, a school day is defined as the period from the midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.¹¹ These standards do not apply to products sold at events held after school, off campus, or on weekends. The State of Minnesota does not allow any exemptions from the Smart Snack standards for products intended to be consumed during the school day.¹²

Does the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)¹³ Model Wellness Policy¹⁴ address healthy fundraising?

Yes. MSBA Model Policy 533, Part IV(D)(3) states that “the school district will make available to parents and teachers a list of suggested healthy fundraising ideas.”

Could existing MSBA policies be used to support healthy fundraising initiatives?

Yes. The MSBA has several policies that could be used, with additional language, to support the creation and management of a healthy fundraising initiative, including:

- 511 (Student Fundraising)
- 533 (Wellness)
- 610 (Field Trips)
- 706 (Acceptance of Gifts)
- 713 (Student Activity Accounting)
- 801 (Equal Access to Facilities of Secondary Schools)
- 902 (Use of School District Facilities and Equipment)
- 903 (Visitors to School District Buildings and Sites)
- 905 (Advertising)

How can healthy fundraising be incorporated into a school wellness policy?

Below is language that can be incorporated into a school board policy modeled after the MSBA’s model policy. This language can also be individually tailored to fit into a school board policy that does not follow the MSBA’s model.

Addition to the MSBA School Wellness Policy

533 WELLNESS

IV. STANDARDS AND NUTRITION GUIDELINES

D. Other Foods and Beverages Made Available to Students

3. Healthy Fundraising

- a. The superintendent, with the assistance of the School Health Council, will create and promote a list of healthy food and non-food fundraising activities, specifically those promoting physical activity and involving non-food items.
- b. Fundraising during and outside school hours will sell only non-food items or foods and beverages that meet or exceed the Smart Snack nutrition standards.¹⁵
- c. The district will make external organizations using school property aware of the policy regarding fundraising with food and beverage items and will encourage them to adopt the same policy.¹⁶

What other ways can schools support healthy fundraising?

In Minnesota, the superintendent is responsible for implementing and enforcing school board policy. Additionally, school districts participating in the national school meals program must designate one or more school district official to ensure that each participating school complies with the local school wellness policy.¹⁷ This official may or may not be the superintendent of the school district.

Superintendents issue protocols, procedures, and guidelines to help implement the school board's policies. The following language can be incorporated into existing guidelines. However, as school boards and superintendents may adopt more specific or general guidelines based on their needs and goals, policy language can be interchangeable with the guidelines listed below.

Healthy Fundraising Guidelines

- Fundraising efforts will be supportive of healthy eating by emphasizing the sale of healthy food items or of non-food items.
- Students and staff will be prohibited from personal fundraising efforts that include the sale of foods or beverages on campus.
- Students at the K–8 level will not be involved in the sale of candy, sodas, cookies, or sweets at any school-sponsored event or for any fundraising activity.¹⁸

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Endnotes

- ¹ See *Local Wellness Policy Law*, MINN. DEP'T OF EDUC. (2017), <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/cdrr/nutrition/schoolwellness/localwellnesspolicy.html>.
- ² Health and Academic Achievement, CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (May 2014), https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/health_and_academics/pdf/health-academic-achievement.pdf.
- ³ Mark Zdechlik, *School Fundraising: A Non-stop Campaign*, MINNESOTA PUBLIC RADIO (Mar. 15, 2004), http://news.minnesota.publicradio.org/features/2004/03/15_zdechlikm_fundraising/; and Nancy Madsen, *St. Peter Public Schools starts up final fundraising for new school*, ST. PETER HERALD (Jun. 20, 2017), http://www.southernminn.com/st_peter_herald/news/article_b25b3633-77a2-5d52-b570-b2b20b3a9b1d.html.
- ⁴ Mark Zdechlik, *School Fundraising: A Non-stop Campaign*, MINNESOTA PUBLIC RADIO (Mar. 15, 2004), http://news.minnesota.publicradio.org/features/2004/03/15_zdechlikm_fundraising/.
- ⁵ Martha Y. Kubik, Leslie A. Lytle, Kian Farbaksh, Stacey Moe, & Anne Samuelson, *Food Use in Middle and High School Fundraising: Does Policy Support Healthful Practice? Results from a Survey of Minnesota School Principals*, 109 J. AM. DIET. ASS'N 1215, 1215 (2009).
- ⁶ *Yes, You Can! A Fresh Look at Healthy Fundraisers for Schools*, STRATEGIC ALLIANCE FOR HEALTH 3 (2010), <http://www.peacefulplaygrounds.com/download/pdf/dpho-fundraiser-guide.pdf>.
- ⁷ *Healthy Fundraisers*, ACTION FOR HEALTHY KIDS, <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/storage/documents/parent-toolkit/fundraisers-family-health-f1.pdf> (last visited Jun. 25, 2017).
- ⁸ *Yes, You Can! A Fresh Look at Healthy Fundraisers for Schools*, STRATEGIC ALLIANCE FOR HEALTH 3 (2010), <http://www.peacefulplaygrounds.com/download/pdf/dpho-fundraiser-guide.pdf>.
- ⁹ *Best Practices for Healthy School Fundraisers*, U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE (Aug. 2014), https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cn/bestpractices_fundraisers.pdf.
- ¹⁰ *Smart Snacks in Schools Fundraisers*, U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE, https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/allfoods_fundraisers.pdf (last visited Jun 25, 2017).
- ¹¹ 7 CFR 210.11(a)(5) (2016).
- ¹² *At-A-Glance: Smart Snacks Guidance for Administrators*, MINN. DEPT. OF EDUCATION (2016), <http://www.education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/fns/056427>.
- ¹³ LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA CITIES, HANDBOOK FOR MINNESOTA CITIES 16:13 (Nov. 2016), available at <https://www.lmc.org/media/document/1/intergovernmentalcooperation.pdf> (“The Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) supports, promotes and enhances the work of public school boards. MSBA is a private nonprofit organization that provides technical assistance; cost-saving programs; and advocacy, training, research, and referral services for all of Minnesota’s public schools. Membership in MSBA is voluntary.”).
- ¹⁴ *MSBA/MASA Model Policy 533: Wellness*, MINN. SCHOOL BOARD ASS'N & MINN. ASS'N OF SCHOOL ADMIN. (2017).
- ¹⁵ *Alliance for a Healthier Generation Model Wellness Policy*, ALLIANCE FOR A HEALTHIER GENERATION (Sep. 2016), https://www.healthiergeneration.org/_asset/1xlv2y/Model-Wellness-Policy-USDA_CDC-Comments-2016-09-02-FINAL.docx.

¹⁶ *Model School Wellness Policy: Fundraising*, NAT'L ALLIANCE FOR NUTRITION AND ACTIVITY, <http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/WellnessPolicies.html#fundraising> (last visited June 25, 2017).

¹⁷ 7 CFR 210.31(e)(1) (2016).

¹⁸ *Model Wellness Policy Guide*, CENTER FOR ECOLITERACY 10 (2010), available at http://www.ecoliteracy.org/sites/default/files/uploads/cel_model_wellness_policy_guide.pdf.