



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. Good nutrition and physical activity help "contribute to improved academic performance, attendance rates, behavior, and lifelong health and well-being."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.³ Sports and other extracurricular activities have been supported by fundraising for decades. Recently, schools have turned to fundraisers to help pay for basic programs as financial pressures strain school budgets.⁴ Each year, fundraising revenues run into the billions of dollars.⁵ Most fundraisers involve the sale of foods that are high in fat, sugar, salt, and calories,⁶ 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.⁷

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.⁸ 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.⁹ 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.¹⁰

Do any federal or Minnesota laws require a healthy fundraising policy?

While schools are encouraged to support healthy eating and active living initiatives,¹¹ healthy fundraising policies are not mandated by Minnesota or federal law.

Does the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)¹² Model Wellness Policy¹³ address healthy fundraising?

No, not directly.

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

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

- 511 (Student Fundraising)
- 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

III. GUIDELINES

F. Healthy Fundraising

1. School-sponsored fundraising will be supportive of healthy eating and physical activity by emphasizing the sale of healthy food or non-food items and by promoting active events.
2. 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.
3. Schools will be required to use the healthy foods or non-food items identified in the list in at least 50% of fundraising activities. Listed healthy foods will meet the Institute of Medicine Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools.¹⁴
4. The district will disseminate a list of healthy fundraising options to schools and student organizations as a resource.
5. 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.¹⁵

What other ways can schools support healthy fundraising?

In Minnesota, the superintendent is responsible for implementing and enforcing school board policy. 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.
- Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-related fundraising events will meet the Institute of Medicine Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools.¹⁶
- 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.¹⁷

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Endnotes

¹ See, e.g., *Local Wellness Policy: A Guide for Development*, MINN. DEP'T OF EDUC. 5 (2005), available at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/cdrr/nutrition/docsandpdf/localwellnesspolicy.pdf>.

² *School Wellness Policies*, IDAHO DEP'T OF EDUC., <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/wellness/> (last visited May 6, 2013).

³ Mark Zdechlik, *School Fundraising: A Non-stop Campaign*, MINNESOTA PUBLIC RADIO (March 15, 2004), http://news.minnesota.publicradio.org/features/2004/03/15_zdechlikm_fundraising/.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Martha Y. Kubik, Leslie A. Lytle, Kian Farbakshsh, 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).

⁷ *Yes, You Can! A Fresh Look at Healthy Fundraisers for Schools*, STRATEGIC ALLIANCE FOR HEALTH 3 (2010), available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/dpho/dpho-fundraiser-guide.pdf>.

⁸ *Fundraising*, NORTH CAROLINA ACTION FOR HEALTHY KIDS (August 2007), available at <http://teacher.haywood.k12.nc.us/hcscnp/files/2009/09/FundraisingAFHK1.pdf>; *Guide to Healthy School Fundraising*, ACTION FOR HEALTHY KIDS OF ALABAMA, available at http://www.astphnd.org/resource_files/233/233_resource_file2.pdf.

⁹ STRATEGIC ALLIANCE FOR HEALTH, *supra* note 7, at 3.

¹⁰ Kathleen Wilson Shryock, *Financial Health*, LEADERSHIP FOR STUDENT ACTIVITIES 25 (Nov. 2010), available at http://www.nhs.us/Content/158/NovL4SA_health_shryock.pdf.

¹¹ See, e.g., Minn. Stat. 124D.955.

¹² LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA CITIES, HANDBOOK FOR MINNESOTA CITIES 17:14 (2012), available at <http://www.lmc.org/media/document/1/chapter17.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 [school members]. Membership in MSBA is voluntary.”).

¹³ *MSBA/MASA Model Policy 533: Wellness*, MINN. SCHOOL BOARD ASS'N & MINN. ASS'N OF SCHOOL ADMIN. (2010).

¹⁴ See *Competitive Foods and Beverages in U.S. Schools: A State Policy Analysis*, CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREV. 3 (2012), available at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/nutrition/pdf/compfoodsbooklet.pdf> (providing the standards and related definitions).

¹⁵ *Model School Wellness Policy: Fundraising*, NAT'L ALLIANCE FOR NUTRITION AND ACTIVITY, <http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/WellnessPolicies.html#fundraising> (last visited May 6, 2013).

¹⁶ CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREV., *supra* note 15, at 3.

¹⁷ *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.