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. Children spend a large portion of their days at school and oftentimes eat an extensive amount of their daily calories on the campus. Because of this, 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 improve academic performance, attendance rates, behavior, and lifelong health and well-being of students.

Federal law requires that school districts receiving federal breakfast and/or lunch dollars have a school wellness policy. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act directed the USDA to adopt regulations specifying community participation, nutrition standards, reporting and evaluation. As of June 2015, the USDA has not yet released its final rule governing the content of school wellness policies.

While student wellness is strongly influenced by the specific school wellness policies, many other policies and procedures also impact student wellness. For
example, practices around fundraising with unhealthy foods, food corporation sports sponsorship, school social media usage, or school gardens all have potential to impact healthy eating, but their respective policies are likely found outside of the wellness policy. For this reason, it is most effective to take a holistic approach when doing a policy review around school wellness. Strong school wellness policies can help schools achieve their health and wellness goals, but in order for them to be implemented in the school setting, school wellness concepts must be embedded in other school board policies impacting nutrition and physical activity. This document has been developed to be used as a guide to identifying other school board policies, rules and regulations that should be analyzed as advocates update school wellness policies.

### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTHY EATING OPPORTUNITIES

School districts use a variety of written content to regulate the school setting. These include school board policies, rules, forms, handbooks and website content. Advocates interested in promoting healthy food and physical activity in schools should fully review each of these written documents to identify ways to use existing language in their effort or change the existing language to better health. When looking at school board policies and rules, it is critical that school districts use a variety of structures to regulate the school environment through school board policy and rules. When doing a scan of existing school board policies, use the list below to consider policies that may impact physical activity and healthy eating opportunities for students, staff and community members.

#### Administration & Policy

- School district system accountability / Program improvement process
- School board objective / Mission
- Adoption, development, implementation, evaluation of policies
- District strategic plan

**Purchasing:** Cooperative purchasing / Local purchasing / Purchasing policy / Purchasing authority /
Bid and quotations requirements / Vendor relations

**Food services:** Free and reduced-price meals / Food and nutrition services program, competitive food sales /
Food services management

**School food services funds:** System of accounting

- Gifts to employees / Acceptance of gifts
- Organized religion
- Waste reduction and recycling
- BMI collection policy / Data management / Health examinations / Data / Records and reports
- School board appointments to district committees / Organizations
- Education programs research request / Focus, funding and process of district research
- Public requests, suggestions and complaints
- Awards, recognition, and incentives for staff, school volunteers, advisory committee members, and community members
- Qualification and duties / Staff training
Going Beyond School Wellness Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEALTHY EATING</th>
<th>PHYSICAL ACTIVITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wellness</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School wellness / Student wellness / Staff wellness / Worksite wellness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and safety / Student supervision and welfare / Comprehensive health care / Individual health plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation of wellness committee (district and/or site committees), agenda, mission, scope, responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instruction</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student promotion, acceleration, retention and program design / Early admission / Graduation requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School district curriculum and instruction goals / Curriculum development and review process / Alternative programs / Textbooks and instructional materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student handbooks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-school time</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vending machines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field trips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward / Discipline / Restrictive procedures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of school calendar and school day / The school day / School calendar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee-student relations / Teaching methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Going Beyond School Wellness Policies

#### HEALTHY EATING

**Out-of-school Time**
- Board-approved high school programs and activities
- School activities
- Programming pilot projects
- Before- and after-school programs
- Evaluation of extra-curricular activities
- Interscholastic athletics
- Guidelines for adding or dropping a sport or activity
- District-sponsored clubs and activities
- Interscholastic athletics
- Athletic coaches
- Student activity fund management
- Middle school students participation in senior-high-level activities
- Student fundraising
- Student transportation safety policy
- Transportation of public school students
- Use of bicycles
- Safety patrol

#### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

**Communication & Marketing**
- Distribution of non-school sponsored materials on school property by non-school person, students, or employees
- Public sales on school property
- Use of technology
- Social media
- Marketing and outreach
- Naming school district facilities
- Advertising
- Marketing on school buses
- Advertising in schools
- Promotion in schools

**Community Relations**
- Parent organizations, booster clubs and other fundraising activities
- Off-campus, school-sponsored activities
- (Existing school board councils/committees) school board committees
- Community school council policy
- School site councils
- School advisory councils
- Citizens’ advisory committees
- Community education advisory councils
- Community education
- Parent-teacher organizations
- Relations with family and community organizations
- School and community partnerships
- Parent/guardian responsibility
- Parent/guardian involvement in district policy
- Partnerships with business
- Relations with special interest groups
- Direct-support organizations
- Relations with educational institutions and organizations
- Relations with governmental authorities

**Shared-use & Siting**
- Kitchen use policies
- Culinary facility use policy
- Pool use policies
- Weight training facility
- Community/school garden policy and siting
- Physical plant security
- School safety and security
- Use of school district facilities and equipment
- Equal access to school facilities
- Building access
- Public use of school facilities
- Staff use of school facilities
- Agreement for use of school facilities
- Public conduct on school property
- Schedule of fees for use of facilities and equipment
- Buildings, grounds and equipment inspections
- School visitor guidelines
- Facility expansion
- School siting
- School improvement
- Interlocal agreement for public school facility planning
- Contracts
- Liability exemption
Other important policies:

- Sanitation and housekeeping
- Bullying prohibition, violence prevention
- Drug-free workplace
- Students and employees with communicable diseases and infectious conditions
- Weapons
- Title 1 programs (parental involvement, reimbursement, etc).

Conclusion

While school wellness policies are important, health and wellness concepts should be reflected in other school policies, from transportation to curriculum development. A comprehensive school policy review, as well as an effective plan for implementation, require a holistic analysis and approach to embedding health and wellness concepts throughout all school policies.