

Local School Wellness Policies: Overview and Action Steps

Overview

- The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 required all districts to establish local school wellness policies by School Year 2006-2007.
- The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 expands the scope of wellness policies; brings in additional stakeholders in its development, implementation and review; and requires public updates on the content and implementation of the wellness policies (Section 204).
 - The intent is to strengthen local school wellness policies so they become useful tools in evaluating, establishing and maintaining healthy school environments, and to provide transparency to the public on key areas that affect the nutrition environment in each school.

Summary of Action Steps for Local Educational Agencies and Districts/Schools:

1. Review the memorandum on wellness policies: http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Policy-Memos/2011/SP42-2011_os.pdf.
2. Continue reviewing local wellness policies during School Year 2012-2013 and implementing new requirements.
3. Consult the resources linked below.
4. Continue to inform and update the public about the content, implementation, and assessment of wellness policies.

Interagency Work Group

- **Agencies involved:** U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (USDA FNS), working with the U.S. Department of Education (ED), and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, acting through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- **Interagency group:**
 - Has published a technical assistance plan outlining activities to support local educational agencies (LEAs) at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/lwp5yrplan.pdf>.
 - Will provide training and technical assistance to local educational agencies, school food authorities, and State educational agencies to meet these new requirements and establish healthy school environments that are intended to promote student health and wellness (ongoing).
 - Will identify and develop resources and training on designing, implementing, promoting, disseminating, and evaluating local school wellness policies and overcoming barriers to the adoption of local school wellness policies (ongoing).
- **FNS is expected to publish a Proposed Rule Winter 2013.** The public will have an opportunity to comment on this rule.

Local School Wellness Policy Resource Links

- **FNS:** <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/healthy/wellnesspolicy.html>.
 - On an ongoing basis, FNS will be updating these materials to reflect the new requirements; these materials are a useful starting point for LEAs working to strengthen their local school wellness policies to meet the requirements of the new law.
- **CDC:** <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/wellness.htm>
 - The CDC website includes resources to assist districts in designing, implementing and promoting elements of local school wellness policies.
 - *School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity* is a resource that presents guidelines for developing, implementing, and evaluating school-based healthy eating and physical activity policies and practices for K-12th grade students. There is also a series of strategies to facilitate implementation of the guidelines <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/strategies.htm>