

Making the Case for Gold Standard School Wellness Policies Creating a Healthy Future for Alaska



Lauren Kelsey
School Grants Manager
Alaska Obesity Prevention & Control Program

Ellen Hackenmueller
Program Specialist
Department of Education Child Nutrition Programs

Alaska Association of School Business Officials
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Today's Session



- Overview of the State of Alaska Gold Standard School Wellness Policy
- **Role of EED Child Nutrition Programs on compliance**
- Review of Alliance for a Healthier Generation Product Navigator and Product Calculator
- **Frequently Asked Questions / Q & A**

Wellness policies promote life-long wellness behaviors, and link healthy nutrition and exercise to students' overall physical well-being



Now is the Time to Review Your School Wellness Policy

- New regulations, related to wellness policy implementation requirements and nutrition standards for foods sold at schools, came into effect in fall 2014.
- Adoption of and adherence to school wellness policies is part of the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program.



Childhood obesity is the predominant public health threat facing Alaska today.

Too many of our kids are overweight or obese. They do not get enough physical activity. They drink too many sugary beverages. And they are suffering the consequences.

If we don't act now, our kids could be the first generation that has a shorter life expectancy than their parents.

Healthy, Successful Students



Healthy eating behaviors and regular physical activity are essential for students to achieve their full academic and life potential.

School districts recognize that they have a responsibility to provide a healthy learning environment by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity.

The Health and Achievement Link

- The academic success of Alaska's youth is strongly linked with their health.
- Health-related factors such as hunger, physical and emotional abuse, and chronic illness can lead to poor school performance.
- Physical inactivity is consistently linked to poor grades and test scores and lower educational attainment.



School Wellness Policies: Federal Requirements



At a minimum, a local school wellness policy must—

1. Include goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based wellness activities
2. Include nutrition guidelines to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity



School Wellness Policies: Federal Requirements (continued)



3. Permit stakeholders (e.g., parents, students, school administrators and the general public) to participate in the development, implementation, and review and update of the local wellness policy
4. Inform and update the public (including parents, students, and others in the community) about the content and implementation of local wellness policies
5. Be measured periodically with assessment results available to the public

School Wellness Policies: Federal Requirements (continued)



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Model Policy for Alaska



The Alaska Obesity Prevention and Control Program and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development worked together to craft a model policy that meets all the federal requirements:

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Documents/Obesity/pubs/>

Similar policy is available for members of the Association of Alaska School Boards.

Key Elements of Gold Standard School Wellness policy



Key Element: Nutrition Guidelines



- All foods sold at school, during the school day (from midnight to 30 minutes after the last class period ends) must meet nutritional guidelines for healthy foods - this includes food and drinks sold in vending machines and at school stores
- No exemptions to nutritional guidelines for foods SOLD to students
- Unhealthy foods will not be advertised or “marketed” at schools

What can we sell?

Q. Does this mean we're going to be limited to selling carrot sticks and hardboiled eggs?

A. No. The Food Industry is quickly adapting to these standards. There are a variety of products that meet the federal nutrition standards.



Smart Snacks Implementation



Q. How do I know if the items we sell in our school store and vending machines are permitted?

A. The Alliance for a Healthier Generation has some great online tools for assessing your competitive foods. Check them out online at:

https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take_action/schools/snacks_and_beverages/

The screenshot shows the 'SMART SNACKS PRODUCT CALCULATOR' interface. It features a header with a calculator icon and the text 'SMART SNACKS PRODUCT CALCULATOR' on the left, and the 'ALLIANCE FOR A HEALTHIER GENERATION' logo on the right. The main content area is divided into two sections: 'Enter your beverage information using the Nutrition Facts Panel on your product.' on the left, and a 'Nutrition Facts' panel on the right. The 'Nutrition Facts' panel includes input fields for 'Serving Size' (with 'fluid oz' next to it), 'Servings Per Container', and 'Calories'. At the bottom of the interface, there are two buttons: 'START OVER' and 'NEXT STEP'.

Explore the Internet



Alliance for a Healthier Generation resources

- Smart Snacks Product Navigator
- Smart Snacks Product Calculator
- Venue Assessment forms

Key Element: Nutrition-related Goals

- **Nutrition Education**

- Standards based nutrition education
- Integrated into curricula (i.e. health or cooking classes)
- Educational links with school environment

- **Nutrition Promotion**

- Team Nutrition
- HealthierUS School Challenge
- School Gardens
- Staff modeling healthy habits



Key Element: PE



Schools will provide **physical education** to all elementary, middle and high school students at the following levels:

Grade Level	Minutes per Week
Elementary School	150
Middle School	225
High School	225, at least one year; required for all students

Key Element: Physical Activity



- Elementary and middle school students will be provided with at least **45 minutes** each day of **physical activity**, not including time spent in physical education
- Physical activity can be before, during or after school and can include classroom based physical activity.
- Elementary students should receive **20 minutes** of active structured recess each day
- Opportunities for recess or other physical activity should not be used as a form of behavior management

Key Element: Other Wellness Goals



- **Other Wellness Goals**

- Lunchroom environment (Smarter Lunchroom Techniques)
- Health fairs
- Before/After School Program
- Safe Routes to School



Key Element: Stakeholder Participation



- Requires stakeholder participation throughout the entire process of creating a wellness policy—drafting, implementing, assessment, revising
- Represents a wide variety of interests:
 - Parents
 - Students
 - Teachers
 - School health professionals
 - Administrators
 - Community members

Key Element: Measuring Implementation



- Requires periodic assessment of the wellness policy
 - School compliance
 - Comparison to model wellness policy
 - Progress toward goals
- Clear plan for measuring implementation success
- Designated official to monitor compliance

Key Element: Communication and Reporting



- The District will develop an annual report about compliance with the policy and progress toward meeting the goals
- The report will be made available to students, parents, and the community



Child Nutrition Program Review of Policy



- Part of the National School Lunch Program administrative review process
- Child Nutrition Programs IS responsible for the following:
 - Ensuring that the policy contains the required elements
 - Ensuring district/agency has taken the required steps regarding implementation, transparency, public input and availability.
- Child Nutrition Programs is NOT responsible for evaluating the *quality* of the district's wellness goals or policies.

Administrative Review Findings



- If deficiencies are identified during a School Lunch Program Administrative Review:
 - District will be noncompliant with the local wellness policy evaluation
 - Department of Education Child Nutrition Program will provide technical assistance

Supporting Documentation Needed



- Copy of the Local Wellness Policy (LWP)
- Documentation that the policy has been made available to the public
- Documentation of district's efforts to review & update the local policy
- Copy of district's most recent assessment on the implementation of the policy

Frequently Asked Questions



Lunches Brought from Home



Q. Will students' home-packed lunches be subject to nutrition standards?

A. No. Students home-packed lunches are not required to meet the federal nutrition standards.



Teachers' Snacks



Q. What snacks are teachers allowed to consume at school?

A. The nutritional standards apply to food sold and served to students. Staff are not required to follow these guidelines but are encouraged to model healthy behaviors.

Classroom Parties



Q. Are classroom parties held in celebration of cultural holidays required to meet the nutrition standards?

A. Schools may allow serving of culturally significant food when served free of charge to students as part of an educational activity.

Exemptions to Nutrition Standards



Q. Are there exemptions to the nutrition standards for fundraisers at school, during school.

A. No. In Alaska, there are no exemptions from the nutritional standards for food sold to students at school, during the school day (from midnight to 30 minutes after the close of the last instructional period).

PE Pass/Fail Option



Q. Why are substitutions and pass/fail options not allowed for physical education?

A. Quality PE is important to equip students with the knowledge and skills to safely maintain physical fitness through a variety of activities and practices. Allowing substitutions for sports or dance defeats that purpose. Allowing pass/fail options devalues physical education as an important subject in the school curriculum.

PE Minutes



Q. Our schedule for next year is already approved and does not have the recommended amount of minutes.

A. Incremental policy steps can be considered. Guidance for developing incremental approaches to complying with national PE standards can be found at: <http://redegroupp.com/opcp-wellness-policy>

Above and beyond



Q. Can our school have go beyond what is in the wellness policy?

A. Yes. Districts may have practices that exceed the requirements at a federal level and individual schools may have practices that exceed the standards of the overall district wellness policy

Timing/Deadlines



Q. What is the deadline for updating our wellness policy?

A. Compliance with the new regulations on all foods sold during the school day (“Smart Snacks in School”) began July 1, 2014.

There is no specific due date for updating the policy. Written policies and annual implementation reports will be assessed at the next regularly scheduled NSLP administrative review.

Resources available for you



- Awesome Gold Standard Policy, plus sample language for incremental steps
- This slide deck, including ‘customizable’ slides for highlighting who is in your wellness team, local priorities, and suggestions for improvement
- “I Support” Stickers
- Additional materials to be developed
- Technical Assistance via phone or email

We can do this!

We need to create an Alaska where every child lives, learns and plays in an environment filled with healthy choices.

We can do this if we work together.



For More Information Contact

Ellen Hackenmueller

Program Specialist

State of Alaska Child
Nutrition Programs,
Department of Education

Phone: 907-465-8719

Fax: 907-465-8910

Email:

ellen.hackenmueller@alaska.gov

Lauren Kelsey, MPH

School Grants Manager

State of Alaska Obesity
Prevention and Control
Program,

Phone 907-269-8165

Fax 907-269-5446

E-mail

lauren.kelsey@alaska.gov

Any Additional Questions

