Bridging the Gap State Laws on Snack Foods and Beverages Interactive Website

http://foods.bridgingthegapresearch.org

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Purpose of the Site

• To present easy-to-use graphical data to enable decision makers to compare and contrast on-the-books codified state laws

• To enable advocates to identify where policy opportunities exist across the states

• To provide baseline information as to where state laws stand prior to implementation of the US Department of Agriculture’s forthcoming competitive food regulations
Information on the Data Compiled and Included on the Site
State Law Compilation

• Codified state laws compiled reflect statutory (legislative) and administrative laws (regulations) effective as of the beginning of September of each school year of interest.
  • Includes any policy embedded in the law or incorporated by reference
• Does not include:
  • Informal, non-codified policies, measures of implementation, guidance, etc.
  • Policies that have never been codified or incorporated by reference but may be fully operational within the state
  • Policies that can be elected to be instituted at the district level (reflected in district-level coding) such as state standards that are voluntary for school districts to adopt

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State Law Compilation (continued)

- State laws compiled through primary legal research using Lexis-Nexis and Westlaw

- Verified against available secondary sources including:
  - National Association of State Boards of Education: State School Health Policy Database
  - National Conference of State Legislatures: Childhood Obesity - Update of Legislative Policy Options
  - National Cancer Institute: Classification of Laws about School Students
  - Trust for America’s Health: F as in Fat reports
  - Yale University Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity: Legislation Database
  - Future data will also will be compared to the School Health Policy Matrix (new from NASBE, NACDD, AAPHRD)

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Coding of the State Laws

• All laws coded using adaptation of ordinal coding scheme

• Each state’s law coded separately for each grade level
• Each state’s law coded as being effective as of the beginning of September of each school year of interest, inclusive of school years 2006-07 through SY 2012-13
# State Law Topics

## Overarching Topics (Not Differentiated by Location of Sale)

1. Snack food and beverage guidelines for all foods/beverages sold at school
2. Snack food ban
3. Contract compliance with nutrition standards
4. Fast food ban
5. Meets IOM fruit and vegetable and/or whole grain standards for school snack food items
6. Provisions for sale of whole, unprocessed and fresh food in snack food venues
7. Limitations on using food as a reward for good behavior or withholding food as punishment for poor behavior
8. Nutrition information/labeling requirements
9. Provision of free drinking water throughout the school

## Topics Coded Separately for Each Location of Sale*

1. Limits on sugar content of foods
2. Limits on candy sales/offering
3. Limits on fat content of foods
4. Limits on trans fats
5. Limits on sodium content
6. Limits on calorie content of foods
7. Limits on sugar content of beverages
8. Limits on calorie content per beverage serving
9. Prohibitions/restrictions on regular soda
10. Prohibitions/restrictions on other sugar sweetened beverages
11. Limits on sugar/calorie content of milk
12. Limits on fat content of milk
13. Limits on beverages serving sizes
14. Limits on caffeine content of beverages

*Six Locations: vending machines, school stores, a la carte lines, classroom parties, fundraisers, and evening/community events (latter only through SY 11-12)
State Law Citations and Related Material

CITATION: 31 Statutes + 4 Regulations

Nutrition Education

US Variables

Nutrition Guidelines
- 1 Colo. Code Regs. § 301-3
- 1 Colo. Code Regs § 301-79
- 1 Colo. Code Regs. § 302-2

Physical Education/Physical Activity

State law data, codebook, and coversheets will be available in
coming weeks

- Includes categorical listing of all laws reviewed and coded in each state
- To be notified when state law data becomes available, please e-mail:
  info@bridgingthegapresearch.org
Website Overview
http://foods.bridgingthegapresearch.org
Explore Data: Bar Chart View

State Laws for School Snack Foods and Beverages

Data is presented as a bar graph.

Grade levels of applicability:

Data is available for SY’s ‘06-’07 through ‘12-’13.

Factoids from BTG reports:

Clicking on the information symbol will provide the user with an explanation of each category of law (next slide).

Did You Know?

77% of high school students could buy junk foods from snack venues at school in 2010-2011.
Explanation of Laws

No law

Weak law

Strong law

Ban

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Explore Data: Map View

Users can choose a state from the drop down menu to view the strength of its laws for a particular point of sale (next slide).

Data is presented as a map.
Explore Data: By State

Graph View: California, SY 12-13

Map View: California, SY 12-13
Explore Data: Detailed Laws
Explore Data: Detailed Laws

State Laws: A la Carte Lines – 2012-2013
Candy limits (foods)
Limit the sale of candy sold in a la carte lines

Did You Know?
63%
63% of middle school students could buy sugary drinks from snack venues at school in 2010–2011
Explore Data: Guidelines Not Specific to Location

Guidelines or Requirements for All Snack Foods – 2012-2013
This chart shows the strength of laws in each state that provide guidelines or requirements for all snack foods and/or drinks, regardless of location. Use the icons to view more laws, including those related to fast-food and free drinking water.

Did You Know?
65%
65% of high school students were in a district or school that had an exclusive beverage contract in place in 2010-2011.
Explore Data: Guidelines Not Specific to Location
State Profiles

Pick a state to view a full profile of its laws (next slide)
State Profiles: Example – District of Columbia, SY 12-13

Users can select a specific location of sale or scroll down the page to see them all listed.

Use the drop down menu to view another state’s profile.

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State Laws for School Snack Foods and Beverages

Competitive Food Laws in District of Columbia – 2012-2013

This table shows the strength of laws in District of Columbia that regulate foods and drinks offered in school à la carte lines, vending machines, and other venues. It includes laws that set limits for sugar, fat, calories, sodium, and sugary drinks.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sugar content</td>
<td>NO LAW</td>
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<td>Candy content</td>
<td>NO LAW</td>
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<td>Fat content</td>
<td>NO LAW</td>
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<td>Trans fat</td>
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<td>Sodium content</td>
<td>NO LAW</td>
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<td>Calorie content per serving size</td>
<td>NO LAW</td>
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<td>Beverage Standards</td>
<td>Sugar content</td>
<td>NO LAW</td>
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<td>Sodium content</td>
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<td>Serving size</td>
<td>NO LAW</td>
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<td>Caffeine content</td>
<td>NO LAW</td>
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<td>School Stores</td>
<td>FOOD STANDARDS</td>
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State Profiles: Example – District of Columbia, SY 12-13

Use the social media buttons located on each page to share data and findings on Facebook and Twitter (next slide).
Sample Social Media Material Generated

Bridging the Gap | State Laws for School Snack Foods and Beverages
Many of the snack foods and drinks schools offer outside of meals are unhealthy, and each state sets its own nutrition standards for what's sold in schools. This site has the most extensive data about laws for school snack foods and beverages in every state for each location of sale.

www.bridgingthegapresearch.org
About School Snack Foods and Beverages

Most schools sell snack foods and beverages in vending machines, à la carte cafeteria lines, stores, or other venues that compete with school meal programs for students’ spending. School snacks are often high in fat, cholesterol, calories, sugar, and/or salt. Many schools also sell unhealthy drinks to students, including high-fat milks and sugar-sweetened beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, and high-calorie fruit drinks. Studies show that kids eat less of their lunch, take in fewer nutrients, and gain weight when schools sell unhealthy snacks and beverages.

In summer 2013, the U.S. Department of Agriculture updated nutrition standards for snack foods and beverages sold in school vending machines, stores, and à la carte lines. The standards will go into effect at the beginning of the 2014-15 school year. Evidence shows that policies governing school snacks and beverages impact children’s diets and their risk for obesity.

About the Site

This site has the most extensive data about laws for school snack foods and beverages in every state, from bans on soda in elementary schools to limits on the fat content of snacks in high schools. Researchers analyzed codified state statutory (legislative) and administrative (regulatory) laws in every state to determine the overall strength or weakness of the laws.

- for seven school years, from 2006–07 to 2012–13;
- applicable to elementary, middle, and high schools, respectively;
- for six locations of sale: vending machines, school stores, à la carte lines in the cafeteria, classroom parties, fundraisers, and evening/community events; and for laws that were not differentiated by location of sale, such as laws that require schools to provide free drinking water.

This site is a project of Bridging the Gap, a program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. It was created with the assistance of the Center for Digital Information.
About: Methodology

Methodology

*Bridging the Gap — State Laws for School Snack Foods and Beverages, Methods Overview*

State Policy Collection

Codified state laws compiled for this study reflect statutory (legislative) and administrative laws (regulations) effective as of the beginning of September (~first week) of each school year (SY) of interest. For purposes of this study, state was defined to include the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The state laws were compiled through primary legal research by Bridging the Gap (BTG) researchers using commercially available legal research databases available by subscription from Lexis-Nexis and Westlaw. For some topics/items, secondary sources also compile information on state laws. [1] In all cases where secondary source information is available, we have verified our collection and coding against the secondary sources.

Policy Coding

All state laws related to school snack foods and beverages were coded using a BTG adaptation of an ordinal coding scheme originally created by Schanzl et al. [2] We have adapted the coding scheme to be used at the state level, to add in additional variables of interest to BTG, as well as to code as separate variable separately for each grade level of interest. Separate documentation on the coding scheme, coding protocols/decision rules is available from BTG. The state law coding directly corresponds with the district wellness policy coding presented elsewhere [3].

Each state’s law was 100% double-coded by two trained Master-level coders. A final consensus coding was applied to each variable.

Policy Coding by Grade Level

Because the state laws for school snack foods and beverages vary by grade level, each state’s law is coded separately for each grade level of interest (ES, MS, HS). For K-12 districts, there are separate cases for each grade level of interest (ES, MS, HS). For K-8 districts, there are two coded cases (ES, MS) with the HS case not being coded. As such, there are multiple cases per state for each year of interest.

Policy Coding by Year

Separate cases represent each school year (SY) of interest. For purposes of this study, the state laws are coded as being effective as of the beginning of September (within the first week) of each SY of interest.

Year 1: SY 2006-07
Year 2: SY 2007-08
Year 3: SY 2008-09
Year 4: SY 2009-10
Year 5: SY 2010-11
Year 6: SY 2011-12
Year 7: SY 2012-13

Policy Coding Topics

For each state, grade level of applicability, and SY, 29 separate snack food and beverage items are coded. For each of the six locations of sale (vending machines, school stores, à la carte lines in the cafeteria, classroom parties, fundraisers, and evening/community events), there are 14 separate snack food or beverage restrictions coded. The following table summarizes the topics that are coded. Separate documentation on the coding scheme, coding protocols/decision rules is available from BTG.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overarching Topics (Not Differentiated by Location of Sale)</th>
<th>Topics Coded Separately for Each Location of Sale*</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1. Snack food and beverage guidelines for all foods/beverages sold at school</td>
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<td>2. Snack food ban</td>
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<td>3. Contract compliance with nutrition standards</td>
<td>3. Limits on fat content of foods*</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Fast food ban</td>
<td>4. Limits on trans fats*</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Meet Institute of Medicine fruit and vegetable and/or whole grain standards for school snack food items</td>
<td>5. Limits on sodium content*</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Provisions for sale of whole, unprocessed and fresh food in snack food venues</td>
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<td>8. Nutrition information/labelling requirements</td>
<td>8. Limits on calorie content per beverage serving</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Provision of free drinking water throughout the school</td>
<td>9. Prohibitions/restrictions on regular soda*</td>
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<td>10. Prohibitions/restrictions on other sugar-sweetened beverages*</td>
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<td>12. Limits on fat content of milk*</td>
<td>13. Limits on beverage serving sizes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Limits on caffeine content of beverages*</td>
<td>15. Limits on sugar content of beverages*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Six Locations: vending machines, school stores, a la carte lines in the cafeteria, classroom parties, fundraisers, and evening/community events.

For all of the topics, the laws are coded on a continuum: no law, weak (suggested/encouraged) law, or strong (required) law. For each of the 6 locations of sale and the 14 topics coded for each location of sale, the BTG adaptation of the coding scheme breaks out the “strong” law category to differentiate required provisions (e.g., ban on sodas) from complete bans on the location of sale (e.g., vending machines), snack foods altogether, or snack beverages altogether. Additionally, for 12 of the items (all denoted with an * in the above table), the “strong” category differentiates whether the law meets the Institute of Medicine’s (IOM:2007) standards for school snack foods and beverages [4] from a weaker requirement that is less than the IOM standard. In four of the beverage items, the only “strong” category other than the complete ban is the IOM restriction (denoted by a + in the above table).
For More Information

State Laws for School Snack Foods and Beverages
http://foods.bridgingthegapresearch.org/

Bridging the Gap Program
http://www.bridgingthegapresearch.org/
Follow us on Twitter! @BTGresearch @jfchriqui

Sign up for our e-mail list!
Contact Information

Questions about Bridging the Gap’s Policy Research and the Website:
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Questions about the coding of a specific state’s laws:
info@bridgingthegapresearch.org