Evaluating Progress and Opportunities in School District Wellness Policies Three Years after the Federal Mandate

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Presentation Overview

- Overview of federal wellness policy requirement
- Describe study methods
- Highlight key findings
- Highlight areas where wellness policies aligned with 2007 Institute of Medicine competitive food & beverage standards
- Report availability
- Next steps

Wellness policy required by 1st day ‘06-’07 school year
   All school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program or Child Nutrition Programs

Required components:
1. Goals for nutrition education, physical activity, other school-based activities
2. Guidelines for all foods/sold served (i.e., competitive foods)
3. Assurance that reimbursable meal guidelines at least meet Federal regulations
4. Implementation plans
5. Involvement of key stakeholders in policy development
Brief Study Overview

Ongoing nationwide evaluation of school district wellness policies
- Nationally representative sample of 579, 641, and 593 school districts, respectively, for school years 06-07, 07-08, and 08-09
- Data presented weighted to %age of students nationwide in districts with given policy provision
- Very high response (policy collection) rates
  - 94% for 06-07 and 07-08
  - 97% for 08-09

Primary policy collection and analysis, included wellness policy and all associated regulations/guidelines/procedures
- Also included cross-referenced policies/models/embedded state laws
Brief Study Overview (cont.)

Policies coded by grade level using adaptation of Schwartz et al. (2009, *JADA*) scheme

Focus on required wellness policy elements:

- Goals for nutrition education
- School meal requirements
- Competitive food guidelines
- Goals for physical activity
- Implementation plans

Also included provisions for physical education and separately analyzed competitive food & beverage policies to assess alignment with 2007 IOM standards
Brief Study Overview (cont.)

Policies evaluated using an ordinal coding scheme:

0: No policy
1: Weak policy (should, encourage, may, try, attempt)
2: Strong policy (must, shall, require)

For competitive food and beverage content restrictions, policies coded using additional coding scheme that accounts for the 2007 IOM competitive food standards. This scheme typically is as follows:

0: No policy
1: Weak policy (should, encourage, may, try, attempt)
2: Strong policy (must, shall, require) less than IOM standard
3: Strong policy that meets IOM standard
4: Complete competitive food/beverage ban or location ban
Highlights of Key Findings
Wellness Policy Requirements

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Year

06-07 07-08 08-09

Wellness policy
Competitive food guidelines
School meal guidelines
Nutrition education goals
Physical activity goals
Implementation plans
Selected Nutrition Education Policy Requirements

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Year

- NE Curriculum
- NE Integrated into Other Subjects
- NE Teaches Behavior-focused Skills
- Nutrition-related Training for Teachers

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Selected School Meal Policy Provisions

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Year

**Meals Meet Dietary Guidelines**

- 06-07: 20%
- 07-08: 40%
- 08-09: 60%

**Adequate Time to Eat**

- 06-07: 20%
- 07-08: 40%
- 08-09: 60%

**Nutritional Content Info for Meals**

- 06-07: 40%
- 07-08: 60%
- 08-09: 80%

**Legend**
- Strong policy (Required)
- Weak policy
Competitive Food & Beverage Location Restrictions by Grade Level and Year

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Grade Level and Year

Elementary

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%
06-07 07-08 08-09

Middle

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%
06-07 07-08 08-09

High

Ban
Vending Machines
School Stores
A la Carte
Guidelines apply to contracts

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Policies Related to Advertising and Marketing of Foods & Beverages in Schools

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Year

Restrict Advertising of Unhealthy Food & Beverages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Weak Policy</th>
<th>Strong Policy (Required)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>06-07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07-08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08-09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Promotion of Healthy Foods and Beverages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Weak Policy</th>
<th>Strong Policy (Required)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>06-07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07-08</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>08-09</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Physical Activity Policy Provisions

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Grade Level and Year

PA Opportunities Outside of PE

PA Breaks throughout Day

Prohibit Use/Withholding PA as Punishment

- Weak policy
- Strong policy

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Elementary School-Level Recess Provisions Contained in Wellness Policies

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Grade Level and Year

- **Weak policy**
- **Strong policy (Required)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Daily Recess</th>
<th>Less than Daily (08-09)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>06-07</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07-08</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08-09</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Selected Physical Education Policy Provisions (not required wellness policy element)

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Grade Level and Year

- **PE addressed in policy**
- **PE time reqs. meet NASPE standards**
- **PE teaches PA lifestyle**
- **Min. 50% PE time in mod./vig. PA**
- **PE taught by state-authorized phys educator**
- **Training for PE teachers**

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Requirements for Wellness Policy Implementation and Evaluation Plans

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Grade Level and Year

- Health advisory committee required
- Evaluation plan
- Reporting requirements
- Policy revision requirements
- Funding for implementation

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Wellness Policy Alignment with IOM 2007 Competitive Food & Beverage Standards
IOM Competitive Food Standards

Fat
- No more than 35% of total calories from fat per portion
- Trans fat-free (no more than 0.5 g)

Sugar
- No more than 35% of total calories from sugar per portion

Sodium
- No more than 200 mg of sodium per portion

Calories
- No more than 200 calories per portion


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Competitive Food Content Restrictions that Meet IOM Standards or Ban Such Sales, SY 2008-09

% of students in districts with policy by grade level
IOM Competitive Beverage Standards

Sugar-Sweetened Beverages (SSB)
Beverages with added caloric sweeteners are prohibited

Sugar/Calorie Content of Flavored Milk
Less than 22 g of sugars per 8 oz serving

Fat Content of Milk
Only low-fat (1%) or non-fat/skim milk

Serving Size
Water any size; AND
8 oz per serving for milk (including flavored milk); AND
4 oz per serving for 100% juice (ES/MS); AND
8 oz per serving for 100% juice (HS)

Caffeine
Beverages with added caffeine are prohibited

Competitive Beverage Content Restrictions that Meet IOM Standards or Ban Such Sales, SY 2008-09

% of students in districts with policy by grade level

- **Vending Machines**
  - ES
  - MS
  - HS

- **School Stores**
  - ES
  - MS
  - HS

- **A la Carte**
  - ES
  - MS
  - HS

- **Fundraisers**
  - ES
  - MS
  - HS

*Note: Soda/SSBs overlap*
Report/Data Availability and Next Steps
Two reports issued to date:

**Report 1:**

**Report 2:**

Detailed data tables contained in the back of the report
Detailed Data Tables Contained in the Report—Table 1

Wellness Policy Data

The following table summarizes most of the data compiled for this study for school years 2006–07, 2007–08 and 2008–09. All data are weighted to reflect the percentage of elementary, middle and high school students nationwide who were enrolled in a district with a given policy provision. All data reflect policies in place by the first day of the given school year. More details, including data presented at the district level and for various subpopulations and geographic areas, are available at www.bridgingthegapresearch.org.

We defined STRONG POLICY PROVISIONS as those that required action and specified an implementation plan or strategy. They included language such as adopt, must, require, comply and enforce. WEAK POLICY PROVISIONS offered suggestions or recommendations, and some required action, but only for certain grade levels or times of day. They included language such as should, may, encourage, some, make an effort to, partial and try.

Where applicable, significant change across the categories (no policy, weak policy and strong policy) over the three-year period is identified and was computed using the square statistics.

Table 1 (page 15 of the report) contains data by grade level of applicability and year (06-07 through 08-09) for each category of policy examined.

To illustrate the potential “reach” of the policy provisions, all data in Table 1 are weighted to reflect the %age of students in districts nationwide with the given policy provision.

The %age of districts nationwide with the various provisions is usually slightly lower than the %age of students.

Hope to make the district-level data available on our website in coming months.
Detailed Data Tables Contained in the Report—Table 2: Competitive Food & Beverage Restrictions by 2007 IOM Standards

- Table 2 (page 22 of the report) contains competitive food and beverage content restrictions by grade level of applicability and location of sale (vending, stores, a la carte, fundraisers, parties), classified according to the 2007 IOM standards.

- Only have data with this classification for 2008-09 (future reports will contain more years of data).

- To illustrate the potential “reach” of the policy provisions, all data in Table 1 are weighted to reflect the %age of students in districts nationwide with the given policy provision.
  - The %age of districts nationwide with the various provisions is usually slightly lower than the %age of students.
  - Hope to make the district-level data available on our website in coming months.
Executive summary released June 8, 2010

School Policies and Practices to Improve Health and Prevent Obesity: National Elementary School Survey Results

Executive Summary, surveys, research briefs, and video Q&A available at:

www.bridgingthegapresearch.org

Complete report forthcoming
Continued Research Planned

• Companion monographs on implementation of the wellness policies and related practices in elementary, middle and high schools

• Analyses examining variation in district policies based on state obesity rates and based on state policy/laws

• Linkages between applicable state laws/policies, district policies and school-level practices at the primary and secondary school levels

• Analyses examining the relationships between the wellness policies and school practices and student weight outcomes (2ry only)

• Ongoing surveillance of wellness policy and implementation progress and innovation following hopeful congressional reauthorization
  • SY 09-10 data completed and SY 10-11 policies being collected
Contact for additional information

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