The Importance of School Health

IT'S THE LAW  Senate Bill 5093, February 14, 2007:
The goal of Washington State is to ensure that by 2010 all K-12 districts have school health advisory committees that advise administration and board members on policies, environmental changes, and programs needed to support healthy food choices, physical activity and child fitness.

Coordinated School Health Program

A coordinated school health program model consists of eight interactive components and encourages organizations and agencies to work together to maintain the well-being of young people.

Why is school health an important issue?

• Attention to school health and fitness has a direct impact on student achievement.

• In healthy schools, children are more alert, more focused on learning, and miss less school.

• Students in healthy schools learn lifelong healthy behaviors to prevent the leading causes of death: heart disease, stroke, and cancer.

• Odds for academic risk are decreased by implementing school programs that prevent obesity and promote healthy eating habits.

• Supporting kids and addressing health issues such as hunger, stress, harassment, and substance use can greatly improve their ability to learn.

Benefits for Students

School health councils help to:

• Improve student performance and test scores
• Decrease risky behaviors
• Reduced drop out rates
• Less absenteeism
• Less fighting
• Improved rates of physical activity

Benefits for Schools

School health councils will not only benefit students, but help schools to:

• Save money
• Reduce absenteeism
• Improve staff morale
• Support teacher teamwork
Forming A School Health Advisory Council

School Health Advisory Council
An advisory group of school and community representatives who act collectively in advising the school district on a Coordinated School Health Program.

School Health Advisory Council Functions:

- Find partners
- Program Planning
- Parent and Community Involvement
- Advocate for Coordinated School Health
- Identify concerns and assess student/staff health and wellness
- Set priorities and nutrition standards
- Design solutions
- Evaluation, Accountability, Quality Control
- Fiscal Planning

Steps to get started:

1) Meet with key school and/or community representatives.
2) Identify existing school and community groups that address health issues.
3) Name a coordinator or team leader for the council.
4) Organize and conduct meetings.
5) Contact Whitman County Department of Health for additional resources.

Get Everyone Involved!
School Health is a community issue and requires help from:

- District personnel
- School administrators
- Health & PE teachers
- School board member
- Public health department
- Community members
- Student volunteers

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
North Carolina’s coordinated school health initiative
www.nchealthyschools.org/schoolhealthadvisorycouncil
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
www.k12.wa.us/CoordinatedSchoolHealth/default.aspx
Washington State Department of Health
www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/mch/cahcp/schoolhealth.htm

Whitman County Department of Public Health
www.whitmancounty.org

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**Nutrition Services**

**Provision of nutritious, affordable, and appealing meals; nutrition education and an environment that promotes healthy eating behaviors.**

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**IT'S THE LAW**  
Senate Bill 5093, February 14, 2007:
The goal of Washington State is to ensure that by 2010 only healthy food and beverages will be provided on school campuses during school hours including school sponsored activities.

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**Nutrition Services**

**Why is nutrition an important issue?**

- Nutrition is essential for sustenance, growth and development, and health and well-being.
- Poor dietary habits are related to obesity, osteoporosis, heart disease and diabetes.
- Too little food or the wrong food can affect sexual maturation and growth.
- Teens who do not get enough calcium many never achieve normal bone strength.
- Over-eating, under-eating and eating disorders can have devastating health impacts.

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**Healthier Options**

Schools should provide access to foods and beverages such as:
- Bottled Water
- 100% Fruit Juice
- Pretzels
- Baked Chips
- Low-fat Cookies
- Fruits and Vegetables

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**Less Healthy Options**

Schools should stay away from:
- Soft Drinks
- Non-100% Juice
- Regular Potato Chips
- High-fat snacks found in vending machines
Improving Nutrition Quality in Schools

School Health Councils will insure that
- All foods and beverages offered on the school campus will contribute to an overall healthful eating environment.
- Nutrition standards for food and beverages will be obeyed.
- Teachers, students, and parents will be provided with guidance regarding food brought into the school for school activities.

Nutrition Guidelines
The law dictates that food provided on school campuses will contain:
- No more than 35% of its total calories should be from fat
- No more than 10% of its total calories should be from saturated fat
- No more than 35% of its total weight or 15 grams per food item should be composed of sugar

The big question
How?

√ Schedule designated lunch periods of sufficient length for students to enjoy eating healthy foods.
√ Make healthy school lunch choices available and easy.
√ Encourage healthy eating in the classroom and incorporate nutrition into the curriculum.
√ Inspire teachers to be role models for physical activity and healthy eating.
√ Establish a healthy school lunch program by instituting a fruit and vegetable bar for all students eating school lunch.
√ Emphasize a nutrition concept of the month.

To find out more about specific nutrition policies for your school district check out
depts.washington.edu/waschool/wellness_policies/wa_policies_l-r.html

For more information contact
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Schools by themselves cannot—and should not be expected to—solve the nation’s most serious health and social problems.

The Whitman County Department of Public Health is here to help by providing resources and support.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
USDA
www.usda.gov
Washington School Nutrition Association
www.washingtonsna.org/
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
www.k12.wa.us/CoordinatedSchoolHealth/default.aspx
Washington State Department of Health
www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/mch/cahcp/schoolhealth.htm
Physical Education

Planned, sequential physical education instruction that promotes life-long physical activity.

Why is physical activity and education an important issue?

Physical activity can help increase students’ capacity for learning.

Physical activity has substantial health benefits including favorable effects on endurance capacity, muscular strength, body weight, and blood pressure.

Positive experiences with physical activity at a young age help lay the basis for being regularly active throughout life.

Addressing student’s health can help schools to meet performance goals and alleviate financial constraints.

THREATS TO SUCCESS

Overconsumption of high-calorie foods and beverages

Too few healthy alternatives to high-calorie, low-nutrient foods in schools

Increasingly sedentary lifestyles for American youth

Physical Inactivity contributes to many health problems, including obesity, heart disease, and diabetes, as well as low self-esteem and stress. Moderate to vigorous physical activity strengthens bones, muscles, the immune system, and helps control weight. Studies show a strong connection between physical activity and improved test scores.

IT'S THE LAW

Senate Bill 5093, February 14, 2007:

The goal of Washington State is to ensure that by 2010 all students in 1st through 8th grade should have at least 150 minutes of physical education every week conducted by certified instructors.

1 week $\Rightarrow$ 150 minutes = only 30 minutes a day Monday through Friday
Improving Physical Education in Schools

School Health Councils will insure that physical education

- Promotes optimal student physical, mental, emotional and social development
- Includes a variety of activities for sufficient periods of time
- Is led by qualified trained teachers

### Physical Education Guidelines

According to the National Association for Sport and Physical Education

1. Children should accumulate at least 60 minutes, and up to several hours, of age-appropriate physical activity on all, or most days of the week.
2. Children should participate in several bouts of physical activity lasting 15 minutes or more each day.
3. Children should participate each day in a variety of age-appropriate physical activities designed to achieve optimal health, wellness, fitness, and performance benefits.
4. Extended periods of inactivity are discouraged for children, especially during the daytime hours.

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### Action Schools Can Take

- Form a school health advisory council
- Integrate physical activity and nutrition into the school day and after school programs
- Encourage staff to model healthy lifestyles
- Strengthening PE requirements for Grades K–12
- Offering joint school and community recreation activities

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- National Association for Sport & Physical Education [www.aahperd.org/Naspe/](http://www.aahperd.org/Naspe/)
- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction [www.k12.wa.us/CoordinatedSchoolHealth/default.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/CoordinatedSchoolHealth/default.aspx)

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Check out the Action for Healthy Kids website for tips on how to improve health and educational performance through better physical activity in schools
[www.actionforhealthykids.org](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org)