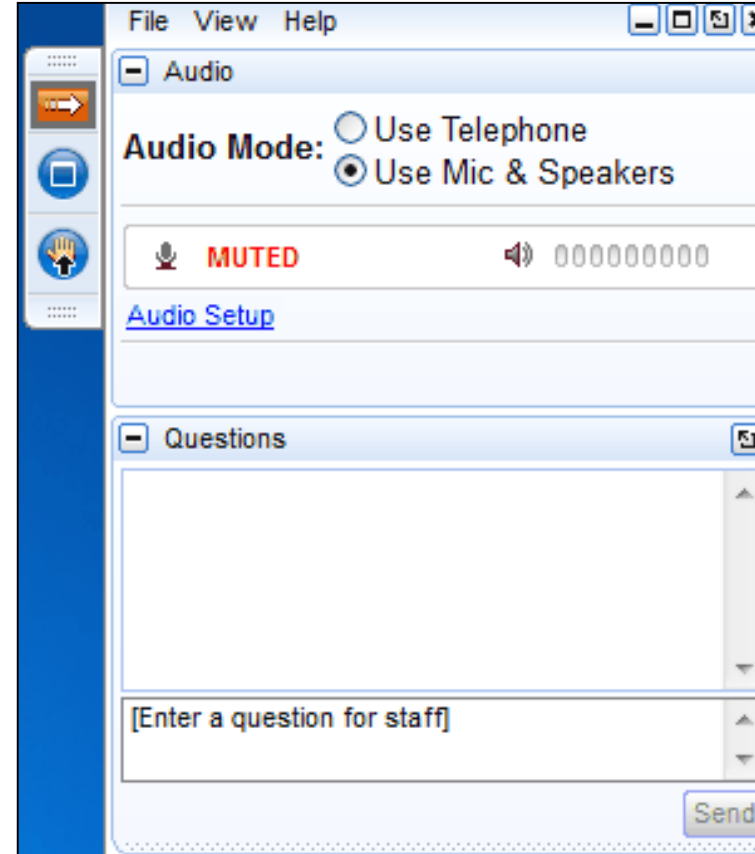


Logistics

- Use telephone or speakers
- Everyone is muted
- Submit a question
- This call is being recorded
- Link to recording and handouts will be sent out following the call



Students to Superintendents: Key stakeholders' qualitative perspectives and experiences with local school wellness policies

Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK) Webinar

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**INSTITUTE FOR
HEALTH RESEARCH
AND POLICY**



**UCONN
RUDD CENTER**
FOR FOOD POLICY & OBESITY

**NATIONAL
WELLNESS**
POLICY STUDY

Acknowledgements

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The USDA program officer is Holly Figueroa

Outline

- **Background on National Wellness Policy Study**
- **Methods – Qualitative focus groups & interviews**
- **Findings**
 - Overall themes across stakeholders
 - Food and beverage marketing & fundraising
- **Conclusions**
 - Implications and recommendations

Background

Local School Wellness Policies

Final rule required revised policy for 2016-2017 school year including additional provisions¹

- **Policies on marketing that allow advertising of only those foods and beverages that meet Smart Snacks standards**
- **Involvement of key stakeholders in policy development, implementation, periodic review, and update Inform and update the public on content and implementation**
- **Triennial assessments**
- **Update WP as necessary**
- **Make WP available to the public**
- **LEAs must establish WP leadership**

National Wellness Policy Study

Examines the implementation of Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act school wellness laws and related policies on schools and students nationwide, from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective, in collaboration with:

- Action for Healthy Kids
- Boise State
- UConn Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity
- USDA Food & Nutrition Services

Linking Policy to Outcomes

Examining the association of district wellness policies and related state laws with outcomes and practices at the school food authority (SFA), school, and student levels

- **State wellness policy requirements are associated with more comprehensive district wellness policies, and both state wellness policy requirements and district wellness policy comprehensiveness are associated with wellness policy implementation.**
- **State policy meeting Smart Snacks is associated with lower student intake of calories from solid fats and added sugars (SOFAS) and saturated fat.**
- **State policy is associated with school required physical education (PE) classes and students taking PE daily.**
- **District and state policy are associated with implementation of nutrition standards for classroom/school celebrations.**

Stakeholders As Key Informants

People are not passive recipients of innovations. Rather...they seek innovations, experiment with them, evaluate them, find (or fail to find) meaning in them, develop feelings (positive or negative) about them, challenge them, worry about them, complain about them, “work around” them, gain experience with them, modify them to fit particular tasks, and try to improve or redesign them often through dialogue with other users.²

Stakeholder Accounts of Implementation

What are stakeholders' experiences and perceptions of local school wellness policy implementation?

- **Lessons learned/best practices & implementation challenges**
- **Awareness of wellness policy & initiatives**
- **Engagement with implementation**
- **Resources and technical assistance utilized**
- **Awareness and involvement with fundraising (superintendents/parents)**
- **Evaluation and reporting (superintendents)**
- **Food and beverage marketing on campus (superintendents)**

Methods



Series of Qualitative Studies

Stakeholders	Data Collected	Focus
Food service directors	n=9 interviews (Spring 2015)	Revised school meal standards implementation
High school students	n=5 focus groups; 15 respondents total (Summer/Fall 2015)	Revised school meal standards implementation
Superintendents	n=6 focus groups; 39 respondents total (Spring 2017)	Local school wellness policy implementation
Parents of middle school students	n=30 interviews (Winter 2017-2018)	Local school wellness policy implementation

Sampling & Recruitment

- **Food service directors – Asada dissertation**
- **High school students – Funders Collaborative for Youth Organizing (FCYO)**
- **Superintendents – The School Superintendents Association (AASA)**
- **Parents of middle school students – Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK)**
- **UIC IRB (#2015-0720) and UConn IRB (H15-165)**

Focus Group & Interview Instruments

- Designed from research questions, input from school wellness experts, and literature review
- Pilot tested for terminology and overall flow
- Focus on perspectives and experiences with implementation of standards
- Revised during data collection as appropriate

Data Collection

- **Focus groups (60 mins) and telephone interviews (30-60 mins)**
- **Conducted by trained qualitative researchers**
- **Audio recorded and transcribed by transcription service and/or research assistant**
- **Participants received gift cards (\$50)**

Coding & Analysis

- **Coding guide iteratively developed**
- **Team coding and analysis in Atlas.ti v8 Qual Data Analysis Software**
- **”Member checking” with high school students**
- **Preliminary themes shared and critiqued by experts outside the analysis team**

Limitations

- Interviews capture one-time data collection efforts, not longitudinal accounts of implementation activities
- Qualitative samples are not meant to be representative of larger stakeholder populations
- Data collection methods did not include additional measurements to triangulate implementation activities e.g., changes to school wellness environments

Overarching Findings

Implementation Takes Time

Most stakeholders described initial implementation challenges and poor acceptance, followed by improvement over time.

- *It was actually my sophomore year when they changed it, and I remember when everyone introduced it, everyone was like, 'What is this? Where is our normal food?' And by our junior year, a lot of people liked it. – High school student*

Positive Outcomes

Each stakeholder group reported positive outcomes of implementation, for example:

- Improved fruit & vegetable consumption with school meals
- Enhanced awareness about nutrition and wellness
- Shifting culture and norms around wellness
- Improved partnership between Child Nutrition and district
- Potential for improvement in academic outcomes

Positive Outcomes

- *I'm thrilled to death when I stand over here at the high school and I see the kids pile up on strawberries or blueberries and they eat it all. – Food service director*
- *But I think it really was a cultural shift, you see it in food service but also in the culture of your organization. The kids having the bottles with the school logo on their water, water fountains everywhere, and teachers embracing the ball chairs so the kids can move. - Superintendent*

Wellness Committees as a Platform

Many stakeholders described wellness committees as an important entity or platform to facilitate implementation

- FSDs who had a wellness committee reported more connection to district-wide implementation
- Superintendents used the committee to ensure appropriate delegation of tasks
- Parents used the committee as a platform to find “strength in numbers”

Technical Assistance & Resources

Stakeholders described the critical role of partnerships with technical assistance agencies/ organizations and resources in facilitating implementation

- State Child Nutrition
- Non profit organizations (e.g., Action for Healthy Kids)
- Local health departments
- University and county extensions
- Local hospital and health foundations
- Health insurance agencies

Technical Assistance & Resources

- *My relationship with Action for Healthy Kids, especially at the state level, is probably the best...because there are links to many more resources and many more locations...And we just need more and more people who not only share your same vision but have ways to help you promote it better. - Parent*

Superintendents: Evaluation of Wellness Initiatives

Challenges with measurement

- *How do you determine whether or not it's [LWP implementation] effective either to [improve] academic performance or to anything in general?...we feel like every time we are trying to decide whether that made a difference academically, we look back and go 'yeah but we made these other 18 different changes.'*

Interest in best practices, resources, and technical assistance for evaluation

School Wellness and Equity

Each stakeholder group described concerns about the economy, food insecurity, and hunger

- *I know every parent loves their kid. The **economy is not as great** as they want us to think it is, and many people are working multiple jobs. They just don't have time. – Parent*
- *...I've met a lot of students that **that would be the only meal that they had**. Sometimes, they're low income families where I live...that was one of the biggest meals that they would have...
– High school student*

Approaches to Address Food Insecurity

Superintendents described initiatives to address hunger

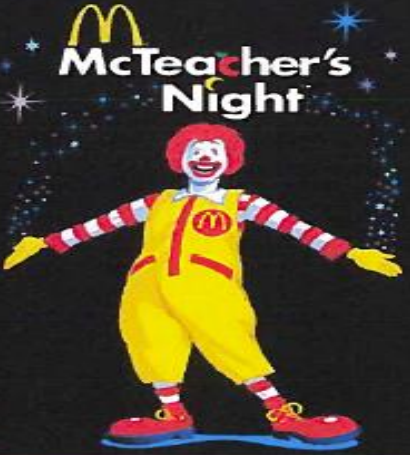
- Backpack programs
- Universal School Breakfast Program
- School food pantry
 - *We have **pop-up food pantry** where...we were able to get a grant from [company] to pay for this. They actually have a pop-up food pantry that comes every 2 weeks, but only once a month during the summer. During the school year, every two weeks and we rotate it between our schools. - Superintendent*

Food Marketing and Fundraising in Schools

Food marketing in schools

- Logos on school equipment (e.g., scoreboards);
- Commercials during in-school educational programming;
- Fundraising using branded products;
- Coupons from food companies to be used as rewards in the classroom; and
- Branded educational materials.

Support Your Local Teachers! ✨



McTeacher's Night


ELEMENTARY

THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 11
5-8PM

20% of ALL Sales are donated to school

School receives 100% of funds earned from pie sales

McDonald's at
76th & Hwy 169




READING AWARD
2013-14
pizzahut.com/bookit

BOOK IT!
read your heart out

Kudos on your goodness!

This certificate certifies you, _____, to a free, one-topping Personal Pan Pizza* from Pizza Hut* to celebrate your reading achievement!




Goldfish
TINY CRACKERS

Counting Board Book

by Barbara Barbieri McGrath
Illustrated by Rob Bolster and Frank Mazzola, Jr.

10 to 1
is so much fun!

The **OREO**
Cookie Counting Book

Awareness and Perceptions of Wellness Policy Marketing Provision

- Most superintendents were not aware of the LWP food & beverage marketing provision
- Most superintendents described food & beverage marketing to students as a negative practice
 - *...insidious & evil and must be combatted*
 - *they're getting a foothold in the school. If you want to make a lot of money, you get yourself in with the kids, with parents, and it's junk food*
 - *I don't think they [food companies] have students' well-being in mind. I think it's for profit.*

Fundraising & Marketing Policies Varied

Bans on food marketing

- *Say we allow [candy company] to come in and put all their flyers out to market themselves, I also have to then let a group that I might not be in favor of come in and market. So a religious group or an anti-political group or a far-right or far-left group. If I let one in, I really can't not let everyone else in. **A zero tolerance policy to say, we don't let anyone in.***

Fundraising & Marketing Policies Varied

A "means to an end"

- *Obviously it [Book it] is a marketing tool for [fast food restaurant], but you know what, I just believe if we can get kids to read, it is important that to me especially K-1, 2 and 3 if you can read, you can conquer the world...so, yeah we are promoting [restaurant] pizzas, but yeah it is a means to an end for us that we are encouraging kids to read.*

Restaurant Fundraisers

Restaurant fundraisers were the most common source of fundraising and often connected with PTA/PTO groups

- *It's attractive to kids and the power of media is obviously at play here. I don't know many kids who don't like [restaurant]. This [restaurant] night, we do it with some reservation. It's hard to get the PTA to not to want to do this. When you work with parent-teacher organizations, they want to do this stuff. I think it's bittersweet. - Superintendent*

Restaurant Fundraisers

Fundraisers as 'implicit' marketing

- *...We have to be very conscientious about the decision making... because it is too easy to say, 'oh great PTO has got the [restaurant] fundraiser going'...I guess we are all going to implicitly endorse that...and look, '20% of all sales are donated to school'. Yay! What is that on a meal, somebody tell me, is that 12¢? That is awesome. Your budget problems are solved [laugh].*
– Superintendent

Restaurant Fundraisers

Fundraisers as positive events in the community

- *We're just trying to bring back the camaraderie of families in our district. And again, this is PTO not our wellness committee doing it. You know, it's the families that are supporting families...We felt that bringing people together over a meal or just seeing each other outside of the school day in a fun, relaxing atmosphere is going to build those relationships. - Parent*

Conclusions & Recommendations

Conclusions

- Initial challenges but overall implementation and student acceptance improved with time
- Stakeholders experienced a range of positive outcomes
- Evaluation remains a challenge and superintendents sought technical assistance and resources
- Wellness initiatives intersect with and address equity
- Food marketing and fundraising policies varied widely despite overall negative perceptions of marketing in schools

Recommendations

- **Many opportunities to provide directed technical assistance and resources for evaluation of local school wellness policies**
 - Targeted to school administration (e.g., school boards and superintendents)
- **More research needed on the ways that schools are addressing hunger and food insecurity concurrently with wellness**

Recommendations

- **Opportunities to Improve awareness about food marketing provisions (and other recent final rule requirements) beyond food service directors and Child Nutrition (e.g., superintendents)**
- **Opportunities to collaborate or and align efforts between parent groups and wellness committees to promote healthier fundraising and marketing**

More great resources on our website!

What Works? Strategies Used by Food Service Directors to Implement the Revised School Meal Standards

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS
AT CHICAGO

Background

School meals offer strong potential for widespread impact on students' health at a population level. In 2012, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a final rule updating meal patterns and nutrition standards for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs for the first time in 15 years: *Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs*.¹

What Is This Brief About?

Food Service Directors (FSDs) play a critical role in the implementation of the revised school meal standards. This brief shares the strategies of FSDs to implement the fruit and vegetable (F&V), whole grain-rich, and sodium requirements, as a way to offer "lessons learned" and ideas for other FSDs who may still be working to increase student acceptance to changes in the school meal program. Further information about FSDs' perceived outcomes and impacts of school meal reform, as well as how these were communicated to the school community, can be found in the companion brief, "*Speaking from Experience: Food Service Directors' Perspectives and Lessons From Implementing the Revised School Meal Standards*."

Strategies for Implementing the Revised Meal Standards: What Did Food Service Directors Say?

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE REQUIREMENT

The revised standards required that students select F&Vs as part of their reimbursable meal. FSDs reported that initially, this led to an increase in plate waste, as students threw away unwanted items. However, they also noted that plate waste has decreased over time, as students' acceptance of school meal reform has grown. In addition, FSDs reported that despite the initial increase in plate waste, overall students were consuming more F&Vs. This section presents strategies that were employed by FSDs to promote F&V consumption, as well as decrease plate waste associated with the F&V requirement.

■ Showcase F&Vs in an appealing, easy-to-consume manner. FSDs reported that F&Vs can be made more appealing, for example, by slicing them and serving them in individual bowls so they are easier to consume. In addition, FSDs note that offering a variety of F&Vs provides students

STRATEGIES USED BY FOOD SERVICE DIRECTORS

PAGE 1

REVISED NUTRITION STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL MEALS



The revised nutrition standards required schools to increase healthy food offerings, including fruits and vegetables and whole grain-rich products, as well as reduce levels of sodium, saturated fat, and trans fat in school meals and set grade level-specific calorie requirements. School districts were required to comply with the revised federal meal standards beginning July 1, 2012, with provisions phased in through school year 2022–2023.

We have 3 fruits and 3 vegetables that are offered each day at lunch. So just having a variety on the menu that children can select from, I think they're more likely to select something that they will actually eat. — MS FSD

High School Students' Insights on School Meal Reform

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS
AT CHICAGO

Background

School meals have the potential to impact student health at a population level. In 2012, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a final rule updating meal patterns and nutrition standards for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs for the first time in 15 years (hereafter referred to as school meal reform).¹ Research has pointed to emerging successes of school meal reform^{2,3} nationwide; however, high schools continue to have poorer food environments compared to elementary and middle schools.⁴ This disparity suggests that high schools may have challenges with fully implementing school meal reform. Thus, it is important to better understand the perspectives and experiences of high school students who are directly impacted by changes to school food environments in order to obtain useful insights for supporting healthier school meal environments.

What Is This Brief About?

This brief highlights experiences and perspectives about school meal reform from a critical stakeholder group: high school students. Based on students' experiences and insights, we also provide practice-relevant strategies that may be considered by local decision makers and school practitioners. Such strategies are outlined in a *Fall Report* and a companion brief, "*Student Recommendations for Improving the School Food Environment: Insights Following School Meal Reform*."

What did High School Students Say about School Meal Reform?

STUDENTS SUPPORT HEALTHIER SCHOOL MEALS

Students asserted their support for school meal reform efforts, yet were frustrated that youth were portrayed in popular media as preferring junk foods and the old school meals. In fact, most students reported that they liked the increase in fruits and vegetables in their school meals. In describing their support for school meal reform, many students stated appreciation for the First Lady Michelle Obama's broad efforts to address children and adolescents' health:

if she [Michelle Obama] didn't push for it [healthy school environment], it wouldn't have been a topic in the first place. So, I'm thankful for that. I think that whole healthy movement was very beneficial.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' INSIGHTS ON SCHOOL MEAL REFORM

PAGE 1

INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH RESEARCH AND POLICY
NATIONAL WELLNESS POLICY STUDY
SMART SNACKS FUNDRAISER EXEMPTION STATE POLICIES

Quarterly Report Updated June 1, 2017

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This report and prior editions are available at:
<http://www.go.uic.edu/NWPSproducts>

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<http://www.go.uic.edu/NWPSproducts>

NATIONAL
WELLNESS
POLICY STUDY

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National Wellness Policy Study Products

<http://www.go.uic.edu/NWPSproducts>

Parents for Healthy Kids Website Update

Parents ^{for}
Healthy Kids

Action for Healthy Kids • National PTA



This Month on ParentsforHealthyKids.org

It's Party Time

With the holiday season upon us, [make sure your kids are celebrating the healthy way](#). Fun doesn't have to mean cupcakes and candy: Themed snacks like [fruit cornucopias](#) and active games like [musical snowflakes](#) keep parties engaging for kids.

Brr...it's Cold out There

It's getting to be that time of year when indoor recess is more frequent. But that often means kids get less physical activity than they would playing outside. [Here are some tips for making sure your child's school is offering a more active indoor recess](#).

Not in Good Shape

When it comes to meeting the new federal physical fitness guidelines, which were released this week, Americans are not in good shape. Fewer than one in three adults and one in five teenagers are getting the recommended amount and types of physical activity needed to help stave off cancer, high blood pressure, and anxiety and improve learning and brain function. [Read the full article to see why schools need to focus on fitness](#).

Stand out with This Dish

Need something to bring to Thanksgiving that's not the same old salad or green bean casserole? Check out [this recipe for roasted acorn squash and Brussels sprouts](#) topped with pomegranate seeds. It's a zesty yet hearty dish that will have guests reaching for seconds.

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