What is a School Wellness Policy?
Since 2006, a school that participates in the national school lunch or breakfast program, is required to have in place a local wellness policy to help address childhood obesity. The law places the responsibility of developing a wellness policy at the local level so the individual needs of each school can be addressed.

The local wellness policy must include, at minimum:
- Goals for nutrition promotion and education
- Goals for physical activity
- Goals for other school-based activities that promote wellness
- Nutrition guidelines that promote student health and reduce childhood obesity for all foods available on each school campus during the school day.

Who should be involved?
The law requires schools to involve a variety of people to develop, carry out, review and update the policy unique to their community. A school should permit the following people on its school wellness committee:

- students
- representatives of the school food authority
- teachers of physical education
- school board
- school administrators
- School Health Professionals
- THE GENERAL PUBLIC

"School day" is defined as the "period from the midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day."

In 2010, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act added school wellness policies. Now schools must report to the public about the their progress made in reaching goals and how the policy compares to standards.
## Local School Wellness 101

...great for starting school gardens!

### Parent Initiatives - Wellness Policy Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal Area</th>
<th>Project Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition Education &amp; Promotion</td>
<td>Healthy food tastings, health fairs, school gardens, messages, posters, signs promoting health, healthy events for teacher appreciation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Activity</td>
<td>Walking school buses, active recess programs, after-school sports or exercise clubs, physical activity breaks in the classroom, schoolyard and playground improvements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Health Promotion Activities</td>
<td>Recess before lunch, family health nights, healthy rewards, “No Internet Day” or week, healthy fundraisers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition Guidelines</td>
<td>Healthy snacks and celebrations, healthy options in vending and concessions, more fresh fruits and veggies at lunch, promotional salad bar events in the lunchroom</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### TAKING ACTION:

- Ask to join your district wellness committee or school health advisory council (SHAC). **OR**
- Join or start a wellness team at your school and create your own guidelines to improve student health. **OR**
- Assess school health programs using the School Health Index self-assessment tool. (www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/SHI) **OR**
- Evaluate your school’s policy strength using the Wellness Policy Assessment Tool (WELLSAT) from the Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity. (www.wellsat.org)

### Stories from the Field

**Laredo Elementary School** (Laredo, Mo.)

The school wellness committee went before the school board and got the written policy changed to increase recess an extra five minutes for a total of 20 minutes every day.

**Grundy High School** (Galt, Mo.)

The school wellness committee implemented a staff **worksite health promotion** program. Educational materials were distributed and pedometers were awarded to all participants.

### RESOURCES

- **For ideas of healthy or non-food related fundraisers:** [https://cspinet.org/resource/fundraising-options-available-schools](https://cspinet.org/resource/fundraising-options-available-schools)
- **For healthier alternatives to school birthdays and holiday celebrations:** [https://cspinet.org/resource/healthy-school-celebrations](https://cspinet.org/resource/healthy-school-celebrations)
- **For non-food classroom rewards:** [https://cspinet.org/resource/constructive-classroom-rewards-fact-sheet](https://cspinet.org/resource/constructive-classroom-rewards-fact-sheet)
- **For parents interested in doing more to advocate for healthy schools:** [https://healthyschoolscampaign.org/](https://healthyschoolscampaign.org/)
- **For some local Missouri success stories on farm to school:** [http://mofarmtoschool.missouri.edu](http://mofarmtoschool.missouri.edu)
- **Website links funders and donations to schools wishing for a salad bar in their lunchroom:** [http://saladbars2schools.org](http://saladbars2schools.org)