

Requirements for School Wellness Policy

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004

Section 204 of The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265) requires that schools participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) child nutrition programs establish a local wellness policy by the first day of the 2006-2007 school year. The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 amends the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, and was signed into law on June 30, 2004.

Section 204 – School Wellness Policy: Not later than the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, this section requires local educational agencies participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s school meal programs to establish a local “school wellness policy” that, at a minimum:

1. Includes goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness in a manner that the local educational agency determines appropriate;
2. Includes nutrition guidelines for all foods available on the school campus during the school day, with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity;
3. Provides an assurance that guidelines for school meals are not less restrictive than those set by the Secretary of Agriculture;
4. Establishes a plan for measuring implementation of the local wellness policy, including the designation of one or more persons within the local education agency or at each school, as appropriate, charged with ensuring that the school meets the local wellness policy; and
5. Involves parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public in development of the local wellness policy.

This section also requires the Secretary of Agriculture (in consultation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) to make information and technical assistance available, on request, to local educational agencies, school food authorities, and State educational agencies. This information and technical assistance would be used to establish healthy school nutrition environments, reduce childhood obesity, and prevent diet-related chronic diseases. It would be provided in a manner consistent with the needs and requirements of local agencies, and would be for guidance purposes only.

This section further provides mandatory funding to the Secretary of Agriculture to provide information and technical assistance – \$4 million to be available though fiscal year 2009. While funding is authorized by Public Law 108-265, actual funding will be dependent on congressional appropriations and final funding may or may not be at this level.

Source: The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Public Law 108-265.
http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Legislation/Historical/PL_108-265.pdf

School Wellness Policy Resources

USDA Team Nutrition: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/wellnesspolicy.html>
National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity: <http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/>
School Nutrition Association: <http://www.schoolnutrition.org/Index.aspx?id=1075>
Action for Healthy Kids: http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/resources_wp.php

For additional information, please contact:
Susan S. Fiore, M.S., R.D., Nutrition Education Coordinator
Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Health and Nutrition Services and Child/Family/School Partnerships
25 Industrial Park Road • Middletown, CT 06457
Phone: (860) 807-2075 • E-mail: susan.fiore@ct.gov