



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools Participating in the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs

FROM: Mark K. McQuillan, Commissioner of Education

DATE: June 27, 2008

SUBJECT: School Wellness Policy Report

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265) required that all school districts participating in the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs develop a school wellness policy by the first day of the 2006-2007 school year.

These policies were intended to promote school practices to support student health and learning. At a minimum, school wellness policies were required to:

1. Include goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness;
2. Include 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. Provide an assurance that guidelines for school meals are not less restrictive than those set by the USDA;
4. Establish 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. Involve parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators and the public in development of the local wellness policy.

In February 2007, districts received a letter from Interim Commissioner George Coleman requesting submission of the district's school wellness policy to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) for review. CSDE received the majority of district policies by late fall 2007. Over the past year, CSDE has been working with the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity at Yale University to develop a school wellness policy assessment tool and to complete the review of these policies. I am pleased to share with you the results for your school district, including the following:

- *School Wellness Policy Report* – an overall summary of the district's scores, state averages and District Reference Group (DRG) scores for each of the seven school wellness policy categories;
- *School Wellness Policy Rating Sheet* – the actual district coding for the 96 policy items which determine the scores for each policy category; and
- *School Wellness Policy Report Comments Section* (if applicable) – a review of the district's policy language for consistency with all applicable federal and state requirements, including suggestions for revising language that is noncompliant with federal or state regulations or statutes.

CSDE anticipates that the enclosed feedback will lead to local policy revisions and intends to conduct a future review of district school wellness policies subject to funding. In the meantime, districts can use the *School Wellness Policy Rating Sheet* and *Coding Tool for Connecticut School Wellness Policies* to conduct a self-evaluation of any revised policies (<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=320754>). The school wellness policy reports can also be accessed online until June 2009. Districts should notify CSDE if their policy has been updated so that this information can be indicated online.

Ongoing local evaluation is important to determine if the district's school wellness policy is being implemented as intended and if planned outcomes are being achieved. I encourage you to use the *School Wellness Policy Report* to help continue the work of your local school wellness team in implementing, promoting and evaluating your district's school wellness policy.

If you have any questions, please contact Susan Fiore, Nutrition Education Coordinator, at susan.fiore@ct.gov or (860) 807-2075.

MKM:sff
cc: Local Board of Education Chairperson
School Food Service Directors

Enclosures