School Nutrition . . . BY DESIGN!

Report of the

Advisory Committee on Nutrition Implementation Strategies

California Department of Education
Sacramento, 2006

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Publishing Information

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Contents

A Message from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction ..... **v**

A Message from the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Nutrition Implementation Strategies ..... **vi**

Acknowledgments ..... **vii**

Introduction **1**

The Building Blocks of This Report **2**

A Call to Action **5**

Moving Forward: Implementation Strategies in Action **7**

Design Principle 1: Governance and Policy **8**

Design Principle 2: Stakeholder Involvement **10**

Design Principle 3: Student Involvement **12**

Design Principle 4: Nutrition Education **14**

Design Principle 5: Access and Participation **17**

Design Principle 6: Healthy School Environment **20**

Design Principle 7: Funding **22**

Design Principle 8: Professional Development **24**

Design Principle 9: Continuous Monitoring and Accountability **26**

Recommendations for the California Department of Education **29**

Appendix **31**

Position Paper of the Student Advisory Board on Education **32**

Acronyms **36**

Glossary **36**

A Message from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction

It is my pleasure to share this document, *School Nutrition . . . by Design!*, with you on behalf of the California Department of Education. This exceptional document is a culmination of the work of my Advisory Committee on Nutrition Implementation Strategies. It represents an overview of a healthy nutrition environment and suggests strategies schools and districts can use to model healthy eating habits for their students. I hope your careful review of this document will lead your district to take steps to address the looming health care crisis related to childhood obesity.

In January 2005 I made a commitment to convene an Advisory Committee that would make recommendations to improve the quality of food and beverages sold or served on school campuses. This document does not mandate any particular activity. Instead, it offers a menu of choices policymakers, administrators, teachers, food service directors, and community leaders can use to develop and maintain a healthy school nutrition environment. The recommended strategies are by no means exhaustive, but they offer ideas that can be adjusted to suit the local circumstances facing nearly any school or district in the state.

I am grateful to the members of the Advisory Committee for the many volunteer hours they put into this document. Each member represents important stakeholders who have demonstrated undeniable commitment to California's children. I believe this document provides a sound foundation that will facilitate your efforts to design a healthy school nutrition environment.

I extend my gratitude to everyone involved with developing this document and to those of you committed to designing a healthy school nutrition environment in California.

Jack O'Connell
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

A Message from the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Nutrition Implementation Strategies

As a home economics educator over the last 36 years, I know the importance of physical, mental, and emotional health to student academic success. I have been fortunate to teach in a state that is in the forefront of a health renaissance in schools—its goal is to create a culture of good nutrition and health on every campus in California.

It takes many people to make real change in schools' nutrition environments. At the local level I encourage community members, district and school administrators, teachers, staff members, food service directors and staff, parents, and students to work together as a strong team. Your commitment to promoting good nutrition in our public schools through community events, school-based gardening, local grants, and donations, to name a few, makes a huge difference.

I have been very proud to serve as chairperson of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction's Advisory Committee on Nutrition Implementation Strategies. Many dedicated professionals spent months developing this document. We invite you to join us and State Superintendent O'Connell in improving the quality of food and beverages sold or served on school campuses in California.

School Nutrition . . . by Design! gives us the framework for the changes that need to be made in schools' nutrition environments. Now it is time to bring the report and its Implementation Strategies to life.

Bonnie Jenuine

Bonnie Jenuine
Chair of the Advisory Committee on Nutrition Implementation Strategies

Acknowledgments

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Introduction

The California Department of Education's recent publication *Healthy Children Ready to Learn – A White Paper on Health, Nutrition, and Physical Education* sounded the alarm regarding the increase in obesity and decline of physical fitness among California students. The white paper recommended immediate actions to address these issues.

In response to the white paper and consistent with his educational priorities, State Superintendent O'Connell commissioned an advisory committee. Its purpose was "to develop implementation strategies for improving the nutritional quality of food and beverages served or sold on school campuses." The Advisory Committee on Nutrition Implementation Strategies was charged with developing a comprehensive, science-based set of strategies that, when implemented, would improve the nutritional health of California students.

The members of the Advisory Committee on Nutrition Implementation Strategies considered current information from several sources, including these reports:

- *The State Superintendent's Task Force on Childhood Obesity, Type 2 Diabetes, and Cardiovascular Disease*
- *Making It Happen! School Nutrition Success Stories,* published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

In addition, numerous presentations and testimony from nutrition educators, researchers, practitioners, and advocates were considered along with the expertise and knowledge of the committee members themselves. This combination of perspectives deepened the committee's understanding of the challenges to, and opportunities for, improving the school nutrition environment for students.

The committee's deliberations were a mix of full committee discussions and small work groups in three subcommittees, namely:

- Program, Policy, and Governance
- Facilities and Equipment Availability
- Fiscal Accountability/Implications

Time for public comments was built into each meeting of the Advisory Committee. Furthermore, the draft of the committee's report was made available for comments by the public at large.

This report, *School Nutrition . . . by Design!* contains the Advisory Committee's response to State Superintendent O'Connell's charge. The recommendations are voluntary; districts and schools are *not required* to implement them. However, districts and schools are encouraged to consider the strategies as part of their comprehensive approach to improving the quality of their school nutrition programs and offerings.

The Building Blocks of This Report

The five building blocks on which this report is based are represented in Figure 1 and are described below.

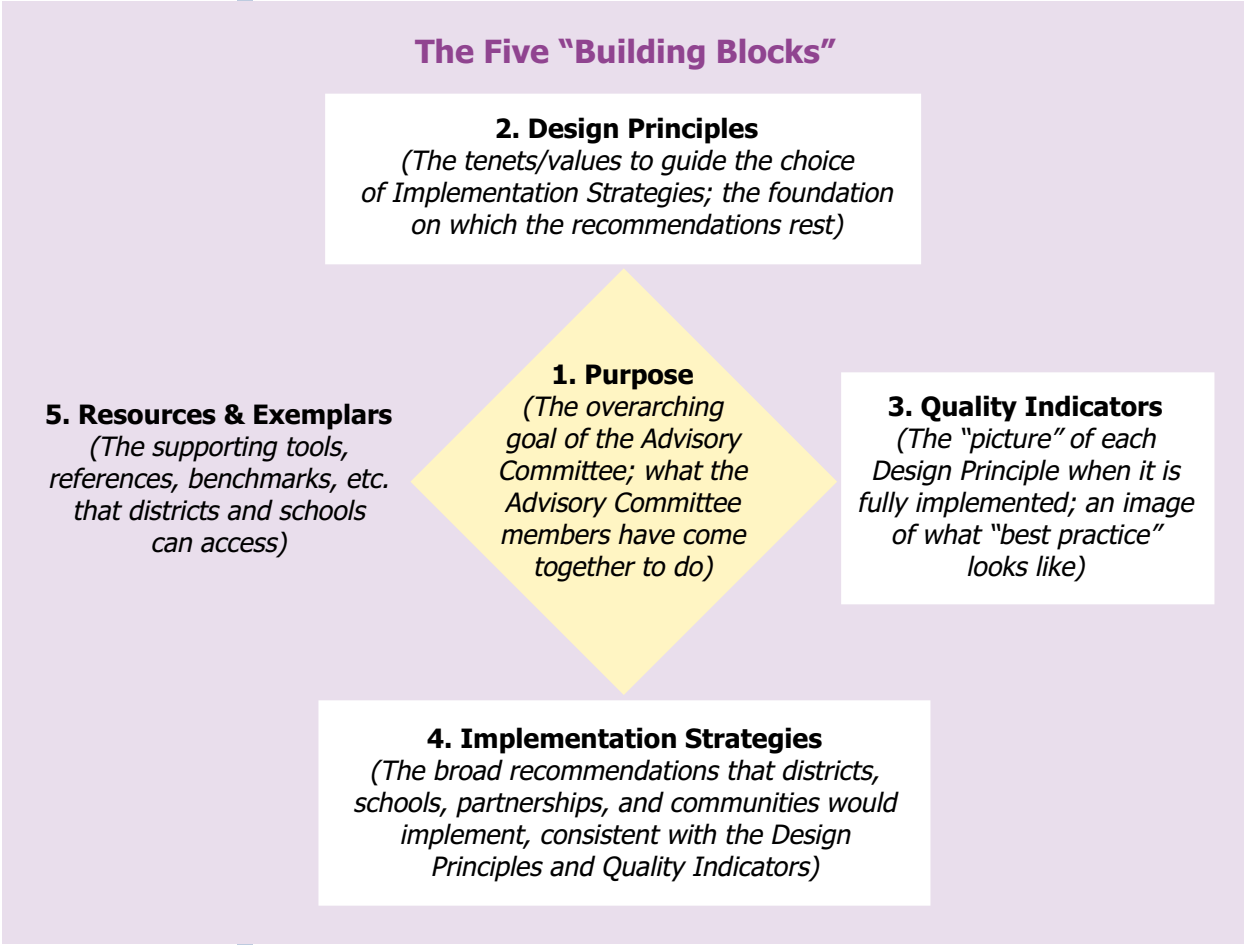


Figure 1. Building blocks of this report

Building Block 1 is the Purpose of the Advisory Committee. As defined by State Superintendent O'Connell, the purpose of the Advisory Committee is "to develop implementation strategies for improving the nutritional quality of food and beverages served or sold on school campuses."

Building Block 2 consists of nine Design Principles, or tenets, that guide the selection of the implementation strategies. They ensure that the Implementation Strategies are based on values essential to achieving overall improvements in the school nutrition environment. (See Table 1.)

The committee recommends seeing the Design Principles as an *interconnected whole* that should be fully implemented in order to achieve the goal of healthier students and quality meals.

Together, the Design Principles and Quality Indicators guided identification of the recommended Implementation Strategies that are comprehensive, are grounded in the values of good nutrition practices and programs, and adhere to the highest standards of quality.

Building Block 3 defines the Quality Indicators for each Design Principle. The Quality Indicators illustrate what each Design Principle would look like when fully implemented. This approach is analogous to defining "Level 4" (the highest level) of a four-part assessment rubric.

The nine Design Principles and the corresponding Quality Indicators define the *standards* that would ensure that all California students—regardless of where they live in the state—have access to quality meals and beverages.

Building Block 4 represents the Implementation Strategies, which are the broad recommendations that districts, schools, partnerships, and communities might implement in ways that are consistent with the Design Principles and Quality Indicators.

Building Block 5 consists of Resources and Exemplars that may aid districts and schools in their selection, implementation, and monitoring of their improvement strategies.

Table 1: Summary of the Nine Design Principles

1. **Governance and Policy**
   The local educational agency (LEA) establishes, implements, and monitors policies and regulations that define the requirements and criteria for a healthy school nutrition environment.

2. **Stakeholder Involvement**
   The voices and expertise of stakeholders are valued, and they are included in the process of ensuring the health and well-being of the school community.

3. **Student Involvement**
   The voices of students are valued, and they are included in developing strategies to ensure students' nutritional health and well-being.

4. **Nutrition Education**
   Nutrition is an integral component of the prekindergarten through grade twelve curriculum, teaching, and assessments.

5. **Access and Participation**
   The LEA designs and fully implements plans to provide access to all school nutrition programs at all schools, where cost effective, and to reach and maintain maximum student participation.

6. **Healthy School Environment**
   The LEA provides a whole school environment that models, supports, and encourages lifelong healthy nutrition habits.

7. **Funding**
   The LEA maximizes funding to ensure all nutrition standards for meals are followed and that provisions are made for adequate facilities to improve access to and the quality of the meals so that participation targets can be met.

8. **Professional Development**
   The LEA provides continuous professional development, learning, and collaboration opportunities to ensure all staff have the knowledge and skills necessary to design and deliver high-quality nutrition policies, standards, programs, and partnerships.

9. **Continuous Monitoring and Accountability**
   School districts (including student and parent organizations, community groups, and partners as well as all staff) are accountable for full implementation of nutrition policies and standards.

A Call to Action

Many of the nutrition implementation strategies proposed by the Advisory Committee can be put into effect within existing policies and budgets—an important consideration in the absence of additional state funding and in light of the fiscal constraints that districts and schools face today.

The recommendations in *School Nutrition . . . by Design!* assist districts and schools in making *different choices* regarding food and beverages sold and served to their students. They represent our collective *promise* to continuously improve and safeguard the nutritional health of California students.

The Implementation Strategies outlined in this report are designed to represent what local schools and districts *may* do, not what they *must* do. It is important to ensure that locally designed Implementation Strategies are in alignment with the Design Principles and Quality Indicators; that is, the "standards" for a healthy nutrition program. However, the specific Implementation Strategies must reflect local context and preferences.

The Implementation Strategies that follow are the "vital few" rather than the "trivial many." They are the results of thoughtful, serious deliberation and consensus that these strategies are powerful and range from those that are *doable* to those that are the *ideal*. The Advisory Committee members designed the strategies to encourage local flexibility in tailoring the solutions to meet unique needs, resources, and diversity.

Following each set of Design Principles, Quality Indicators, and Implementation Strategies is a list of Resources and Exemplars. This is a list of innovative ideas and examples of model programs to support and enhance implementation. The list is not exhaustive, and it includes references within the broader topic of Wellness. Also useful to implementation and compliance are references to recently passed legislation affecting the nutrition environment, including Senate Bill 12 (Chapter 235, Statutes of 2005), Senate Bill 965 (Chapter 237, Statutes of 2005), and Senate Bill 281 (Chapter 236, Statutes of 2005).

This report represents the end of the beginning of fulfilling State Superintendent O'Connell's charge. The next stage starts when all local educational agencies are implementing nutrition strategies consistent with the Design Principles and Quality Indicators and are collecting evidence that students are healthier. Only then will we know California schools are fulfilling the charge of providing a healthy school nutrition environment . . . *by design.*

It is important to ensure that locally designed Implementation Strategies are in alignment with the Design Principles and Quality Indicators; that is, the "standards" for a healthy nutrition program. However, the specific Implementation Strategies must reflect local context and preferences.

Moving Forward: Implementation Strategies in Action

The Implementation Strategies you choose for your school district require various levels of commitment from the leadership.

The effectiveness of the Implementation Strategies requires strong commitment from leadership at all levels. To be most effective, strong leadership and active participation from school boards, superintendents, and principals are critical. Their leadership sends the message to the entire community that the nutritional health of students is a priority and serves as a catalyst for school, district, and community-wide "buy-in," support, and action.

Although the superintendent and board members may launch and lead the community-wide nutritional improvement initiative, implementing the strategies is a *team* effort. *School Nutrition . . . by Design!* contains specific implementation strategies that address multiple school and district stakeholders; for example, food service staff and directors, school administrators, teachers, families, community partners, and students. This report helps the members of the education community team to learn about and implement specific roles and responsibilities for ensuring the improvement of nutrition in public schools.

The Advisory Committee on Nutrition Implementation Strategies is committed to continuing as a resource to State Superintendent O'Connell, the California Department of Education, and the schools and districts in California as *School Nutrition . . . by Design!* is transformed into action.

Design Principle 1: Governance and Policy

The local educational agency (LEA) establishes, implements, and monitors policies and regulations that define the requirements and criteria for a healthy school nutrition environment.

QUALITY INDICATORS

School boards adopt and monitor the implementation of policies and regulations that include:

A. Nutrition standards aligned with federal, state, and local laws and guidelines and that address all aspects of food and beverages sold or served on every campus in the district

B. At a minimum, a local wellness policy that addresses each of the following Design Principles, as defined by the related Quality Indicators:
   - Stakeholder Involvement
   - Student Involvement
   - Nutrition Education
   - Access and Participation
   - Healthy School Environment
   - Funding
   - Professional Development
   - Continuous Monitoring and Accountability

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Establish a school health council that includes all stakeholders, including parents, students, community members, board members, administrators, teachers, food service employees, and community health staff members, to:

1. Lay the groundwork to prepare for a policy initiative by determining what policies already exist and clarifying the need for a new policy.*
2. Build awareness and support for policy goals and strategies by involving groups likely to be affected by the policy in making the case for change.
3. Draft the policy and build consensus. Anticipate sources of opposition, likely arguments to be made against it, and possible responses to arguments and begin to plan for policy implementation.

* Steps 1 – 6 have been adapted from *Making It Happen! School Nutrition Success Stories.*

4. Present the draft policy to the school board for adoption.
5. Assist with the implementation by promoting it to others.
6. Monitor the entire process and evaluate compliance with, and the impact of, the policy throughout the district.

Resources and Exemplars

Fit, Healthy and Ready to Learn: A School Health Policy Guide, Part I. Alexandria, Va.: National Association of State Boards of Education, 2000. http://www.nasbe.org/healthy_schools/fit_healthy.htm

Guidance for the Development of California Wellness Policies. http://californiahealthykids.org/articles/guidance_for_wellness.pdf (accessed February 2006)

LEAF Fiscal Impact Report. Berkeley: Center for Weight and Health at the University of California, Berkeley, 2005. http://nature.berkeley.edu/cwh/activities/LEAF.shtml

Making It Happen! School Nutrition Success Stories. Alexandria, Va.: United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2005. http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/makingithappen.html

National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity. http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org

Student Wellness: A Healthy Food and Physical Activity Policy Resource Guide. Sacramento: California School Boards Association and California Project LEAN, 2005. http://www.csba.org/ps/hf.htm

Taking Action for Healthy School Environments: Linking Education, Activity, and Food in California Secondary Schools. Sacramento: California Department of Education, forthcoming. http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/rc

Design Principle 2: Stakeholder Involvement

The voices and expertise of stakeholders are valued, and they are included in the process of ensuring the health and well-being of the school community.

QUALITY INDICATORS

A. The district has established a school health council.

B. Nutrition programs and activities reflect the diversity of the district, the school(s), and the broader community.

C. Stakeholders are fully informed about healthy lifestyles and support healthy eating behavior.

D. The school engages families and the community to reinforce school-based nutrition education.

E. Staff model healthy eating habits and participate in health promotion.

Ensure that communication with schools and surrounding community stakeholders is two-way, regular, and meaningful and occurs through multiple channels.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Create a culture within each school that encourages healthy eating and active living by gaining acceptance through stakeholder education, incentives, and promotions.
2. Encourage stakeholder participation in school wellness efforts based on the relevance to their interests and needs.
3. Ensure that communication with schools and surrounding community stakeholders is two-way, regular, and meaningful and occurs through multiple channels.
4. Collaborate with community partners such as registered dietitians, registered nurses, public health officers, physicians, and other trained professionals to provide technical expertise and resources on pertinent issues.
5. Establish and maintain a school health council.

Resources and Exemplars

Improving School Health: A Guide to School Health Councils. Atlanta: American Cancer Society, Inc., 1999. http://www.schoolhealth.info

Making It Happen! School Nutrition Success Stories. Alexandria, Va.: United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2005. http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/makingithappen.html

School Health Index: A Self-Assessment and Planning Guide. Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004. http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/SHI/index.htm

Strategies for Creating a School-wide Culture. Carpenteria, Calif.: Carpenteria Middle School, 2005. http://www.sbceo.org/~cms/leaf/index.html

Taking Action for Healthy School Environments: Linking Education, Activity, and Food in California Secondary Schools. Sacramento: California Department of Education, forthcoming. http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/rc

Design Principle 3: Student Involvement

The voices of students are valued, and they are included in developing strategies to ensure students' nutritional health and well-being.*

QUALITY INDICATORS

A. Students, through their involvement in local school and district health or nutrition advisory committees, have roles in making key decisions about how the nutrition policies are implemented at their school.

B. Students are included in planning menus, designing meal service areas, and creating multiple options to expedite meal service in order to accommodate all students on campus.

C. Students are instrumental in designing an assessment process that measures student participation and gathers information on ways to continuously increase their consumption of healthy meals on campus.

D. Students are nutrition advocates within their school and community and, as such, are provided the information needed to support their positions and decisions.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Gain administrative and financial support and adult leadership for a school health or nutrition advisory committee or similar club.
2. Ensure there is diverse representation of all students on the district school health or nutrition advisory committee. Student representatives will work with student councils to:
   - Plan schoolwide activities that encourage good nutrition.
   - Take the lead in surveying students about food preferences, conducting taste tests, and getting student recommendations in designing meal service areas.
3. Schedule regular districtwide meetings of student councils for presentations by district nutrition directors on nutrition guidelines to encourage student councils to help promote student participation in school meal programs and make healthy nutrition choices.

* See the Appendix for a position paper developed by the Student Advisory Board on Education.

4. Empower students to take active roles in assessing the school environment and the community surrounding the school as a beginning step to determine next steps/actions in creating healthy environments.
5. Provide training on student leadership and advocacy for youths.
6. Work with students to develop healthy or nonfood-based fundraising strategies.

Resources and Exemplars

"Best Practices for Secondary Involvement," *NFSMI Insight*, No. 14 (Spring 2000).

California Adolescent Health Collaborative. http://www.californiateenhealth.org/youth_involvement_resources.asp

California Center for Civic Participation and Youth Engagement. http://www.californiacenter.org

National Food Service Management Institute. http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/Newsletters/insight14.pdf

Playing the Policy Game. Sacramento: California Department of Health Services, 2000. http://www.Californiaprojectlean.org/resourcelibrary

School Health Index: A Self-Assessment and Planning Guide. Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004. http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/SHI/index.htm

Strategies for Success II. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 2001. *http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/shape.asp*

Student Advisory Groups. Alexandria, Va.: School Nutrition Association, 2005. http://www.schoolnutrition.org/Index.aspx?id=1530

Design Principle 4: Nutrition Education

Nutrition is an integral component of the prekindergarten through grade twelve (preK–12) curriculum, teaching, and assessments.

QUALITY INDICATORS

School boards adopt, and staff implement, a nutrition education program that:

A. Adheres to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Dietary Guidelines and other science-based nutrition research and evidence-based instructional strategies.

B. Is based on the national or state health education standards and/or the home economics careers and technology standards at secondary schools.

C. Is taught as part of a comprehensive health education program.

D. Integrates nutrition knowledge and skills across the curriculum at specific grade levels.

E. Values and encourages experiential learning (e.g., menu planning, food preparation, gardening) that builds knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that promote healthy food choices.

F. Assesses students' acquisition of nutrition knowledge, skills, and behaviors. Assessment tools include surveys to gauge student implementation of healthy habits. Results are shared with stakeholders.

G. Engages families and community members to reinforce instruction.

H. Incorporates the physical environment to support the concepts promoted through the program.

Nutrition is an integral component of the prekindergarten through grade twelve (preK–12) curriculum, teaching, and assessments.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Involve a school health council or similar body, including classroom teachers and child nutrition staff, to develop an effective nutrition education program that:
   - Uses state-adopted health textbooks or home economics careers and technology textbooks (Family and Consumer Science)
   - Uses other nutrition-related materials available through the California Healthy Kids Resource Center to enhance the core curriculum
   - Provides staff development for classroom teachers on basic nutrition and evidence-based instructional strategies that build skills

- Creates a connection between what is taught in the classroom, what is served in the cafeteria, and what is available in the surrounding community

2. Ensure that nutrition knowledge and skills are integrated across the preK–12 curriculum.
3. Reinforce nutrition knowledge, skills, and behaviors by making supplemental materials available to families.
4. Encourage and recognize schools, teachers, and classrooms that implement or participate in experiential nutrition education, including gardening and food preparation.
5. Encourage and use supplemental lesson plans that integrate nutrition knowledge and skills into other subject areas.
6. Provide ample indoor space and time for students to eat.

Resources and Exemplars

California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom. http://www.cfaitc.org/TRG/TRG.php

California Healthy Kids Resource Center. http://www.californiahealthykids.org

A Child's Garden of Standards. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 2002. http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/rc/documents/catalog2006.pdf

Dairy Council of California. http://www.dairycouncilofca.org

Health Framework for California Public Schools. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 2003. http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/fd/documents/catalog2006.pdf

Kids Cook Farm-Fresh Foods. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 2002. http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/rc/documents/catalog2006.pdf

Life Management Curriculum Guide: Consumer and Family Studies. Fresno: California State University at Fresno, Home Economics Careers and Technology Unit, 2002. http://www.hect.org/pdf/OrderForm2005.pdf

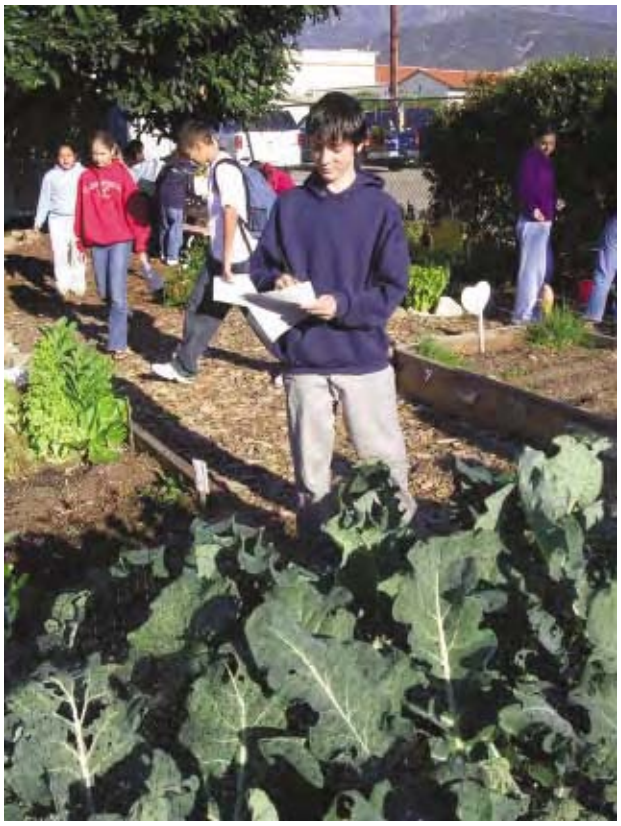
Middle Grades Home Economics Curriculum Guide. Volume 3. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1996. http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/rc/documents/catalog2006.pdf

National PTA. http://www.pta.org/pr_category_details_1117232379734.html

Nutrition Competencies for California's Children, Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 2001. http://www.californiahealthykids.org/articles/nutrcomp.pdf

Nutrition to Grow On. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 2000. http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/rc/documents/catalog2006.pdf

Strategies for Success II: Enhancing Academic Performance and Health Through Nutrition Education. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 2001. http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/documents/strategy2.pdf



Design Principle 5: Access and Participation

The LEA designs and fully implements plans to provide access to all school nutrition programs at all schools, where cost effective, and to reach and maintain maximum student participation.

QUALITY INDICATORS

A. All schools operate all school nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program (ASP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), whenever possible.

B. School meals are promoted as the meal of choice to all students. Schools sell or serve multiple meal options throughout the day, including breakfast, lunch, and afterschool snacks—all of which are designed to meet current standards and are high quality (appropriate temperatures, colors, textures, flavors, freshness, etc.), affordable, and accessible.

C. All food and beverages, including vending machine snacks, that are served or sold during school hours and school-sponsored activities adhere to or exceed local, state, and federal nutrition and food safety standards.

D. Annual targets for achieving and maintaining high student participation in school nutrition programs are set and met.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Examine the feasibility of providing the school nutrition programs, listed under "A" above, that the district does not currently operate. If a district chooses not to participate in a meal program, the school board will review that decision annually.
2. Increase the number of students who participate in meal programs by:
   - Selling only reimbursable meal options, fresh fruit and vegetables, and milk and water at all food venues
   - Minimizing the time students wait in line
   - Scheduling sufficient time to enable students to eat after being served—no less than 10 minutes for breakfast and no less than 20 minutes for lunch
   - Scheduling lunch after recess in elementary schools, whenever possible, in order to encourage students to consume their lunches and return to class ready to learn
   - Scheduling lunch at times best suited to prevent students from being hungry

If a district chooses not to participate in a meal program, the school board will review that decision annually.

- Offering multiple food choices and a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Serving meal selections that are attractive, high quality, nutrient dense, and culturally diverse
- Closing campuses during meal times to encourage all students to eat the healthy meals provided by schools

3. Provide snacks, whenever feasible, for students participating in after-school programs.
4. Involve students and parents in developing efforts to maximize appeal and increase participation.
5. Develop and implement a marketing plan that is updated and assessed annually to increase participation:
   - Ensure the marketing plan includes strategies to reduce barriers to participation, promotes student acceptance of nutritious choices, and publicizes the variety of meal times, offerings, and venues.
   - Launch a targeted marketing campaign to promote the variety of meal options and programs to students, families, and communities.
   - Implement provisions 2 and 3 whenever feasible.
   - Maximize the return of free and reduced-price lunch applications.
   - Seek state-funded SBP and SFSP start-up and expansion grants when appropriate.
   - Explore all breakfast service options, such as classroom breakfast, second chance breakfast, and Grab and Go.
   - Seek state reimbursement for providing fresh fruits and vegetables.
6. Maximize and pursue funding opportunities, such as grants that provide resources to increase student participation.
7. Gather baseline data on student participation rates, set targets to increase rates, adjust prices and selections to improve participation, and routinely assess progress. Administer surveys to find out why students do or do not participate and what might increase their participation.
8. Eliminate stigma for free and reduced-price (FRP) participants by installing automated point of sale (POS) systems and by avoiding any aspect of meal service that might differentiate between FRP students and full-paying students.

Explore all breakfast service options, such as classroom breakfast, second chance breakfast, and Grab and Go.

Resources and Exemplars

The California Food Policy Advocates. *Breakfast First Campaign.* http://www.breakfastfirst.org (accessed January 2006)

Making It Happen! School Nutrition Success Stories. Alexandria, Va.: United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2005. http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/nutrition/making-it-happen

*Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals. A*lexandria, Va.: United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, 1998. http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/Recipes/menuplan/menuplan.html

National Food Service Management Institute. *School Breakfast Resources*. http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/2005resourcecatalog.htm#breakfast-smart (accessed January 2006)

USDA Fruits and Vegetables Galore. Alexandria, Va.: United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, 2004. http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/fv_galore.html

Design Principle 6: Healthy School Environment

The LEA provides a whole school environment that models, supports, and encourages lifelong healthy nutrition habits.

The LEA provides a whole school environment that models, supports, and encourages lifelong healthy nutrition habits.

QUALITY INDICATORS

A. District leaders establish and annually monitor standards to ensure that:
   - All areas for meal preparation, sales, service, and eating meet strict cleanliness and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point guidelines and are inviting, attractive places to work and enjoy meals.
   - Youths attend school in a commercial-free environment regarding food and beverages.

B. Sufficient well-trained staff and adequate fiscal resources are provided to ensure:
   - The acquisition and use of state-of-the art technology and equipment
   - Clean, well-maintained facilities to accommodate all students for meal preparation, meal service, and dining
   - Efficient and speedy meal service to all students by customer-friendly school nutrition staff

C. All meals are prepared so they are presented in an appealing manner and are easily accessible from multiple locations on campus.

D. LEAs have established goals to create and maintain a healthy nutrition environment, and their long-term facilities plans include steps that ensure:
   - All schools include food preparation and service areas that accommodate all students.
   - Improvements toward the goals are made whenever practicable.
   - All school modernization and new construction project designs and budgets include plans and resources to achieve the established goals.

E. All foods sold or served on campus reflect a commitment to healthy eating behaviors.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Provide training for all staff by the California Department of Education, county offices of education, or other qualified professionals to assist staff in meeting wellness goals.

2. Ensure that a greater number of “whole foods” (compared to highly processed foods) are used in meals on campus.
3. Encourage all school staff and guests to model healthy eating behaviors by ensuring all foods available to staff and guests are consistent with state and local nutrition standards for competitive foods.
4. Focus school fundraisers and celebrations on nonfood items or healthy food items.
5. Replace food rewards with low-cost gifts.
6. Provide facilities for washing hands before eating meals and snacks.
7. Provide functioning, sanitary drinking fountains; when that is not possible, provide free drinking water in quantities sufficient for the student enrollment.
8. Ensure all school modernization and new construction designs and budgets are developed with the district’s food service director and staff and are supported by resources to achieve the goals.
9. Assess the cafeteria environment, identify areas for improvement, and initiate changes as appropriate in cooperation with the food service director.

Resources and Exemplars

California Department of Education. *Guidance for the Development of California Wellness Policies.* http://californiahealthykids.org/articles/guidance_for_wellness.pdf (accessed February 2006)

Changing the Scene - Improving the School Nutrition Environment. Alexandria, Va.: United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2000. http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/changing.html

Making It Happen! School Nutrition Success Stories. Alexandria, Va.: United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2005. http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/nutrition/making-it-happen

School Health Index: A Self-Assessment and Planning Guide. Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004. http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/SHI/index.htm

Taking Action for Healthy School Environments: Linking Education, Activity, and Food in California Secondary Schools. Sacramento: California Department of Education, forthcoming. http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/rc

Design Principle 7: Funding

The LEA maximizes funding to ensure all nutrition standards for meals are followed and that provisions are made for adequate facilities to improve the quality of and access to the meals so that participation targets can be met.

QUALITY INDICATORS

Funding is available to:

- Implement nutrition education.
- Provide food and beverages that meet all local, state, and federal standards.
- Provide adequate food preparation and eating facilities.
- Promote increased student participation.

School boards and district leaders:

A. Involve stakeholders and community partners to develop new sources of funding and to explore ways to leverage resources through collaborations with other organizations and agencies.

B. Ensure that all school-related fundraising efforts promote only healthy food and beverages or involve nonfood items and activities. School districts understand that changing to a more healthy nutrition environment may be done without additional revenues.

Involve stakeholders and community partners to develop new sources of funding and to explore ways to leverage resources through collaborations with other organizations and agencies.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Taking the lead, district leaders will work with state and federal representatives, professional organizations, the California Department of Education, community and service organizations, and other state agencies to advocate:
   - Retroactive and ongoing cost-of-living adjustments to baseline state funding levels
   - Federal legislation to increase the reimbursement rate for states with a higher cost of living than the national average
   - Restoration of state reimbursement for paid meals
   - An increase in state and federal reimbursement for school meals and after-school snacks
   - A reimbursement rate for the reduced-price meals to equal that of the free meals
   - Universal breakfast and lunch programs
2. Consider establishing a school food service joint powers authority agreement and establishing purchasing, processing, and storage

cooperatives to improve economies of scale and reduce administrative costs.

3. Identify and work with agricultural organizations, associations, and businesses to partner with a school or schools to assist them in reaching their school nutrition goals by:
   - Asking the partners to "adopt" a school and provide additional resources to support a healthy nutrition environment
   - Establishing a mechanism to identify and solicit funding through grants or awards from local, state, federal, and private organizations
4. Ensure principals implement district-directed guidelines for all fundraisers so that any food sold meets all nutrition guidelines and is not sold in competition with school meals unless the sales occur in a revenue-sharing partnership with the school food service department.
5. Ensure current guidelines are understood and compliance occurs through meetings between school administrators and representatives of campus organizations.
6. Establish and promote fundraising guidelines that enhance health and apply to all members of the school community, including staff, families, and the community at-large.

Establish and promote fundraising guidelines that enhance health and apply to all members of the school community, including staff, families, and the community at-large.

Resources and Exemplars

California Association of School Business Officials. http://www.casbo.org/Library/childnut.htm

Financial Management Issues and Practices in School Nutrition Programs: An Annotated Bibliography. University, Miss.: National Food Service Management Institute, 2004. http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/fin-mgmt-bib.pdf

The New Design Handbook for School Food Service. University, Miss.: National Food Service Management Institute, 1997. http://www.nfsmi.org/epubs/ex11-95/pdf_list.htm

The School Foodservice Handbook: A Guide for School Administrators. Lanham, Md.: Association of School Business Officials International, 1999. http://www.rowmaneducation.com/Catalog/SingleBook.shtml?command=Search&db=^DB/CATALOG.db&eqSKUdata=0910170762

Design Principle 8: Professional Development

The LEA provides continuous professional development, learning, and collaboration opportunities to ensure all staff have the knowledge and skills necessary to design and deliver high-quality nutrition policies, standards, programs, and partnerships.

QUALITY INDICATORS

District leaders support education, training, and ongoing professional development for:

A. Teachers on teaching and integration of nutrition education across the curriculum and on multiple approaches for assessing student progress

B. All food service staff in the planning, preparation, and delivery of meals to students

C. Child nutrition directors and nutrition professionals in food service management practices and techniques

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Provide teachers professional development in order to incorporate nutrition education resources into standards-based lesson plans.
2. Ensure that child nutrition staff are provided ongoing professional development consistent with certification requirements of the School Nutrition Association.
3. Support the school health council established by the school's Wellness Policy to develop a plan identifying comprehensive professional development for child nutrition staff, teachers, physical educators, health educators, school nurses, and parents in order to establish a healthy school environment.
4. Facilitate cost-effective professional development or, at the LEA's discretion, require or support participation of child nutrition staff in professional associations.

Support the school health council established by the school's Wellness Policy to develop a plan identifying comprehensive professional development for child nutrition staff, teachers, physical educators, health educators, school nurses, and parents in order to establish a healthy school environment.

Resources and Exemplars

California Department of Education. *Child Nutrition Program Career Ladder.* http://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/fs/ne (accessed January 2006)

California School Nutrition Association. *School Nutrition Association Credentialing/Certification Program.* http://www.csfsa.org/Certification.htm (accessed January 2006)

Dairy Council of California. http://www.dairycouncilofca.org

School Nutrition Association. *Keys to Excellence.* INK "http://www.schoolnutrition.org/KEYS.aspx?ID=1162" http://www.schoolnutrition.org/KEYS.aspx?ID=1162 (accessed January 2006)

Design Principle 9: Continuous Monitoring and Accountability

School districts (including student and parent organizations, community groups, and partners as well as all staff) are accountable for full implementation of nutrition policies and standards.

QUALITY INDICATORS

School boards and district leaders ensure that:

A. All local, state, and federal policies, regulations, and standards are fully implemented, monitored, enforced, and evaluated.

B. District nutrition policies are reviewed and updated regularly by staff, students, and other stakeholders to ensure compliance with changes in state and federal requirements.

C. Assessment data are used regularly to improve the quality of school nutrition programs, increase participation rates, and monitor adherence to nutrition policies.

Conduct regular reviews to determine site/district compliance with local, state, and federal nutrition requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Conduct regular reviews to determine site/district compliance with local, state, and federal nutrition requirements.
2. Assess and evaluate the status of the school nutrition environment (e.g., through a school site council or school health council) and modify activities as appropriate to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal requirements.
3. Encourage the governing board to review the "Coordinated Review Effort" reports submitted to the district by the California Department of Education, Nutrition Services Division, after its review of the district food service programs.
4. Assign the responsibility of coordinating compliance monitoring to an individual or committee to ensure a locus of accountability.

Resources and Exemplars

Action for Healthy Kids. http://www.actionforhealthykids.org

School Health Index: A Self-Assessment and Planning Guide. Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004. http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/SHI/index.htm

School Nutrition Association. *Keys to Excellence.* http://www.schoolnutrition.org/KEYS.aspx?ID=1162 (accessed January 2006)

Recommendations for the California Department of Education

Follow-Up Activities Recommended by the Advisory Committee on Nutrition Implementation Strategies

1. Sponsor legislation to make the California Fresh Start Pilot Project (Assembly Bill 281) permanent and provide sufficient staff to administer the funds to maximize the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables.
2. Sponsor legislation to acquire construction funds to create adequate space and facilities for food preparation, meal service, and indoor eating areas.
3. Sponsor legislation to expand and fund the state meal mandate from one meal (National School Lunch Program [NSLP] *or* School Breakfast Program [SBP]) to two (NSLP *and* SBP).
4. Sponsor legislation to eliminate sales of all competitive foods except water, milk, fresh fruit, and vegetables during meal times.
5. Release widely the annual School Meal Initiative data to document progress on meeting USDA nutrition standards.
6. Seek clear authority through legislation or regulation for the California Department of Education to enforce state and federal nutrition requirements through fiscal accountability in school districts.
7. Sponsor legislation to fund appropriate food and nutrition in-service training for food service managers and staff.
8. Track, analyze, and disseminate participation data by meal, age group, percentage of needy students, student records, and academic performance at the site and district level.
9. Require nutrition education to be integrated with other subject matters, especially science.
10. Support federal legislation to increase reimbursement rates for states with a higher cost of living than the national average.

11. Encourage agricultural associations and organizations to help implement the strategies presented in *School Nutrition . . . by Design!*
12. Develop a program to honor schools, businesses, and community organizations that promote the exemplars in *School Nutrition . . . by Design!*

Appendix

- **Position Paper of the Student Advisory Board on Education: A Program of the California Association of Student Councils**
- **Acronyms**
- **Glossary**

Position Paper of the Student Advisory Board on Education: A Program of the California Association of Student Councils

Recommendations presented to the California State Board of Education on Wednesday, November 9, 2005.

Topic: Student Health and Nutrition
Speaker: Aaron Feuer, North Hollywood High School
Writer: Tim Wang, Arcadia High School

Group Members: **Leyly Bautista,** Dana Middle School; **Bryce Brin,** Lower Lake High School; **Aaron Feuer,** North Hollywood High School; **Cassie Gillum-Jennell,** E. V. Cain Middle School; **Andy Hiller,** Fortuna Union High School; **Linda Khamoushian,** Canyon High School; **Katrina Ortiz,** Nogales High School; **Amanda Pyle,** Pacifica High School; and **Tim Wang,** Arcadia High School

I. Recommendation

The Student Advisory Board on Education, a program of the California Association of Student Councils, recommends that the State Board of Education improve student health through enhanced health curriculum guidelines and healthier food options.

II. Summary of Previous State Board of Education Discussion and Action

A. Previous Student Advisory Board on Education Discussion and Action:

- This is the first year that the Student Advisory Board on Education has addressed this issue.

B. Pertinent Regulations and Policy:

- 2003 – California State Board of Education developed and adopted the *Health Framework for California Public Schools.*
- 2003 – Senate Bill 677 (Ortiz) ensured that only healthy beverages would be sold in elementary and junior high schools.
- 2004 – Federal Child Obesity Act provided for state childhood obesity prevention and control and established grant programs to prevent childhood obesity in homes, schools, and communities.
- 2004 – California State Board of Education adopted the *Physical Education Model Content Standards.*

- 2005 – Senate Bill 965 (Escutia) bans the sale of soft drinks at the high school level in addition to elementary and middle schools. The Governor signed the bill into law.
- 2005 – Senate Bill 12 (Escutia) requires foods sold in school vending machines to meet high nutritional standards. The Governor signed the bill into law.
- 2005 – Senate Bill 281 (Maldonaldo) provides $18.2 million during this fiscal year to offer more fruits and vegetables in school meal programs. The Governor signed the bill into law.

III. Summary of Key Issues

A passive stance toward the nutritional value of school food has contributed greatly to the lack of wellness among students. A ubiquitous concern from parents and students about substandard test scores and inattentiveness during class stems from the basic need for enhanced food quality. The following points summarize the current crisis:

- Inadequate education curriculum regarding the potential risks of faulty eating habits, nutrition, and fitness
- Overexposure to unhealthy food, a limitation of healthy alternatives, and the resulting restriction of students' ability to make nutritional choices

IV. Fiscal Analysis

Because healthier alternatives to current food choices will not increase the amount of money spent in most cases, the only financial costs are for creating and then implementing new curriculum and awareness programs as well as for developing the improved, healthier menus. Furthermore, the long-term fiscal benefits of an aware student population would equalize, if not surpass, any monetary deficits, especially in terms of reduced health care costs.

V. Background Information

A. Criteria for Implementation

In order to implement our recommendation, we suggest that the State Board of Education:

- With input from health professionals and the FDA, expand upon the existing health curriculum framework regarding:
  - Nutrition labels and the new food pyramid

  - Health risks associated with poor eating and exercising habits
  - Benefits of a healthy lifestyle
  - Clarification of dietary myths and misconceptions
  - Importance of developing a positive self-image and strong self-esteem
- Educate administrators and teachers on the new health curriculum.
- Create a committee of health professionals, FDA officials, school administrators, students, and health food company representatives to increase healthfulness of current meals and add new healthy and wholesome alternatives.
- Require exhibition of nutrition facts for foods given in school.
- Organize groups within districts to monitor the implementation of nutritional programs.
- Support goal numbers one, two, and four of the California Department of Education's white paper "Healthy Children Ready to Learn."

B. Field Involvement

- Each district evaluates its health curriculum and implements guidelines based on these criteria.
- Student governments promote healthy living through activities such as intramural sports programs, fitness fundraisers, lunchtime activities, and health tips in school newsletters.

- Outside health awareness organizations assist schools in the design and promotion of the newer health guidelines.

C. Alternatives

The State Board may wish to consider the following alternatives in addition to the prior recommendations:

- Offer a class that combines physical activity with health curriculum for physical education credit.
- Encourage districts to develop their own programs with assistance from outside health organizations.
- Urge districts to establish health awareness campaigns.
- Require each school to have health awareness events annually.

D. Rationale

The health of today's youth is in critical danger; diabetes, cholesterol, and other health problems are clearly on the rise. The California Department of Education reports the epidemic growth of obesity with 32 percent of the state's youths overweight and 7 percent unfit. Endless complaints from students attest to their dissatisfaction with current meals and their interest in healthy alternatives. Teaching healthy habits would not only immediately increase student motivation and self-esteem but also provide students with the necessary knowledge to practice healthy habits both now and in their future. Moreover, as students have healthier food options at schools, student academic performance will increase. With millions of students eating one or two meals a day at school, it is imperative that we offer healthy, balanced meals on campus.

Acronyms

ASP	After-school Snack Program
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
DNAC	District Nutrition Advisory Council
LEA	Local Educational Agency
NFSMI	National Food Service Management Institute
NSLP	National School Lunch Program
SBP	School Breakfast Program
SFSP	Summer Food Service Program
SHI	School Health Index
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

Glossary

Comprehensive Health Education Program—Classroom instruction that addresses the physical, mental, emotional, and social dimensions of health; develops health knowledge, attitudes, and skills; and is tailored to each age level. Designed to motivate and assist students to maintain and improve their health, prevent disease, and reduce health-related risk behaviors.

Coordinated School Health (CSH)—CSH is a planned, integrated, and school-affiliated program or programs designed to enhance the health of children and adolescents and comprises eight interrelated components: comprehensive school health education, physical education, parent/community involvement, safe and healthy school environment, health services, psychological and counseling services, nutrition services, and health promotion for staff.

Coordinated School Health Council (CSHC)—CSHC is a coordinated and multidisciplinary team that provides advice to the school system on aspects of school health. Depending on district needs and resources, the key members are individuals who implement the various components of a coordinated school health program. Other team members reflect the diversity and needs of both the school community and the broader community on the issues of school health.

This council is sometimes called a coordinated school health advisory council or a healthy school team. The council may be formed at a district level or a site level or both. It may also be composed of subcommittees that focus on specific topics of school health, such as nutrition or physical education.

Design Principles—The concept used to frame a systemic approach to a healthy nutrition environment. Collectively, the Design Principles ensure that the Implementation Strategies are based on the values

essential to achieving overall improvements in the school nutrition environment.

Grab and Go Breakfast—A method of providing breakfast meals to students as a packaged unit to facilitate rapid delivery of meals with minimal to no waiting time. "Breakfast in the Classroom" and "Second Chance Breakfast" are other service options that bring breakfast into the regular school day and increase participation dramatically.

Healthy School Environment—The physical, emotional, and social climate of the school. Designed to provide a safe physical plant as well as a healthy and supportive environment that fosters learning.

Healthy School Nutrition Environment—The physical, emotional, and social climate of the school as it relates to nutrition. A facility designed to provide a healthy and supportive environment that fosters learning.

Implementation Strategies—Suggested strategies proven to successfully move a school nutrition program toward establishing and maintaining a quality nutrition environment. The Implementation Strategies are aligned with the Design Principles and adhere to the rigorous standards embedded within the Quality Indicators.

Local Wellness Policy—Federal legislation requires each local educational agency (school district) participating in the National School Lunch Program to establish a "local school wellness policy" by the school year beginning July 2006. Contact the California Department of Education, Nutrition Services Division, for more information.

Nutrition Standards—A list of criteria that determine which foods and beverages can and cannot be offered on a school campus. Senate Bill 12 (Chapter 235, Statutes of 2005) provides nutrition standards for foods sold outside the school meal programs. This law becomes effective July 1, 2007. Until then, nutrition standards can take different approaches, such as requiring that fruits and vegetables are offered at all locations where snacks are available or restricting specific constituents, such as fat and sugar, in food and beverages.

Point of Sale (POS) System—The method used, usually in the lunch line, to determine if a child needs to pay the full price or reduced price for a meal or if the child receives a school meal free, depending on the child's household income eligibility.

Quality Indicator—Checkpoint of progress indicating the extent to which a healthy nutrition environment has been established according to the Design Principle associated with it. The Quality Indicators also act as guides during the onset to implement strategies and as measures of excellence when implementation is complete.

School Health Council (SHC)—A school health council can be the same as or similar to a Coordinated School Health Council. There can be variations of the composition of team members, the structure of the council, and the level at which the council operates (district or site). An SHC can take many forms, address a variety of health issues, or be limited in the scope of issues addressed. For instance, an SHC may be the same as the Wellness Policy committee.

Stakeholders—Individuals who have an interest in, or work in, school health and nutrition or community health and nutrition or both.

Universal Meal Programs—This term refers to meals that are served at no charge to all students regardless of their household's eligibility status for free, reduced-price, or paid meal benefits. School meal programs derive their income from state and federal reimbursements only.

USDA Dietary Guidelines—This term refers to the 2005 version of the United States Department of Agriculture Dietary Guidelines.

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