



PTA Newsletter

August: What is Local Wellness Policy?

Local Wellness Policy 101

You may have heard the term “Local Wellness Policy” but are not quite sure what it means. Local Wellness Policies are guidelines created to improve the school health and wellness environment. These guidelines focus on two areas. One is to make sure all foods and drinks available to students throughout the school day are healthy. The other is that students get the chance to be physically active during school.

The federal government requires that every school district have a Local Wellness Policy. Each district in North Carolina has one. These policies have been in place since 2006.

Your Local Wellness Policy must include:

- ◆ Goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school- based activities. These goals should promote student wellness.
- ◆ Nutrition guidelines selected by the school district for all foods available on campus. Guidelines cover foods available in the cafeteria, school store, and other locations.
- ◆ Standards for all school meals served in the cafeteria. The USDA has nutrition standards that all foods must meet. They address fat, calorie and sugar content.
- ◆ A plan for measuring implementation of the local wellness policy. At least one person in the school system must be responsible for making sure that the schools meet the guidelines. Preferably, one person per school will be responsible.
- ◆ Involvement of multiple groups in the development of the Local Wellness Policy. These should include parents and students. In addition, representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, teachers and community members should participate

There are laws in North Carolina that determine the foods that can be sold at lunch and as after school snacks. They also regulate when vending machines can be available and what is in them. In addition, North Carolina law states that all students in grades K-8 get at least 30 minutes of physical activity each school day.

As families, educators, and administrators, you can help put these Local Wellness Policies into practice.

For more information:

www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/programs_tools/school/successful_students.html

www.nutritionnc.com/ResourcesForSchools/index.htm

www.actionforhealthykids.org