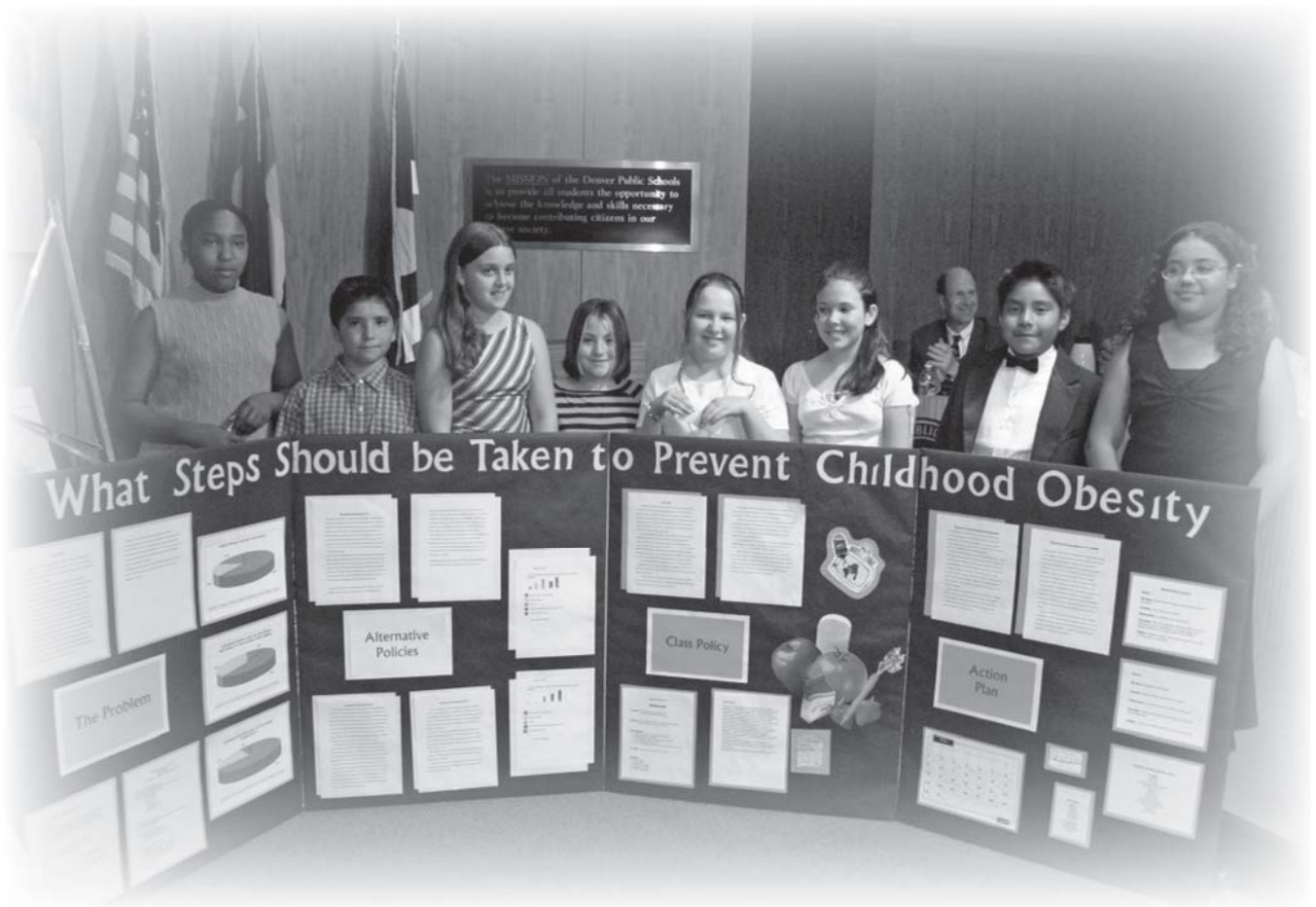


Commission on School Nutrition and Physical Activity

Final Report
to the
Denver Public Schools Board of Education



December 16, 2004

**Thanks and appreciation to
Rose Community Foundation
for supporting
the work of the commission.**

ON THE COVER: Lincoln Elementary School fourth- and fifth-grade students presented a research project on childhood obesity to the Denver Board of Education on May 6, 2004. The students were led by teacher Tiffany Berry.

Denver Public Schools

Commission on School Nutrition and Physical Activity

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Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Critical Background	3
The Work of the DPS Commission	4
Recommendations to the Board of Education	5
1. Healthy lifestyles as a strategic priority	
2. District-wide policy on nutrition standards	
3. Guidelines for Beverage Vending	
4. Nutrition Education	
5. Physical Activity Standards	
6. Recess	
7. Elementary School Standards for Physical Education	
8. Middle School Standards for Physical Education	
9. High School Standards for Physical Education	
10. Coordinated School Health Model	
11. DPS Health Research Committee	
12. Development of Longitudinal Database of Health Survey Results	
13. Addition of Height/Weight to Existing School Health Screenings	
Appendix	9
• January 22, 2004 Board of Education Resolution Establishing the Commission on School Nutrition and Physical Activity	9
• Summary of Student Survey Results	10
• Current background of School Nutrition in DPS	14
• Current background of Physical Education in DPS	17
• Senate Bill 04-103, Concerning Policies To Increase The Inclusion Of Nutritious Choices In School Vending Machines	21
• Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 establishing Local Wellness Policy	23
• Spark Curriculum	24
• Editorials	25
• Additional Resources	28

... to “examine effective practices in schools and recommend policies and standards which would have a positive impact on students’ nutrition, health, and physical well-being.”

Introduction

National Dilemma

In hundreds of pediatric offices, thousands of classrooms and millions of homes, adults who care for children have sounded a steady alarm. The number of overweight and medically obese American children is growing out of control. These concerns were validated in 2003 when the Centers for Disease Control formally pronounced childhood obesity an epidemic.

“Epidemic” is a frightening term but it is also a technical one. It denotes an outbreak of a disease that spreads more quickly and more extensively among a group of people than would normally be expected. “Overweight” also has a technical definition. It refers to a body mass index (BMI) in excess of what the medical community has established as healthy for a child’s age (95th percentile BMI for age).

The statistics are sobering. In 1974, overweight children represented four percent of children aged 6-11. In 2002, the percentage of overweight children stood at 16 percent of that same age group. Similarly, the percentage of overweight youths aged 12-19 increased from 6 percent in 1974 to 16 percent in 2002. In other words, the percentage of overweight elementary school children quadrupled and the percentage of overweight adolescents nearly tripled in one generation.

If childhood obesity had been an infectious phenomenon like earlier epidemics of polio and German measles, national health experts and others might have reacted with greater vigor. However, the growing waistlines of America’s kids may have seemed innocuous by comparison with typical medical challenges. Unlike bacteria and viruses, food is necessary for survival and is not viewed in the same category as “harmful agents.”

Nonetheless, the long-term effects of obesity among children are potent, unrelenting and may interfere with normal childhood development in critical areas. These include physical health, emotional balance, social interaction and academic performance.

In 2002, former Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher founded Action for Healthy Kids, which served to ignite initiatives in school districts nationwide. Focusing on nutrition and physical activity as two key variables in the energy equation, public health officials have started to address the epidemic in a serious and hopeful way. The public schools are perfectly positioned to promote healthy lifestyles as the antidote to obesity and to reinforce the benefits of lifelong physical activity.

The Local Challenge

The experience of Denver Public Schools’ 72,000 students is comparable to that of other urban schools districts. DPS has wide socio-economic disparities in its student population, with 65 percent of students qualifying for free and reduced-price lunches. The district is also diverse. Fifty-seven percent of students are Latino, 20 percent are white, and 19 percent are African-American. There are also smaller but significant numbers of Asian-Americans, Native Americans and students with multiple heritages and ethnicities.

But Denver is also considered a city that draws individuals and families that care about physical fitness and healthy lifestyles. Denver contains an enviable system of parks that is hospitable to runners, walkers, bicyclists and exercisers of all kinds. The city boasts a full complement of professional and recreational sports teams, fitness clubs and organic food stores. How could a child become overweight living in the Mile High City?

The answer is that Denver is subject to the same “perfect storm” as the rest of the nation. There is no single overriding cause of childhood obesity. Rather, it’s a confluence of trends that combine to have a more potent effect than any one variable could have on its own.

Like every other American community over the last two or three decades, the city has experienced the rise of manufactured fast food, the explosion of sedentary entertainment, plus daunting work and school schedules that preclude the traditional home-cooked meal or healthy brown bag school lunch. Concurrently, we've suffered from declining public education budgets that have impacted school cafeteria meals, physical education programs, sports activities and school nursing.

Finally, food manufacturers spend over \$11 billion annually marketing to children and adolescents. As a result, many messages reach youth today that make fast, convenient food look good, trendy and, in some cases, nourishing. Fast food is often none of the above. But the messages that reach students and youths today create a very loud voice that is difficult to match or overcome.

Critical Background

In order to address the issues of nutrition and physical activity, it's important to understand the context for these issues today in the Denver Public Schools. Following is a summary of two critical issues:

Food Service and Vending

The Department of Food and Nutrition Services is an "enterprise fund" that receives no general fund money from DPS. The department earns its revenue solely through the administration of the National School Lunch Act. The USDA meal program requires the program to meet strict RDA (Recommended Dietary Allowance) standards for key nutrients.

All key nutrients are analyzed every week and posted on the department's website. They meet or exceed federal guidelines for sugar, fat, and portion size. The DPS program is audited every five years and received high marks in 2000.

The department also oversees the vending machines and "a la carte" products sold in schools. This year, it required that all snack vending items meet more stringent guidelines of no more than 40 percent of calories from fat, no more than 35 percent sugar by weight. This new standard resulted in the removal of all candy from vending machines.

The current Pepsi contract, administered by the department, now calls for only water to be sold in elementary schools. In addition, all other machines were placed on timers so products were not available when meals were being served in cafeteria. This was to comply with the competitive foods statute. Finally, there is an ongoing effort to introduce alternative vending products with nutritional integrity.

The Department of Food Services is currently experimenting with new vending machines that will incorporate healthy snacks on top and refrigerated fruits and vegetables on the bottom of each vending machine. Constraints to making these changes include electrical circuitry, competitive vending machines and the retail stores products available to open campus high schools.

Physical Education and Health Education

There is great variability in program offerings in physical education (PE) within the Denver Public Schools. Some elementary schools are able to offer a healthy 150 minutes of physical activity per week. Others have no program at all. Over the last thirteen years, the average amount of time that students spend in elementary school PE has declined by 44 percent. In the last year alone, staffing has declined 16 percent.

In middle schools, where PE is an elective only, 64 percent of students took one semester in 2003-2004 while 10 percent took no physical education. Staffing has declined almost 20 percent in the last year. Current high school graduation requirements include two semesters of physical education; 56 percent of students completed at least one class during 2003-2004.

There is no formal policy governing health education within DPS. However, health instruction is in evidence in science and physical education curricula. The overall impression is that information is inconsistently available and offered. One high school – Abraham Lincoln High School – is currently offering a program that offers a 90-minute instruction block incorporating health education and fitness training.

(More detailed information on Food Services, PE and Health Education is available in the appendix of this report.)

The Work Of The DPS Commission

The Denver Board of Education passed a Resolution in March of 2004 that established a commission of community experts to address growing concerns about the quality of school nutrition and physical activity in the schools.

The resolution called on the commission to “examine effective practices in schools and recommend policies and standards which would have a positive impact on students’ nutrition, health, and physical well-being.” The resolution further directed that the district would adopt those recommended practices that are “affordable and promote the long-term health, life-long learning, and overall wellbeing of our children.”

Serving as co-chairs for the Commission were past President and Board Member Elaine Gantz Berman and Dr. Reginald Washington, a pediatric cardiologist who concurrently serves as the Co-Chair of the Task Force on Childhood Obesity for the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The 17-member commission included pediatricians, registered dietitians, physical education teachers, university researchers, public health professionals, the president of the American School Food Service Association and a representative from the office of Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper.

The Commission meetings included presentations from managers of food service and physical education departments in DPS as well as interactive sessions with district administrators who oversee the beverage and snack vending program and school nursing services. Principals from different quadrants of the city also shared their views on open campuses and physical education programs in their high schools.

Site visits to elementary, middle and high schools enabled commissioners to speak with students and teachers directly, to sample cafeteria food and observe physical education classes and facilities.

The Student Board of Education, which consists of representatives from all DPS high schools, was also enlisted to help create a student survey. The survey was disseminated to a middle and high school in each the four quadrants of the city, resulting in approximately 4,500 student responses about food preferences, use of vending machines, exercise, health education and self-image.

Finally, the commissioners, with the Mayor in attendance, took public testimony from 26 speakers representing a variety of stakeholders including parents, teachers, students, staff from innovative programs in the metro area, and experts on community development of recreational environments.

In preparation for a two-day retreat held in November, the commissioners reviewed pertinent literature and research that addressed key topics on a variety of issues including food in schools, physical education, physical activity, health education, and future research.

The Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services and the Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services joined commission members at the retreat. The group reviewed all the data and information gathered over its nine month investigation and generated the following recommendations:

Recommendations Of The Commission

In order to improve the health and well being of DPS students, good nutrition and daily physical activity are essential. To be successful, a multi-year effort will be required.

Nutrition

Recommendation 1:

Adopt healthy lifestyles as a strategic priority for the DPS school community over the next three years. This priority should be consistent with the Local Wellness Policy required by the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004.

Recommendation 2:

Create Board of Education policy for district-wide nutrition standards for all food sold on school campuses.

“Foods in schools” refers to any food items that are sold on the school campus, including school breakfasts and lunches, a la carte sales in the cafeteria, school stores, sponsored fundraisers, sporting events, and food and beverage vending in the schools. The commission calls for the inclusion of high quality protein, fruits, vegetables, and dairy in both snack foods and meals. The commission also strongly recommends that:

- All sold foods should comply with the current practice of the DPS Department of Food and Nutrition Services restricting foods and beverages that contain no more than 40 percent of calories from total fat, no more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat and less than 35 percent of its total weight in sugar. Information regarding healthy choices should be provided to encourage healthy choices at all points of purchase, e.g. cafeteria, vending machines, school stores.
- The district should strengthen the nutrition standards to require that all foods contain less than 30 percent of calories from total fat; no more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat; and 35 percent total weight in sugar, with allowable exceptions for nutrient dense foods such as nuts, seeds, raisins, flavored milk, fresh fruits, and packaged fruits in their own juice. This policy should be written to specify nutrient composition (calcium, protein, fiber, etc.). This should be accomplished by 2007.
- Nutritional guidelines be suggested for food and beverage brought into the school by students, parents, teachers, and community members. A list of sample healthy foods should be provided.

Recommendation 3:

Develop guidelines for portion size and nutrient content for all beverages provided in school vending and implement these guidelines as soon as feasible, but no later than 2008.

Work with PepsiCo to increase the number of healthier Pepsi products in vending machines for the life of the current contract using these suggested products: plain, unflavored, non-carbonated water; 100 percent fruit juices or fruit-based drinks composed of no less than 50 percent juice, without additional sweeteners; an electrolyte replacement beverage that contains 42 grams or fewer of additional sweetener per 20 ounce serving.

Recommendation 4:

Develop a health education program that will include behaviorally focused nutrition education for all students that is integrated into existing curriculum. Additional considerations:

- Consider refrigerated vending machines to provide nutrient-dense foods, such as yogurt, fresh fruit, and vegetable snacks.
- Pilot a beverage vending program in selected schools with healthy items and compare results of sales.
- Over time, implement serving breakfast in the classroom, rather than in the cafeteria. This would allow many more children to take advantage of the school breakfast program.

Physical Activity

Physical Activity includes all movement and is not limited to activity in a classroom setting.

Recommendation 5:

All students should participate daily in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity that is developmentally appropriate, enjoyable, and involves a variety of activities both within and outside of the school day.

Recommendation 6:

All elementary students should have daily recess in addition to the lunch recess. The lunch recess should be scheduled prior to eating. Additional Considerations:

- Expand before- and after-school and summer programs and incorporate 50 percent of moderate to vigorous physical activity programming including the 'SPARK' physical activity curricula. (See Appendix.)
- Post on each School's web page and have available a resource list of after school activities at each school for families. List opportunities in the area, such as recreational centers, trails, sports teams, dance studios, and Boys and Girls Clubs.



- Establish corporate sponsorships for social marketing to develop key messages promoting physical activity (posters, incentive, athletic competitions), healthy eating and television turnoff.
- Take advantage of established programs – for example, Walk and Bike to School, Take 10 – to complement the DPS curriculum.

Physical Education

Physical Education (PE) is activity that is taught in a gymnasium setting and the curriculum is standards based.

Recommendation 7:

Improve Physical Education for Elementary School Students

Near term: Require at least 90 minutes per week of physical education e.g. 30 minutes, 3 times per week. Schools already exceeding this threshold are encouraged to maintain their current standards.

Mid-term: Increase available physical education instructors by certifying classroom teachers and other non physical education teachers. These teachers would need to pass the Colorado Licensing Assessment Test (PLACE exam) to become certified to teach physical education.

Long term: Require physical education 30 minutes per day, 5 days per week with a fully endorsed physical education teacher.

Recommendation 8:

Improve Physical Education for Middle School Students

Near term: Require two semesters of physical education over the three years of middle school. Classes should not exceed a safe limit of 35 students and structured so that 50 percent of the time is spent in moderate or vigorous physical activity.

Mid-term: Require three semesters of physical education throughout middle school using developmentally appropriate activities designed to encourage maximum participation.

Long term: Require one semester of physical education and one semester of health each year or congruent teaching of both subjects in schools that offer 90 minute block scheduling. Teachers for Health Education could come from multiple disciplines.

Recommendation 9:

Improve Physical Education For High School Students

Near term: Limit the current waiver policy, Athletic Exemption from Physical Education, to one semester only.

Mid-term: Require 9th graders to take “Introduction to High School Physical Education” to fulfill one of the two semesters required for graduation.

Long term: Offer a physical education curriculum that teaches lifetime activities that students can use to promote their health and personal wellness.

Additional Considerations:

- Consider a mill levy to fund additional physical education teachers.

Health Education / Healthy Lifestyles

Recommendation 10:

Implement the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Coordinated School Health model.

- Improve coordination between School-Based Health Centers and classroom educational activities by improving communication with school administration.
- Consider grant opportunities for Coordinated School Health funding available through the Colorado Department of Education, and local and national foundations.

Health Research And Ongoing Surveillance

The Commission focused on the interface between the Denver Public Schools and the medical, academic, and public health institutions. All have a common mandate to serve Denver students' health needs. It was determined that better coordination of current research and efficient dissemination of results would improve health practices. The Commission wants to emphasize to the school community how poor diet and sedentary lifestyles threaten normal development and academic performance.

Recommendation 11:

By the 2005 - 2006 school year, create the DPS Health Research Committee to develop and monitor research with the following responsibilities:

- To provide guidelines for and evaluation of proposed research projects in the schools thereby ensuring safety, confidentiality, and respect for community standards.
- To create policy requiring prior Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals for research proposals, use of appropriate consent protocols; standards for experience and track record of applicants; demonstration that research is evidence-based.
- To coordinate physical and mental health services to students.

Recommendation 12:

Develop a combined health and mental health survey incorporating existing surveys, delivered periodically, and shared with community partners for the purpose of collecting standardized longitudinal data.

Recommendation 13:

Add the collection of height, weight, and Body Mass Index for Age to the hearing/vision screenings already routine in the district.

- Task the Denver School Health Advisory Council with developing a plan for data collection, database creation, surveillance schedules, and screening protocols. This could possibly require adding one paraprofessional FTE per screening team.
- Use willing schools as pilots and partner with community agencies who have the ability to increase resources.

On January 22, 2004, the Denver Board of Education approved the following:

Resolution on School Nutrition and Physical Activity

WHEREAS, The long-term health and well-being of Denver Public School students is of critical importance to the district; and

WHEREAS, The effectiveness of Denver Public Schools' educational programs is impacted by children's readiness to learn including whether children are nutritionally and physically healthy; and

WHEREAS, Healthy children who practice good nutritional habits and regular physical activity are better prepared to succeed in the classroom; and

WHEREAS, Research has clearly demonstrated the connection between nutrition and physical activity and both positive short-term and long-term health status; and

WHEREAS, There is great concern about the epidemic of obesity in this country, particularly among children, as evidenced by the growing incidence of adult-onset diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease in teens and children; and

WHEREAS, Schools have a vested interest in promoting optimal nutrition and regular physical activity, both as a responsibility to promote healthy lifestyles and to improve health outcomes, resulting in better educational outcomes; and

WHEREAS, Several school nutrition and physical activity projects in Denver, as well as Colorado and the nation, provide important examples to give students more opportunities to eat healthy meals, snacks, and beverages; prepare and learn about healthy foods and understand the importance of regular physical activity; and

WHEREAS, Schools, school districts, and states throughout the country have established proved standards for healthy food and drink items in vending machines and cafeterias and also standards for appropriate physical fitness programs.

Therefore, Be It Resolved by the Denver Public Schools Board of Education:

That DPS establish a Commission on School Nutrition and Physical Fitness to examine effective practices in schools and recommend policies and standards, which would have a positive impact on students' nutrition, health, and physical well-being.

Be It Further Resolved, that the district adopt those best practices in school nutrition and physical activity programs that are affordable and promote the longterm health, life-long learning, and overall well-being of our children.

Denver Public Schools
Nutrition and Health Survey
 District Results 2004-2005

1. How often do you eat healthy snacks like fruit instead of candy?

	Count	Percent
Always	689	14.9%
Sometimes	3459	74.7%
Never	481	10.4%
Total	4629	100%

2. How often do you eat fresh vegetables every day?

	Count	Percent
Always	967	20.9%
Sometimes	2469	53.4%
Never	1186	25.7%
Total	4622	100%

3. How often do you eat in a healthy way even when you're with your friends?

	Count	Percent
Always	556	12.3%
Sometimes	2897	63.8%
Never	1085	23.9%
Total	4538	100%

4. How often do you limit the amount of fat you eat?

	Count	Percent
Always	724	16.0%
Sometimes	2131	47.0%
Never	1680	37.0%
Total	4535	100%

5. How many pops (sodas) do you drink at school each day?

	Count	Percent
None	2193	47.7%
1 a day	1628	35.4%
2 a day	503	10.9%
3 or more	277	6.0%
Total	4601	100%



6. How often do you purchase food or drink items from school vending machines during the week?

	Count	Percent
Almost never	1768	38.4%
Once or twice a week	1842	40.0%
Almost every day	789	17.1%
More than once a day	202	4.4%
Total	4601	100%

7. What do you usually purchase from school vending machines?

	Count	Percent
Nothing	978	21.3%
Mostly food	740	16.1%
Mostly drinks	1435	31.3%
Both food and drinks	1432	31.2%
Total	4585	100%

8. Where do you usually eat at lunch time?

	Count	Percent
Cafeteria	2211	48.3%
Fast food restaurant	1317	28.8%
Home	406	8.9%
Usually skip lunch	641	14.0%
Total	4575	100%

9. If you eat in the cafeteria, would you say that the food is:

	Count	Percent
Excellent	247	6.1%
Above average	1071	26.4%
Below average	1425	35.2%
Poor	1310	32.3%
Total	4053	100%

10. How often do you eat lunch at a fast food restaurant? (high school only)

	Count	Percent
Never	965	26.1%
Once a week	1154	31.2%
2-3 times a week	1014	27.4%
Every day	569	15.4%
Total	3702	100%

11. When you buy food or drink, what's the most important to you?

	Count	Percent
Cost	1045	23.2%
Taste	2299	51.0%
Nutrition	710	15.7%
Convenience	174	3.9%
Portion size	282	6.3%
Total	4510	100%

12. What's the most important reason to go to lunch? (*middle school only*)

	Count	Percent
Friends	703	24.3%
Eat	1825	63.1%
Hang out	363	12.6%
Total	2891	100%

13. On how many of the past seven days did you exercise for at least 20 minutes or participate in physical activity that made you sweat and breathe hard?

	Count	Percent
Never	341	7.4%
Almost never (seldom)	454	9.9%
1-2 days	1110	24.1%
3-4 days	941	20.4%
Almost every day	1758	38.2%
Total	4604	100%

14. In an average week when you are in school, on how many days do you get to physical education (PE) classes?

	Count	Percent
Not in PE	2420	52.9%
1-2 days	310	6.8%
3-4 days	727	15.9%
Every day	1117	24.4%
Total	4574	100%

15. How long do you watch TV, DVDs, or videos each day?

	Count	Percent
Never	302	6.7%
1 hour	1369	30.3%
2-3 hours	1693	37.4%
4-5 hours	532	11.8%
More than 5 hours	628	13.9%
Total	4524	100%

16. How long do you play computer or video games, surf the Internet, e-mail, instant message, or chat each day?

	Count	Percent
Never	1176	25.7%
1 hour	1758	38.4%
2-3 hours	987	21.6%
4-5 hours	253	5.5%
More than 5 hours	403	8.8%
Total	4577	100%

17. Do you smoke?

	Count	Percent
Unidentified	9	0.2%
Yes	554	12.0%
No	4035	87.8%
Total	4598	100%

18. Do you think that you are overweight?

	Count	Percent
Unidentified	11	0.2%
Yes	1047	22.8%
No	3535	77.0%
Total	4593	100%



Current Background On School Nutrition In DPS

To: Elaine Berman and Reggie Washington:
Co-Chairs "DPS Commission on Nutrition and Physical Activity"

From: Leo Lesh, Dept. of Food and Nutrition Services

Re: Nutrition in Denver Public Schools

Current State of Nutrition in Denver Public Schools:

- DPS recognizes that there is a crucial relationship between nutrition and learning.
- There is evidence that the dramatic increase in overweight children and preventable childhood diseases in the US affects DPS students as well.

Federal Meal Programs:

- Food and Nutrition Services is in a unique position because of its status as an "enterprise fund" operating within the walls of a Public School System. As such, it is wholly selfsupporting, receiving no general fund monies for operations. The department generates enough revenue from all programs to pay for expenses and reinvest for future use.
- This revenue is generated by the administration of the National School Lunch Act. This USDA program consists of the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program, the After School Snack Program and the Summer Feeding Program.
- The USDA requires us to meet the Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA), for key nutrients for different age groups. These standards regulate :

1. Calories	2. Protein	3. Calcium
4. Iron	5. Vitamin A	6. Vitamin C
- Breakfast must provide 1/4 of the RDA and lunch must provide 1/3 of the RDA.
- In addition to providing key nutrients, we must also provide certain portion sizes for different age groups. All key nutrients are analyzed on a weekly basis and posted on the DPS web site along with the portion size.
- In keeping with the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines, the nutrient standards set targets of no more than 30% of calories from fat and less than 10% of calories from saturated fat.
- Although nutrient standards do not set specific targets for cholesterol, sodium and dietary fiber, our goal to reduce cholesterol and sodium and increase dietary fiber.
- Food and Nutrition Services has been providing proper portion sizes and these key nutrients and serving nutritious well-balanced meals (10,500 breakfasts and 35,700 lunches per day), to DPS students for the past several years.
- All of our kitchens are inspected by the City and County Health Department twice each year.

- Every five years, the department undergoes a very rigorous CRE Audit (Coordinated Review Effort), by the state and federal government. The emphasis of the audit is to make sure we are in full compliance with federal and state rules governing portion sizes, nutrient standards and other federal and state meal initiatives, accounting and claiming meals properly, food handling and storage, sanitation and etc. Four years ago we passed with high marks; our next CRE is in the 2005-2006 school year.

Food and Nutrition Services Snack Vending Program:

- The department owns and operates a snack vending program. Approximately 110 vending machines provide snacks, cold food, coffee and other hot beverages. We purchase, warehouse, fill, deliver and repair the machines in-house.
- Profits are shared with participating schools on a 50 – 50 basis. In the last school year, sales resulted in over \$62,000 in commissions of income for the participating schools.
- The department started offering more nutritious products in our snack vending machines during school year 2003 – 2004. The goal was to have at least 33% of all snack vending products contain no more than 35% of calories from fat and no more than 35% of total weight in sugar. In some cases we were as high as 50% nutritious products. All regular chips were replaced with backed chips.
- In addition to the snack vending, our department is also vending milk, which has been well received by the students.
- This school year 2004 – 2005, we decided to have all snack vending items meet a certain criteria: 40% of calories from fat and 35% of sugar by weight, (this meant the elimination of all candy bars and other very popular products from vending machines).
- The healthier changes in product mix have resulted in no significant change in revenue at the middle school level.
- At the high school level sales are down 24% and thus commissions are down 25% for the first three full months of the year.
- We have no snack vending in public areas in elementary schools.

A la carte Food Sales:

- To provide additional revenue to the School Meals Program the department also sells food and beverages on an a la carte basis (these are cash sales and not part of the reimbursable school lunch). About 90% of all a la carte products are sold at the middle and high school level.
- For the current school year, all a la carte items meet the following criteria: 40% of calories from fat and 35% of sugar by weight. This eliminated all candy bars and other popular products from being sold a la carte.
- In successive years, as more and more manufactures meet the criteria, all products will meet the stricter criteria.

Pepsi Beverage Vending:

- In addition, to snack vending, the department manages the Pepsi contract for the District. The five year contract is in its second year.
- The new contract specifies that only water can be sold in public areas in elementary schools, all machines must be on timers to comply with the State Competitive Food Rule, no Pepsi products can have a selling price that is less than the selling price of water. It also specifies other regulations that were designed to increase the nutritional integrity of the contract.
- We have been working with Pepsi to change the offering of products to a healthier mix.
- By the end of January, all middle schools we will have 50% of the beverage products considered “healthy”, as defined and recommended by Senate Bill 04-103.

Future Considerations:

Food and Nutrition Services along with Dr. Jim Hill from the Center on Human Nutrition at the C.U. Health Center will be conducting a food research study. The department will work with manufacturers who will reformulate products to make them healthier for students. The students will assist us by testing the new products for acceptable taste and appearance. We are also planning to increase the availability fresh fruits and vegetables through our vending program. The lack of electricity, competition for space, potential spoilage, and cost are obstacles we need to overcome. We will be experimenting with a new vending machine that will accommodate healthy snacks on top and a cold vending below for fruits and vegetables. We anticipate that this will address space and electrical issues by combining two machines in one.



Current Background On Physical Education In DPS

To: Elaine Berman and Reggie Washington

From: Eric Larson

Re: Physical Education and Health Education in Denver Public Schools
State of Physical Education in Denver Public Schools.

Elementary School Physical Education

- Duration and frequency of physical education varies from school to school.
- The amount of physical education time offered ranges from zero minutes per week to 150 minutes per week.
- Class sessions vary in length of time ranging from 25 to 50 minutes.
- During the past 13 years, average weekly physical education time in elementary schools has decreased 44%.
- Nine schools do not offer a physical education program. Fourteen schools offer physical education once a week. Eighteen schools offer physical education daily.
- Physical education staffing ranges from zero to three teachers per school.
- Physical education staffing declined from 101 FTEs in 2003–2004 to 85 FTEs in 2004–2005 (15.8% reduction).

Middle School Physical Education

- Physical education is an elective and not a requirement.
- Physical education staffing ranges from one to three teachers per school.
- Ten percent of students complete three years of courses without taking physical education.
- Sixty-four percent of middle school students completed at least one physical education class during 2003–2004.
- Physical education staffing declined from 41 FTEs in 2003–2004 to 33 FTEs in 2004–2005 (19.5% reduction).

High School Physical Education

- Two semesters (10 units) of physical education is required for graduation.
- Physical education staffing ranges from two to five teachers per school.
- Both semesters of the physical education requirement may be exempted by participation in athletics, ROTC, or citywide marching band.
- Fifty-six percent of high school students completed at least one physical education class during 2003–2004.
- Physical education staffing declined from 46 FTEs in 2003–2004 to 40 FTEs in 2004–2005 (13% reduction).
- Most commonly taught classes: Team Sports, Introduction to High School Physical Education, Team/Life Activities, and Fitness/Conditioning-Weight Training.

Decisions related to physical education offerings in Denver Public Schools are sitebased. Therefore, programs vary from one school to the next. Duration and frequency of physical education is inconsistent due to variations in staffing and scheduling. A standards-based physical education curriculum is taught at all our schools with the exception of nine elementary schools, which don't offer the program. For more information on DPS physical education curriculum, refer to the physical education Web site located at http://curriculum.dpsk12.org/pe_phys_ed.htm.

National Physical Education Standards

1. Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
2. Demonstrates understanding of movement concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics as they apply to learning and performance of physical activities.
3. Participates regularly in physical activity.
4. Achieves and maintains a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.
5. Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings.
6. Values physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expressions, and/or social interaction.

Colorado Physical Education Standards

1. Students demonstrate competent skills in a variety of physical activities and sports.
2. Students demonstrate competency in physical fitness.
3. Students demonstrate the knowledge of factors important to participation in physical activity.

Denver Public Schools Physical Education Standards

1. Students demonstrate competent skills in a variety of regular physical activities and sports.
2. Students demonstrate competency in physical fitness.
3. Students demonstrate knowledge of the factors important to and the benefits gained from participation in physical activity.
4. Students understand the importance of physical activity and its contributions to a healthy lifestyle.

Physical Activity for Children Aged 5–12

A Position Statement of the National Association for Sport and Physical Education—NASPE (revised in 2004)

1. Children should accumulate at least 60 minutes, and up to several hours, of age-appropriate physical activity on all, or most days of the week. This daily accumulation should include moderate and vigorous physical activity with the majority of the time being spent in activity that is intermittent in nature.
2. Children should participate in several bouts of physical activity lasting 15 minutes or more each day.
3. Children should participate each day in a variety of age-appropriate physical activities designed to achieve optimal health, wellness, fitness, and performance benefits.
4. Extended periods (periods of two hours or more) of inactivity are discouraged for children, especially during daytime hours.

State of Health Education in Denver Public Schools

- The district has no policies guiding the implementation of health education.
- No graduation requirements are specifically devoted to health education. In the science requirement, a statement related to Biology 1 and 2 states that within these courses, content “must include study of the nature of alcohol and narcotics, their effects upon the human system, and environmental concerns.”
- Health, if taught at the elementary and middle school levels, is integrated into science or physical education. Family Life for fourth and fifth grade students is the one specific health-related course that has a separate designation.
- At the high school level, Health and Medical Science, Health and Wellness, Science and Healthy Living are titles of elective courses offered in the majority of our high schools. Health and Medical Science seems to be the most commonly course taught.
- At Abraham Lincoln High School, students enrolled in Introduction to High School Physical Education experience 90 minutes of instruction in health and fitness. Included in this course are nutrition, diet, body fat, and cardiovascular endurance. Students in these classes write their own fitness plans incorporating the above health components. The textbook used for this class is Fitness for Life.

Individual schools may provide experiences such as the 9Health Fair or invite an outside speaker in from a health organization such as the American Cancer Society to do presentations, but it tends to be “drive-by” health education. No program coherence exists. Time for quality health education programs is limited; qualified health educators are few, and health education as a content area has never been valued.

The Rocky Mountain Center for Health Promotion and Education made numerous attempts to bring Denver Public Schools some of the best research-based kindergarten–grade 12 health education programs in the country and had funds to support implementation. Because of other priorities, they were unable to make much progress.

Food manufacturers spend over \$11 billion annually marketing to children and adolescents. As a result, many messages reach youth today that make fast, convenient food look good, trendy and, in some cases, nourishing.

Senate Bill 04-103

BY SENATOR(S) Sandoval, Gordon, Phillips, Arnold, Entz, Fitz-Gerald, Groff, Grossman, Hagedorn, Hanna, Isgar, Johnson S., Jones, Keller, Kester, Reeves, Takis, Tapia, Tupa, Veiga, and Windels;

also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Cloer, Boyd, Cadman, Cerbo, Frangas, Madden, Marshall, McFadyen, McGihon, Merrifield, Romanoff, Vigil, Williams S., Coleman, Johnson R., Paccione, Plant, Salazar, Spradley, and Stafford.

Concerning Policies To Increase The Inclusion Of Nutritious Choices In School Vending Machines.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:
SECTION 1. Article 32 of title 22, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION to read:
22-32-134. Healthful alternatives - school vending machines - requirements - cash fund created - rule-making.

(1) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS WORK WITH CONTRACTORS TO INCREASE OVER TIME THE NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF FOODS OFFERED TO STUDENTS IN SCHOOL VENDING MACHINES AND TO PHASE IN HIGHER NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS AS VENDOR CONTRACTS ARE RENEWED. IT IS ALSO THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROVIDE, WITHIN EXISTING APPROPRIATIONS, GUIDANCE AND ASSISTANCE TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS REGARDING HEALTHFUL ALTERNATIVES AND NUTRITIONAL DIETS.

(2) ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2004, EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION IS ENCOURAGED TO ADOPT A POLICY BY RESOLUTION PROVIDING THAT, BY THE 2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR, AT LEAST FIFTY PERCENT OF ALL ITEMS OFFERED IN EACH VENDING MACHINE OR ADJOINING SET OF VENDING MACHINES LOCATED IN EACH SCHOOL OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT SHALL MEET THE CRITERIA SET FORTH IN SUBSECTION (3) OF THIS SECTION.

(3) (a) FOODS AND BEVERAGES SOLD THROUGH SCHOOL VENDING MACHINES THAT MEET ACCEPTABLE NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS SHALL CONSIST OF THE FOLLOWING:
(I) PLAIN, UNFLAVORED, NONCARBONATED WATER;
(II) MILK, AS THAT TERM IS DEFINED IN SECTION 25-5.5-101, C.R.S., AND SHALL INCLUDE BUT NOT NECESSARILY BE LIMITED TO

CHOCOLATE MILK, SOY BEVERAGE, RICE BEVERAGE, AND OTHER SIMILAR DAIRY OR NONDAIRY BEVERAGE;
 (III) ONE HUNDRED PERCENT FRUIT JUICES OR FRUIT-BASED DRINKS COMPOSED OF NO LESS THAN FIFTY PERCENT JUICE, WITHOUT ADDITIONAL SWEETENERS;

(IV) AN ELECTROLYTE REPLACEMENT BEVERAGE THAT CONTAINS FORTY-TWO GRAMS OR FEWER OF ADDITIONAL SWEETENER PER TWENTY-OUNCE SERVING;

(V) NUTS, SEEDS, DAIRY PRODUCTS, FRESH FRUITS OR VEGETABLES, DRIED FRUITS OR VEGETABLES, AND PACKAGED FRUITS IN THEIR OWN JUICE; AND

(VI) ANY OTHER FOOD ITEM CONTAINING:

(A) NOT MORE THAN THIRTY-FIVE PERCENT OF TOTAL CALORIES FROM FAT AND NOT MORE THAN TEN PERCENT OF THOSE CALORIES FROM SATURATED FAT; AND HIGHER NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS AS VENDOR CONTRACTS ARE RENEWED.

(B) NOT MORE THAN THIRTY-FIVE PERCENT OF ITS TOTAL WEIGHT IN SUGAR.

(b) FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, "ADDITIONAL SWEETNER" MEANS AN ADDITIVE THAT ENHANCES THE SWEETNESS OF A FOOD OR BEVERAGE, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO SUGAR. "ADDITIONAL SWEETNER" DOES NOT INCLUDE THE NATURAL SUGAR OR SUGARS THAT ARE CONTAINED IN ANY FRUIT JUICE THAT IS A COMPONENT OF THE FOOD OR BEVERAGE.

SECTION 2. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

 John Andrews Lola Spradley
 PRESIDENT OF SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
 THE SENATE OF REPRESENTATIVES

 Mona Heustis Judith Rodrigue
 SECRETARY OF CHIEF CLERK OF THE HOUSE
 THE SENATE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 APPROVED _____

 Bill Owens
 GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

The Child Nutrition And Wic Reauthorization Act Of 2004

Sec. 204. Local Wellness Policy.

(a) IN GENERAL- Not later than the first day of the school year beginning after June 30, 2006, each local educational agency participating in a program authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq.) shall establish a local school wellness policy for schools under the local educational agency that, at a minimum—

- (1) includes goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness in a manner that the local educational agency determines is appropriate;
- (2) includes nutrition guidelines selected by the local educational agency for all foods available on each school campus under the local educational agency during the school day with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity;
- (3) provides an assurance that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of section 10 of the Child Nutrition Act (42 U.S.C. 1779) and sections 9(f)(l) and 17(a) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758(f)(l), 1766(a)), as those regulations and guidance apply to schools;
- (4) establishes a plan for measuring implementation of the local wellness policy, including designation of 1 or more persons within the local educational agency or at each school, as appropriate, charged with operational responsibility for 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 the development of the school wellness policy.



Spark Curriculum Design

The SPARK Physical Education program is designed to encourage maximum participation during class time. Active participation and practice are the means for improving students' fitness, skills, and enjoyment.

SPARK Physical Education offers instruction and practice in a realistic number of diverse skills and activities appropriate for sixth through eighth grade students. The curriculum is designed to take best advantage of developmentally appropriate activities without overwhelming students or teachers. Repetition within classes and within units allows students to develop sufficient skills so they become comfortable with an activity.

SPARK includes only activities that can be realistically implemented in a variety of school settings, including those that have limited space, equipment, and supplies. SPARK activities have been tried and tested with middle school students. Only activities that are manageable in diverse settings and produce substantial opportunities for students to actively engage in movement are included. Inactive games and drills, as well as activities requiring specialized equipment (e.g., formal gymnastics) are excluded.

SPARK emphasizes health-related fitness activities. However, it is also designed to reach other traditional physical education outcomes, including the attainment of motor skills, knowledge, and social values. The focus during class time, however, is on students being actively engaged in developmentally appropriate movement.

Warm-up and cool-down activities that require little explanation should be integrated into a lesson rather than being separate components. For example, students can warm up for a tag game by walking first, then running. In this manner, SPARK reduces both the number of different activities a teacher needs to plan, and the possibility of inactivity due to transitions.

Objective: The focus of SPARK is the development of healthy lifestyles, motor skills and movement knowledge, and social and personal skills.

Policies for Physical Activity:

1. Provide staff development to physical education instructors on methods for increasing physical activity during PE.
2. Evaluate PE instructors' performance in part on students' physical activity levels.

Rocky Mountain News

December 18, 2004

Targeting Fat, Sugar In Schools DPS panel has right idea

Before we embrace important new health and nutrition standards proposed for Denver Public Schools, we want to reassure our readers that we have not abandoned our belief in personal responsibility. Nor have we joined forces with the self-appointed anti-fat police who demonize fast food, soft drinks and snacks, and whose long-term agenda is to limit consumer choice through "Twinkie taxes" and other draconian policies, while leveraging plump settlements from deep-pocket corporations.

No, adults should be free to decide for themselves whether to eat salads or Snickers, bananas or Big Macs. And they should be able to do so without the nannies of the legal and public-health professions intervening to make that choice for them.

But children are different. Good parents don't let children choose any diet they want, and neither should good schools. Meanwhile, both parents and schools have a duty to make sure kids get enough exercise to stay healthy.

Although these ideas will no doubt seem obvious to most readers, they've apparently been neglected by some school districts in recent years. Consider Denver. Dr. Reginald Washington, a pediatric cardiologist who co-chaired Denver's Commission on School Nutrition and Physical Activity, reports that "It was very revealing when we took our field trips . . . to see very nutritious foods offered in the cafeteria and five or six feet away, all the junk food they could eat" in vending machines. The commission recommends better enforcement of Denver's current standard for food of less than 40 percent of calories from total fat and less than 35 percent of total weight in sugar (goodbye, candy), and urges adoption by 2007 of a standard of less than 30 percent total fat.

Denver began to push for better nutrition two years ago when it negotiated a new contract with Pepsi, which provides drinks for vending machines. But the commission is understandably not satisfied with the result. It recommends working with Pepsi to improve the quality of those offerings, too.

However, the most important part of the commission's report does not involve the calories kids put in their mouths. It has to do with the calories they work off with their arms and legs. It's more than a little ironic, in fact, to see the commission blame a "confluence of trends" for the increase in child obesity when its own report points out that a surprising number of Denver students attend schools - even elementary schools - with no physical education and only a short recess period around lunch time. Why, of course they're gaining weight. That's what happens to many adults who never exercise. Why should children be immune to the well-known effects of a sedentary lifestyle?

So, should all elementary students enjoy a "daily recess in addition to the lunch recess," as well as physical education lasting "30 minutes per day, 5 days per week," as the commission recommends? But of course. Getting there won't be easy, given how the school day has been organized and because the district employs too few qualified P.E. instructors. But the commission has done a commendable job of formulating the right goals. Now it's up to district officials. Now that they understand their own contribution to the unhealthy lifestyles of so many students, they need to step up and do something about it.

Nutrition should count at DPS

As the waistlines of America's children were bulging in the 1990s, money for physical education was drying up and sedentary kids were filling up on chips and candy from school vending machines.

Some school districts, including Denver's, also inked lucrative contracts with soft-drink companies to sell soda pop in schools - as well as water and juice.

It's proved to be a dangerous combination: Childhood obesity has become an American epidemic, according to the Centers for Disease Control, with the number of overweight school children quadrupling since 1974.

Now, a special Denver Public Schools commission is recommending mandatory exercise for students - there's a novel idea - and district-wide nutrition standards for food sold at schools.

It took about nine months for the 17-member commission to develop the policy, which seems long overdue. The question now becomes: Will the administration and school board take action?

Or will they instead shrug and guzzle another Pepsi? After all, their contract with the soda giant is worth up to \$12 million over the next four years.

It seems a shame a commission actually has to recommend formally that children get enough exercise. Physical education may not count for anything in the state testing program - not yet, anyway - but its importance cannot be underscored enough.

Not only does physical activity keep children healthy, and make it easier for them to sit still and learn the rest of the day, it helps foster lifelong healthy lifestyles.

While some elementary schools in Denver are able to offer 150 minutes of physical activity per week, some offer no physical education at all, according to the DPS Commission on School Nutrition and Physical Activity report. In fact, over the past 13 years, the average amount of time students spend in elementary school PE classes has dropped 44 percent as staffing has been cut.

The commission's report suggests all elementary students participate in at least 90 minutes of physical education per week. The long-term goal is to require 30 minutes of PE a day, five days a week, with a fully qualified teacher.

That will cost money. Is DPS willing to ask voters for a tax hike?

The recommended nutrition standards would restrict food and drinks sold on campus to items that get no more than 40 percent of their calories from total fat, no more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat and less than 35 percent of their total weight in sugar.

By 2007, those standards would tighten even further. And, the commission wants the district to study stocking vending machines with nutrient-rich foods such as yogurt, fruit and vegetables.

The report also asks the district to work with Pepsi to provide healthier options, such as 100 percent fruit juices, in beverage vending machines. (The district's contract expires in 2008.) To its credit, DPS already has worked to keep soda pop out of elementary schools, where only bottled water is sold.

The DPS board and administration should take a serious look at the recommendations drafted by the commission. Some make so much sense that they shouldn't need a long look.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. American Academy of Pediatrics - Policy on Soft Drinks and Obesity

<http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;113/1/152>

<http://www.aap.org/advocacy/archives/jansoftdrinks.htm>

2. Institute of Medicine of the National Academies Preventing Childhood Obesity: Health in the Balance

<http://www.iom.edu/report.asp?id=22596>

3. Colorado Physical Activity and Nutrition Program School Site Task Force

<http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/pp/COPAN/SchoolSites.pdf>

4. Action for Healthy Kids

<http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/html/main.htm>

5. National Association of School Boards of Education Summary of Federal School Wellness Policy

http://www.nasbe.org/Membership/Educational_Issues/Policy_Update/12_14.pdf

**For more information
please visit the
Commission on School Nutrition and Physical Activity
website at:**

<http://dcsnpa.dpsk12.org>



Denver Public Schools

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