

# Policy Implications: Observations & Recommendations



Brief VII • 2009

The University of Washington Center for Public Health Nutrition hosted a meeting of key Washington State school nutrition policy stakeholders in May 2009. The purpose of the meeting was to share the results and discuss the policy implications of a pivotal 3-year study on the impact of Washington’s school nutrition and physical activity policies.

Forty-six people participated in the meeting, including Washington State representatives from the Department of Health, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Board of Health, Senate staff, State PTA, Washington State School Directors’ Association, Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition, Alliance for a Healthier Generation, Washington Health Foundation, School Board members, local wellness committee members, district food service directors, and local health jurisdiction staff.

The investigators shared the study results during the morning session. The afternoon session was devoted to large and small group discussions of the policy implications of the findings. Participants divided into groups to discuss possible policy gaps with school nutrition and physical activity. The policy ideas noted below represent their collective thinking.

## Policy Ideas

Policy Ideas	
<b>Nutrition</b>	<p><b>State</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Change SB 5093 goals to mandates</li> <li>▪ Tax unhealthy snacks and beverages and direct some of the revenue back to schools (to help replace lost revenue from sales of unhealthy snacks and beverages)</li> <li>▪ Repeal soda pop syrup tax relief</li> <li>▪ Restrict food and soda advertising targeted at students</li> <li>▪ Eliminate competitive foods from all public schools</li> <li>▪ Regulate vending machine contracts to collect sales and availability data</li> <li>▪ Allow schools to fill their own vending machines</li> <li>▪ Mandate that the schools adopt/create a defined nutrition curriculum that can be integrated across all subject areas</li> </ul> <p><b>Federal</b></p> <p>Commodity improvement – improve the quality of foods offered to schools</p>
<b>Physical Activity</b>	<p><b>State</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enforce physical education teacher certification requirements</li> <li>▪ Use school transportation funding as a way to incentivize walking and biking to school</li> </ul>
<b>Broad Ideas (Nutr &amp; PA)</b>	<p><b>State</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wean schools away from revenue generated by unhealthy foods and beverages by creating new &amp; different funding mechanism (i.e., 1% tax on professional entertainment, like sporting events)</li> <li>▪ Create “healthy school zones” to reflect federal health guidelines</li> <li>▪ Require schools to share the health information that they currently collect</li> </ul> <p><b>Federal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Apply wellness policies to all school events</li> </ul>