



NJDOE News

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For Immediate Release: December 22, 2009

New Jersey Recognized as School Nutrition Leader

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have recognized New Jersey for its accomplishments in improving nutrition for young people.

The CDC identified New Jersey as one of the 10 best states in the percentage of secondary schools that did not sell less nutritious food and beverages from vending machines or at a school store, canteen or snack bar in 2008. CDC collected the information from the 50 states in its 2008 School Health Profiles Survey. The School Health Profiles is a system of surveys conducted every two years to assess school health policies and practices in states, large urban school districts, and territories.

Through the enactment of state law and regulations, schools are banned from selling junk food to their students. Any public or private school that participates in any of the federally funded Child Nutrition Programs must adopt, at a minimum, the New Jersey School Nutrition / Wellness Policy.

"We are transforming the culture in our schools as it applies to good nutrition and the development of healthier habits," said Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy, who attributed the success in this area to effective coordination and collaboration with the departments of Education, Agriculture and Health. "This federal recognition serves as evidence that we are a leading state in our policies and practices."

Commissioner Davy noted that although New Jersey can be proud of its efforts to date, a sustained effort by the partnership at all levels of the education community and among leaders in health and agriculture is needed for lasting results.

State regulations require all New Jersey public and private schools that participate in federally funded child nutrition programs to adopt, at minimum, the New Jersey School Nutrition / Wellness Policy: Information on the New Jersey Wellness Policy can be found at:

http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/fn/childadult/school_model.html State law requires all public schools, including schools that do not participate in the federal programs, to follow the standards as stated in the policy.

In addition to regulations governing districtwide wide wellness policy, New Jersey maintains rigorous state academic standards for Comprehensive Health and Physical Education which require districts to incorporate nutrition education and physical activity into the local curriculum. As part of the state's ongoing commitment to prevention and education, the standards were updated and readopted by the State Board of Education in June 2009. They can be accessed at:

<http://www.nj.gov/education/aps/cccs/chpe/>

In an effort to motivate schools to improve health outcomes for students, eight Learning Partner Schools were chosen to participate in the Coordinated School Health Demonstration Project. Participating schools establish a wellness team to assess health policies and practices and develop an action plan that supports wellness. Students participate in fitness assessments and use the information to guide individual improvement. Learning Partner Schools engage school staff, students, parents and the community in a coordinated approach to support healthy, active lifestyles.

The eight Learning Partner Schools are: Broad Street Elementary School, Bridgeton; Burlington City Junior/Senior High School, Burlington City; Woodrow Wilson High School, Camden; Rittenberg Middle School, Egg Harbor City; Trenton Central High School, Trenton; Hunterdon Central Regional High School; Perth Amboy High School, Perth Amboy; and Halsted Street School, Newton.

The Coordinated School Health Demonstration Project is funded through a cooperative agreement with the CDC. The Department of Education, in partnership with the Department of Health and Senior Services, was awarded \$699,689 per year. The five-year cooperative agreement, "Improving Health and Educational Outcomes of Young

People," supports coordinated school health programs, HIV prevention and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. To learn more about CDC's approach to school wellness, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthYouth/index.htm>