

Mass in Motion Webinar:  
**Healthy Students Healthy Schools**  
***School Nutrition Guidelines***

Presenter: Julianna Valcour, School Nutrition Policy Consultant, MDPH  
Host: Stefanie Valovic, Health Resources in Action

NOVEMBER 15, 2012



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Department of Public Health

Helping People Lead Healthy Lives in Healthy Communities

# Welcome!

Mass in Motion Webinar:  
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### **Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages**



## **Poll Question**

**How comfortable do you feel advocating  
for school nutrition guidelines in your  
community?**

- A. very comfortable**
- B. somewhat comfortable**
- C. not comfortable**

## Poll Question

**Are you are working on school nutrition guidelines in your community?**

**A. Yes**

**B. No**

**C. Trying to get started**

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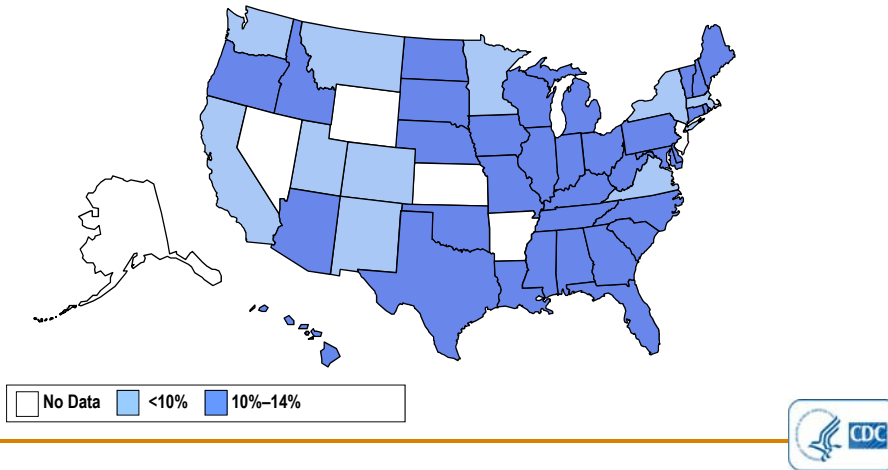
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## Outline

- Development and scope of obesity in adults across the United States and children in Massachusetts
  - Background on the development of the School Nutrition Bill and an overview of the key elements
  - New standards for competitive foods and beverages
  - Implementation guidance document, “Healthy Students, Healthy Schools”
  - Community involvement in implementation
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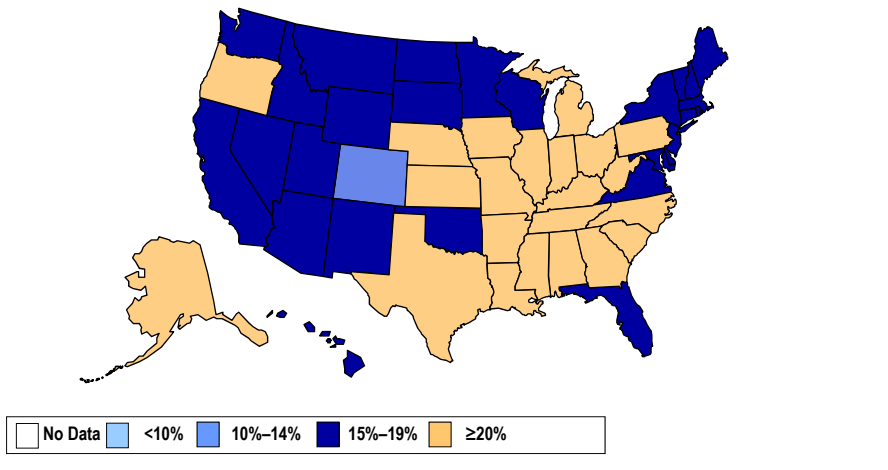
# Obesity Trends\* Among U.S. Adults BRFSS, 1990

(\*BMI  $\geq 30$ , or  $\sim 30$  lbs. overweight for 5' 4" person)



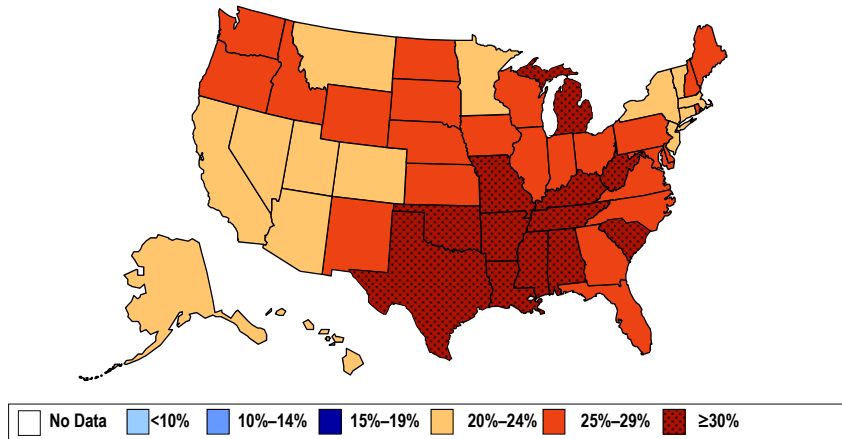
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## Obesity Trends\* Among U.S. Adults BRFSS, 2010

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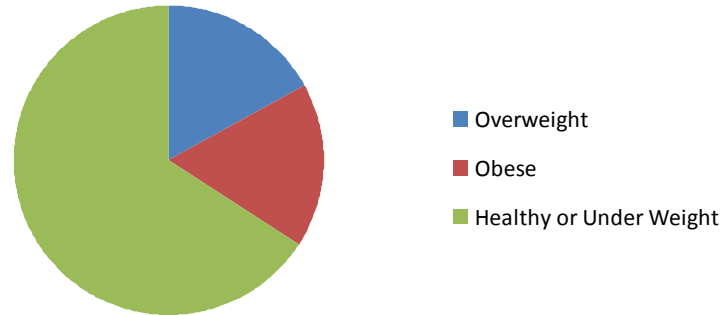


## Childhood Obesity in Massachusetts

- **Middle School Students**
  - 15% overweight and 9% obese
- **High School Students**
  - 14% overweight and 10% obese
- **Black and Hispanic Adolescents**
  - Black 16% obese
  - Hispanic 14% obese
  - White 9% obese

## BMI Screening Data

Overweight and Obese Children in Massachusetts



32% are either overweight or obese

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## Consequences of Childhood Obesity

- 79% more likely to become an obese adult
- Type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- ↑school absences due to triggers from chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes, depression and anxiety
- ↓physical fitness
- ↓life expectancy

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## Poll Question

Over the last 30 years, obesity rates among children ages 2-19 has:

- A. doubled
- B. tripled
- C. quadrupled
- D. stayed the same

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## Answer: B

- According to the CDC, the rate of obesity among children age 2-19 is approximately 17%
- 12.5 million children in 2008
- up from about 5% in 1980

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## School Nutrition Bill Background

- For over a decade, MDPH has been working with statewide partners to develop and implement strategies and environmental changes to prevent obesity in Massachusetts through healthy eating and active living.
- Community agencies, grassroots organizations and schools in Massachusetts advocated for passage of various versions of a school nutrition bill for over 8 years.

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## Development of School Nutrition Regulations

### **Massachusetts School Nutrition Bill signed into law July 10, 2010**

- Requires MDPH, in collaboration with MDESE, to establish nutritional standards for “competitive foods and beverages” in public schools sold or provided during the school day



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## Overview of Key Elements of Bill

- Update standards every 5 years
- Make plain water readily available during school day at no cost
- Offer fresh fruits/non-fried vegetables wherever food is sold (except vending machines)
- Make nutrition information available for non pre-packaged foods (in the cafeteria)
- Prohibits use of fryolators in preparing competitive foods



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## Overview of Key Elements of Bill

- Requires regulations to promote school wellness advisory committees
- Requires training of public school nurses in screening and referral for obesity, diabetes and eating disorders
- Establishes Commission on School Nutrition and Childhood Obesity



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## Standards Development

- Interagency Workgroup Commissioned
  - MDPH obesity prevention and school health staff
  - MDESE health and nutrition staff
  - John C. Stalker Institute of Food and Nutrition at Framingham State
  - Boston Public Health Commission
  - Harvard School of Public Health

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## Workgroup collected and compared existing nutrition standards established by

- Institute of Medicine (IOM) Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages
- Executive Order 509 for state agencies providing food to patients/clients
- MA Action for Healthy Kids
- Alliance for a Healthier Generation (AHA)
- Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010
- Connecticut Standards
- West Virginia Standards
- Michigan Draft Standards
- Massachusetts Public Health Association



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## Goal of the Standards

- Provide a healthy school environment for all students
- Offer nourishing food and beverage choices
  - Whole grains
  - Fruits and vegetables
  - Low-fat dairy products
- Promote students' healthy growth and development, enhance learning and form life-long healthy eating habits



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## Poll Question

**What % of adolescents regularly consume the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables daily?**

- A. 45%**
- B. 25%**
- C. 10%**
- D. 5%**

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## Answer: C

Data collected from the Youth Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System indicates that only 10% of adolescents consume the recommended 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily.

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## “Competitive” Foods and Beverages

- “Competitive” foods/beverages are those provided in:
  - school cafeterias offered as à la carte items
  - school stores and snack bars
  - vending machines

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## School Nutrition Standards - Highlights

Food/Beverage	Standards
Milk – Added Sugar	Flavored milk with no more than <b>22 grams total sugar per 8 ounces</b> ; includes alternative milk beverages such as lactose-free and soy
Beverages with Added Sugar or Sweeteners	Any beverages with added sugar or sweeteners not already prohibited will be phased out by <b>August 1, 2013</b> . A school may provide or sell flavored milk or milk substitutes that contain the same amount or less sugar than plain, fat-free or low-fat milk.
Calories	Foods shall not exceed <b>200 calories per item</b> . A la carte entrées shall not exceed the calorie count of entrée items offered as a part of the National School Lunch Program (e.g., equivalent portion size).
Fat	No more than <b>35% of total calories from fat</b>
Sodium	No food shall contain more than <b>200 mg of sodium</b> per item. A la carte entrées shall not contain more than <b>480 mg of sodium</b> per item.
Grains	All bread or grain-based products shall be <b>whole grain</b> (includes crackers, granola bars, chips, bakery items, pasta, rice, etc.).
Artificial Sweeteners	No food or beverage shall contain an artificial sweetener.

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## Public Comment

- Presentation to PHC February 9, 2011
- 2 public hearings: March 28 in Boston and April 5 in Springfield
  - More than 60 people attended these hearings
  - 19 parties submitted oral testimony
- 91 written responses received

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## Organization Support

- Many public health organizations strongly supported the standards as presented
  - Massachusetts Public Health Association
  - American Academy of Pediatrics, Massachusetts Chapter
  - Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center
  - American Diabetes Association
  - Massachusetts Dietetic Association

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## Comments on Artificial Sweeteners

Comments were received:



- From organizations (AHA and MA Beverage Association) and individuals requesting that **artificial sweeteners be allowed**
- Requesting that **artificial flavors and colors be excluded** along with artificial sweeteners

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## Comments on Beverages with Added Sugar or Sweeteners

Comments were received:



- From organizations (School Nutrition Association, Dairy Council and the MA Nutrition Board) and individuals regarding **allowing flavored milk**
- Recommending **the exclusion of flavored milk** in the standards

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## Response to Comments

The Interagency Work Group fully reviewed all of the comments received and presented final recommendations to the Public Health Council for a vote.

## MDPH Response

### Artificial Sweeteners

**Proposed:**

No artificial sweeteners

**Final Recommendation:**

**Maintain current standard**

*Rationale:*

There is incomplete evidence on the long-term health effects of non-nutritive sweeteners, particularly from exposure initiated in childhood. Some research suggests that non-nutritive sweeteners can increase preference for sweet foods and lead to increased calorie consumption. Additionally, the objective is to encourage children to enjoy natural flavors of foods and beverages – not artificially enhanced with a sweet taste.

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## MDPH Response

### Beverages with Added Sugar or Sweeteners

**Proposed:**

Any beverages with added sugar or sweeteners not already prohibited will be phased out by August 1, 2013.

A school may provide or sell flavored milk or milk substitutes that contain the same amount or less sugar than plain, fat-free or low-fat milk.

**Final Recommendation:**

**Maintain current standard**

*Rationale:*

Limiting the availability and accessibility of sugar-sweetened beverages can decrease consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages and increase the consumption of more healthful drinks. Adding sugar to plain milk (**flavored milk contains at least 2.5 teaspoons of added sugar per 8 ounce serving**) can substantially increase the calories per serving without increasing overall nutrient value. Schools have an important opportunity to restrict the availability of sugar-sweetened beverages, and to educate and model healthy behavior (CDC).

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## Development of School Nutrition Standards

- Unanimous approval of the standards by MA Public Health Council July 13, 2011
- Standards go into effect August 1, 2012, except for the following provisions which go into effect August 1, 2013
  - Eliminating beverages with added sugar or sweeteners
  - Making nutritional information available

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## Poll Question

**According to the School Nutrition Bill, competitive foods do not include:**

- A. school stores**
- B. vending machines**
- C. classroom parties**
- D. cafeteria a la carte offerings**

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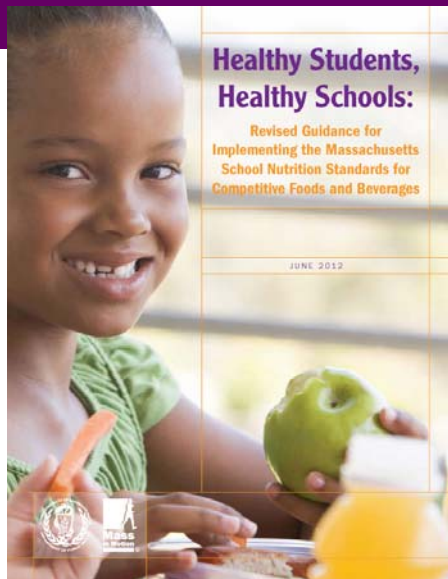
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## Answer: C

- **Classroom parties and temporary fundraisers are no longer part of the School Nutrition Bill.**
- **Schools need to address these situations as part of their wellness policies.**

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## Implementation Guidance



- Standards at-a-glance
- Recommendation for healthy school environments
  - Healthy celebrations
  - “A-List”
  - Alternatives for school fundraising
- Financial implications
- Q’s and A’s
- Local Massachusetts stories throughout

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## Recommendations to Create and Support a Healthy Environment

- Food-free fundraising
- Healthy celebrations
- Limiting marketing to healthy foods and beverages
- Using non-food rewards
- Limiting outside vendors
- Nutrition education for parents/students
- Healthy choices at all times
- Adequate time for lunch
- Scheduling recess before lunch

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## Food-Free Fundraising

- Profitable healthy fundraising alternatives abound
  - Events such as car washes, fun runs, walk-a-thons, raffles
  - Sales of non-food items such as calendars, greeting cards, flowers/plants, personal care products, wrapping paper
  - Electronics recycling events



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## Successful Fundraising



### Students raise money with their heads in Woburn

Students in each grade at the Hurl Elementary School took a 30-question grade-level math test developed by their teachers and collected pledges for their correct answers. Adding to the novel fundraiser, students who returned their sponsor sheet had a chance to win by raffle. Two of the prizes: a ride to school in a fire truck or police cruiser!

**The fundraiser had an extremely high participation rate and produced over \$11,000 for the school.**

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## Healthy Celebrations

- Food-Free Celebrations in School
  - Birthday celebrations
  - Academic achievements
  - Holidays



## Codman Academy in Dorchester

- Celebrations involve art, fitness and community service
  - Boston’s First Night festivities
  - Alumni-student basketball game
  - School-wide community service day



## Financial Implications for School Food Services

The majority of studies and reports have found that schools implementing healthier competitive foods have not had decreases in overall revenue.



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## Good Nutrition and Profits?

# YES!

- Keys to success
  - Make slow, gradual changes
  - Offer taste testings
  - Incorporate changes after-school breaks and vacations
  - Get students, teachers and parents involved

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## Competitive Foods That Meet the Standards



The John C. Stalker Institute  
of Food and Nutrition  
AT FRAMINGHAM STATE UNIVERSITY

- “A-List” (or Acceptable List)
- Nutrition Calculator-Mass NETS
- Recipe calculator in development
- [www.johnstalkerinstitute.org/alist](http://www.johnstalkerinstitute.org/alist)

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## Implementation

- Guidance document: *Healthy Students, Healthy Schools* mailed to all public schools November 2011
- Revised *Healthy Students, Healthy Schools* guidance document available online at: <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/mass-in-motion/school-nutrition-guide.pdf>
- Ongoing training and technical assistance for school nutrition directors and other school personnel by DESE and John Stalker Institute

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## National Efforts

- USDA school lunch and breakfast nutrition standards
- USDA competitive food nutrition standards
- Let's Move
  - A nationwide effort to combat childhood obesity with education and resources to improve nutrition and physical activity for kids.



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## How Communities Can Help

- Participate in the local school district's School Wellness Advisory Committee
  - Support implementation efforts of the School Nutrition Standards
  - Encourage schools to adopt healthy school environment recommendations
- Encourage other youth-serving agencies to adopt the nutrition standards
  - Before/after-school programs, child care centers, faith-based programs, summer programs, Parks and Recreation programs



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## Communication

- Wellness committee
- School Food Services
- PTO/PTA
- School Committee
- Local media

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## Poll Question

After this presentation, how comfortable do you feel advocating for school nutrition guidelines in your community?

- A. very comfortable
- B. somewhat comfortable
- C. not comfortable

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## Questions?



*Mass in Motion*  
Healthier Schools page

[www.mass.gov/dph/healthierschools](http://www.mass.gov/dph/healthierschools)

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