

---

**Contributed By:** Marion County School Nutrition Department

**This Week's Topic: Wellness Policies**

*Key to Excellence:* Nutrition Education

In 2004, as part of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act, congress passed a law requiring every school district that uses federal funds for school breakfast and lunch to develop a local Wellness Policy by the start of the 2006-2007 school year. The Wellness Policy applies to every school in the local district. Its purpose is to help schools improve the health of students and reduce childhood obesity through promoting nutritious foods and physical activity.

The law required the policy be developed by a team of stakeholders including students, community members, parents, school board members, administrators, and school food service employees. They were to work together to develop goals for nutrition standards for food served in school, nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness.

The Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 took the basic plan developed in 2006 and strengthened it by setting rules for implementing and monitoring the policy. A new emphasis was placed on developing broad-based support from community members to assist with the implementation of a successful wellness policy. In addition, the Act added requirements for goals for nutrition promotion, and to permit physical education teachers and school health professionals to collaborate in the development of the policies. The purpose of the wellness team was also expanded to include implementation, periodic review, and policy updates. These updates and reviews must be made available to the public and must include: extent of compliance, how local policy compares to model local wellness policies and progress made in reaching goals set by local policy.

As a result, creating a successful wellness policy is a team effort that fosters a collaboration of the entire school district. It brings together the ideas and thoughts of those who play important roles in school nutrition, physical education, health, and academics. Schools have the opportunity to positively influence the greatest population of students in a county. Wellness policies, created by the district, are an important key to preventing and reducing childhood obesity and giving students the tools for a lifetime of healthy choices.

If you wish to view this policy it can be accessed on the district website [www.marion.k12.ga.us](http://www.marion.k12.ga.us) or the Marion County Board of Education Office, 1697 Pineville Road, Buena Vista, GA 31803. Individuals, who wish to be a part of the Wellness Advisory Committee, please contact Sonya Faulk at [sfaulk@marion.k12.ga.us](mailto:sfaulk@marion.k12.ga.us) or 229-649-2234.

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer."