

**RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING SCHOOLS TO
ADOPT NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL
ACTIVITY POLICIES**

2005 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Patricia W. Jones

Senate Sponsor: Patrice M. Arent

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This joint resolution of the Legislature urges the development of wellness policies to reduce obesity in children and adolescents.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

► urges that schools, school districts, health care providers, community-based organizations, businesses, and families work to establish comprehensive wellness policies to help prevent and reduce the prevalence of overweight children and adolescents.

Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

WHEREAS, Action for Healthy Kids is a nationwide initiative dedicated to improving the health and educational performances of children through better nutrition and physical activity in schools;

WHEREAS, this effort represents a response to the nation's epidemic of overweight, sedentary, and undernourished children and adolescents;

WHEREAS, the Utah Action for Healthy Kids has 11 local working partners who meet monthly to plan ways to improve nutrition and physical activity in Utah schools;

WHEREAS, since 1980 the percentage of young people who are overweight has doubled, putting them at a greater risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer;

WHEREAS, according to the Surgeon General, only half of adolescents regularly participate in vigorous physical activity and 25% report no physical activity;

WHEREAS, one in every four Utah students from kindergarten to eighth grade is overweight or at risk of becoming overweight and there are enough overweight or at risk children in Utah to fill 124 elementary schools or 2,067 classrooms;

WHEREAS, studies have shown that physically active students have more positive self esteem and lower levels of depression;

WHEREAS, good health and nourishment also enhance performance on cognitive testing, and improved test scores are a result of participation in the school breakfast program;

WHEREAS, the 2004 reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Program states that each school district participating in the National School Lunch Program shall establish a local wellness policy by 2006;

WHEREAS, school-based efforts present a unique opportunity to provide children with the skills and support they need to adopt healthy, lifelong behaviors;

WHEREAS, there is also an opportunity to engage students, school faculty, families, and communities in promoting healthy eating and regular physical activity;

WHEREAS, Action for Healthy Kids recognizes the importance of wellness policies and has developed policy and program guidelines to assist schools and school districts as they create and evaluate their wellness policies; and

WHEREAS, it is critical that physical activity requirements, standards, and programs in schools are strengthened, school and community partnerships that promote good nutrition are fostered, and nutrition policies and physical education programs are established:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah urges that school community councils, school districts, health care providers, community-based organizations, businesses, and families work to establish comprehensive wellness policies to help prevent and reduce the prevalence of overweight children and adolescents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Utah State Office of Education, the Utah Parent-Teachers Association, the Utah Chamber of Commerce, and the Utah Medical Association.