



Healthy Schools for Pennsylvania

Ban Soda and Junk Food in PA Schools!

Take the No Soda in Our Schools! Pledge

I, _____, as a school board member or candidate pledge to work towards eliminating the sale of soda and junk food in school by establishing a strong School Nutrition Policy for my school district.

The Healthy Schools for Pennsylvania campaign is a statewide effort to rid our schools of soda and junk food. According to a recent poll, 8 out of 10 Pennsylvanians want soda and junk food out of our schools. Here's why:

- Our children's health depends on it. Over one third of the children in our schools are either overweight or obese, putting them at risk for debilitating conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease. According to the New England Journal of Medicine, this generation of children may be the first to have a shorter life expectancy than their parents because of childhood obesity.
- Preventing obesity reduces healthcare costs. According to a recent study in Health Affairs, private health insurance spending on illnesses related to obesity has increased more than tenfold since 1987. This year in Pennsylvania, obesity-related healthcare costs will exceed \$4 billion. State spending on healthcare related to the obesity epidemic is squeezing budgets and leaving less for education.
- Students will buy healthy products. Several federal agencies conducted 32 case studies of districts and schools that changed the offerings in vending machines and cafeterias to improve children's health. As documented in their report, "Making It Happen," of the 17 schools and districts that submitted data on revenues, 12 showed an increase as a result of the changes, four reported no change and only 1 reported a decrease.
- Parents and community members should decide what is offered in schools. Community members can get involved by contacting their school board members and candidates and asking them to take the pledge. The Healthy Beverage Toolkit (available at www.thefoodtrust.org) explains how to build community support for reforming school nutrition policies.

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