

## **Start Development Now for the Required Local Wellness Policy**

It is not too early to begin the steps to establish a school wellness policy. Congress passed a law requiring each local educational agency participating in USDA school meals programs to have a local wellness policy by school year 2006. Requirements include: setting goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities, nutrition guidelines for all foods available on school campus, meeting nutrition standards for school meals, and a plan for measuring implementation of the local wellness policy.

There are no standard procedures for developing the policy, but the recommended first step is to form a team. The new school year is a good time to determine whether a new team is needed, or if your school or district already has an existing team that is well-positioned to assist with the policy (example: school health council or Team Nutrition team). Guidelines for the make-up of the team and several national and state resources are available.

A policy template tool [http://actionforhealthykids.org/resources\\_wp.php](http://actionforhealthykids.org/resources_wp.php) that can be completed by filling in each section from a menu of choices is also available from [Action for Healthy Kids](#). It's very comprehensive and user friendly

To learn more about establishing a local wellness policy, check out the Team Nutrition website, [www.fns.usda.gov/tn](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn). It serves as the clearinghouse for information and resources to assist schools in meeting this requirement. Click on [http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/wellnesspolicy\\_examples.html](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/wellnesspolicy_examples.html) for some sample policies.

DPI Child Nutrition Programs has developed a [Local Wellness Policy handout](#) you can use to inform others in your school about this new requirement.