



Student Health & Wellness

MCSBA members are concerned about the health of their students and have already taken a number of steps to ensure that, as much as possible, schools support student wellness. The overwhelming majority of programs and services promoting student health and wellness are already offered through schools.

- Several federal and state laws already govern what foods schools can serve to students.
- All districts in NYS, to meet state mandates, have worked with local citizens to establish health and wellness committees and wellness plans. Many such plans were in existence before the state mandated them.
- All districts in NYS, to meet state mandates, have written policies on student health and wellness. Many such policies were in existence before the state mandated them.
- Since the early 20th Century, schools have taught nutrition and health to all students.
- A number of regional initiatives have been implemented without state imposition. In Monroe County, the Health Director and other agencies, including school districts, have worked independently and voluntarily to remove trans fats from menus.
- State law already sets standards for physical education. School districts do not have the teachers, the time, or the facilities to increase the amount of physical education offered during the school day.

MCSBA OPPOSES any more interference from the state in local decision making on health and wellness of our students, since schools are the one governmental agency already leading the way in such efforts with or without the financial support such initiatives require from the state.

MCSBA RECOMMENDS that the state focus its attention on agencies that affect children when they are outside of school to fill the gaps that are really hurting children.

The state could take steps to make healthy foods, which tend to be more expensive than high-fat, high-carbohydrate foods, available to needy families. Laws that help families pay for more nutritious foods would have an immediate benefit for children.

The state could take steps to make neighborhoods safe, so children can play freely outside when not on school property and travel to and from school without fear. Laws that support public safety initiatives would directly help children.

The state could work to remove government subsidies from unhealthy food and provide subsidies only for nutritious foods, to improve the health of children.

NYS legislators should consider potential changes to education law within the context of all existing education laws and mandates as well as guidelines established by the Board of Regents.