University of Minnesota ScOPE researchers have identified ways to support Minnesota schools choosing the healthy path to student success.

ScOPE research shows that when school districts adapt and align wellness policy templates to their unique environments, students have more opportunities for healthy choices.2,3

ScOPE research shows that schools have stronger policies when families, students, communities and businesses are included in decision making.4,5

ScOPE research shows that schools with practices that reflect strong wellness policies ban junk food sales, establish physical education guidelines and demand healthy foods and beverages.6,7,10

Healthy students are better learners
Other research shows that when students are physically active and consume nutritious foods they have:]
- Reduced behavioral problems
- Increased attendance
- Higher grades & test scores
- Increased graduation rates

Healthy choices every day
When schools have policies and practices that:
- Emphasize healthy food and restrict junk food and sugary drinks, students drink less soda and sports drinks,6,7 eat more fruits and vegetables,9 weigh slightly less6,8 and are no more likely to use unhealthy weight control behaviors9
- Require a class that teach individualized physical activity plans, students report more days when they are active for 30 minutes10

Diverse perspectives build better policy
When a school’s health council has a diverse membership, schools are more likely to:
- Stock vending machines with less junk food
- Offer more fruits/vegetables
- Price healthy snacks competitively
- Provide more intramural sports opportunities for students
- Require PE in any grades 6-12

Engage students, families & communities

Connect with resources

Promote healthy choices

Make marketing work for you
When schools use price incentives to promote fruits and vegetables over junk food — students make the healthy choice.5

Valuable guides standing by
ScOPE research shows that state agencies are working hard to help you create and implement your policies through:21,12,13
- Cross agency collaboration
- Technical assistance to districts and schools
ABOUT ScOPE:

ScOPE (School Obesity-related Policy Evaluation) is a University of Minnesota study led by Principal Investigator Susie Nanney, PhD, MPH, RD.

Goal: Evaluate the associations between school-level food and physical activity policy and practice environments and student diet, activity behaviors, and weight status.14

Funding: Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), Grant No. R01-HD070738.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


9 Larson N, Davey CS, Caspi CE, Kubik MY, Nanney MS. School-based obesity prevention policies and practices and weight-control behaviors among adolescent boys and girls. Under Review.


12 Grannon KY, O’Connell M, Pelletier JE, Larson N, Nanney MS. State agency support for implementation of weight-related school policies and practices: types of support and linkages to obesity prevalence. Under review.


ScOPE RESEARCH on the impact of policy found that students in high schools (compared to students in middle schools) and schools in rural communities (compared to urban) have fewer opportunities to make healthy choices.

RURAL SCHOOLS REPORT less investment in policy.
- Over 40% use the exact wellness policy template.
- Only about half have a school health plan.
- The most rural (furthest out) schools are less likely to review health and safety data.

ScOPE RESEARCH SHOWS that when schools offer healthy food options and require physical activity, students make healthier choices.

ScOPE RESEARCH SHOWS that customized health and wellness policies are more effective and improve student outcomes.

RURAL SCHOOLS HAVE
- More students who are overweight or obese.
- Lower percent of students who are physically active.

Other research shows RURAL SCHOOLS HAVE
- Higher percent of students who are obese.
- Fewer students who eat the daily recommended proportion of fruits and vegetables.

HIGH SCHOOLS HAVE
- More students who are overweight or obese.
- Lower percent of students who are physically active.

ScOPE RESEARCH SHOWS that healthy marketing encourages students to make better choices.

RURAL SCHOOLS ARE
- Less likely to ban junk food advertising.
- Less likely to use healthy food & beverage marketing strategies.

HIGH SCHOOLS ARE
- Less likely to ban junk food advertising on school grounds, in school publications or curricula.

ALL MINNESOTANS PLAY a role in addressing disparities.
- Policy makers: create awareness of high school and rural disparities, provide resources to these schools and encourage local solutions.
- State agencies: provide technical assistance on school-identified needs.
- Schools/school districts: invest in strong policies.
- Parents and other community members: engage in school wellness policy work.

CLICK TO RETURN TO MAIN PATH
CLICK FOR RESOURCES
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Funding: Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), Grant No. R01-HD070738.

¹ Hearst M, Wang Q, Grannon KY, Nanney MS. School physical activity policy is associated with student physical activity outcomes. Under review.
⁶ Minnesota WellSAT data analysis table available at: z.umn.edu/scope
¹⁶ School Health Profiles 2008 and 2014 middle school vs high school analysis table. Available at: z.umn.edu/scope
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RESOURCES
Alliance for a Healthier Generation: School Wellness Committee Toolkit
United Stated Department of Agriculture (USDA): Sample policies from various organizations
National Food Service Management Institute: Resource to Sustain and Strengthen Local Wellness Initiatives
Minnesota Food Charter: Schools Leader Guide
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Parents for Healthy Schools Website
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Parents for Healthy Schools Toolkit
Minnesota Department of Education: Moving Matters – An Implementation Toolkit
Minnesota Food Charter: Schools Mini Guide
Minnesota Food Charter: Health Equity Guide
Minnesota Food Charter: Request Health Equity Toolkit
United Stated Department of Agriculture (USDA): Smart Snack Resources
Penn State and PDE: Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice in Schools!
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Making it Happen: School Nutrition Success Stories – Approach 4 Market Healthy Choices
Activity Promotion Laboratory, East Carolina University Energizers: Classroom Based Physical Activity (grades K-2)
Bridging the Gap: Marketing and Promotion of Foods and Beverages at School