TOM TORLAKSON





August 26, 2013

Dear County and District Superintendents:

LOCAL SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICIES

Healthy students not only excel academically but are more likely to be positively engaged in social, community, and extracurricular activities. The benefits of supporting student health and wellness are far-reaching. This is why, as State Superintendent of Public Instruction, I launched the Team California for Healthy Kids (TCHK) initiative to promote healthy eating and physical activity throughout the day, every day, and in schools, before and after school programs, early childhood programs, and communities.

Due to your leadership in your educational communities, I want to remind you to update and implement your Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP) because it is a very effective infrastructure for sustaining student health and wellness. I also want to inform you about the inclusion of new monitoring requirements for LSWPs during the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Administrative Review process for local education agencies operating a federal school nutrition program (SNP).

Local School Wellness Policy Requirements

As you may be aware, school boards across the nation adopted districtwide LSWPs to fulfill the requirements of the Child Nutrition and Women, Infants, and Children Reauthorization Act of 2004. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, Public Law 111-296, reauthorized the child nutrition programs and established federally required enhancements to LSWPs, adding section 9A to the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 *U.S. Code* 1758b), LSWP Implementation. The new provisions enhanced the 2004 LSWP requirements by (1) strengthening requirements for ongoing implementation, assessment, and public reporting of wellness policies and (2) expanding the team of collaborators participating in LSWP development to include more school and community members.

In August 2011, the California Department of Education (CDE) communicated the 2010 LSWP requirements in Management Bulletin USDA-SNP-16-2011. This management bulletin is on the CDE LSWP Web page at www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sn/mbusdasnp162011.asp. The CDE also sent a letter in September 2012 communicating the need to update LSWPs to meet the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 requirements. The LSWP letter is on the CDE Correspondence Web page at http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/el/le/yr12ltr0907.asp.

Administrative Review Process

The CDE will monitor the implementation of the LSWP requirements through the new USDA Administrative Review process beginning this school year. This more robust system of

accountability will better ensure that participating School Food Authorities (SFA) comply with the federal requirements of all SNPs including the National School Lunch Program.

For School Year 2013–14, the recommended action steps are to:

- Continue reviewing, assessing, and updating your district's LSWP.
- Continue to inform and update the public about the content, implementation, and assessment of wellness policies.
- Keep supporting documentation on file demonstrating compliance with LSWP implementation, assessment, and public update requirements.

For more information, please visit the USDA Food and Nutrition Service LSWP Web page at http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/healthy/wellnesspolicy_process.html. The USDA anticipates releasing proposed regulations regarding LSWPs in early 2014.

Resources

The CDE has posted resources that will be continually updated on the CDE LSWP Web page at www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/wellness.asp. I also want to let you know about the California LSWP Collaborative, which is comprised of more than 10 state and local partners who provide training, resources, and technical assistance regarding LSWPs. The Collaborative has compiled online LSWP resources, including a video clip in which I share my commitment to LSWPs. Information about the Collaborative and its resources is on the TCHK School Wellness Policy Web page at http://www.teamcaliforniaforhealthykids.org/school-wellness.

Thank you for your leadership and strong support of LSWPs. If you have any questions regarding this subject, please contact Heather Reed, Nutrition Education Consultant, by phone at 916-323-3581 or by e-mail at hreed@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Tom Torlakson

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cc: School Food Service Directors

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