

## FACT SHEET

# HEALTH AND ACADEMICS

### What Is the Link Between Academic Achievement, Parent and Family Involvement, and the Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP)?

When parents are actively involved in their child's education and school, their children are more likely to:

- ❖ Earn better grades and achieve higher test scores.
- ❖ Participate in advanced academics.
- ❖ Attend school regularly.
- ❖ Develop better social skills.
- ❖ Graduate and go on to college.

Healthy, well-nourished, physically active students:

- ❖ Are more prepared to learn.
- ❖ Have increased concentration and improved test scores.
- ❖ Are more likely to attend school regularly.
- ❖ Show better attendance and a more positive attitude toward school.
- ❖ Are better able to take advantage of educational opportunities, such as attending college.

### What are the Challenges?

- ❖ Parents not being informed about LSWPs and the role they can play.
- ❖ Parents not being included in LSWP implementation, monitoring, and evaluation on an on-going basis.
- ❖ LSWPs may not be implemented, monitored, or evaluated.



*Strong LSWPs create healthy school environments and healthy students.*

*Healthy students are more successful students. Parent involvement, healthy eating, physical education, and regular opportunities for physical activity all contribute to healthier students.*

### What is the Ideal Situation?

- ❖ Parents know about the LSWP and are involved in the implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and improvement of LSWPs.
- ❖ Parents are actively recruited and their participation is welcomed by schools and districts.

### What Can Parents Do?

- ❖ Be involved in your child's school. Get to know the principal, teachers, cafeteria staff, and other staff.
- ❖ Visit the school office or website to get a copy of the LSWP.
- ❖ Learn what your district's LSWP says about nutrition, nutrition education, foods and beverages sold at school, physical activity, and physical education.
- ❖ Ask at your school office who is responsible for the implementation of the policy or check the school/district website.
- ❖ Ask your school to post the LSWP at the school and on the school's website.
- ❖ Talk to other parents about the link between health, parent involvement, and children's success in school.
- ❖ Join or form a team of interested parents. You may find support from such groups as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), school health advisory council, school wellness council, school improvement team, or at your school parent center.
- ❖ Ask to join the committee or council responsible for implementing the LSWP.
- ❖ Request that a school representative speak to parents about the LSWP and the progress with its implementation.
- ❖ Work together with school leaders (principals, school nutrition staff, and physical education staff) to evaluate and improve the LSWP.

### Additional Resources

#### *Healthy Youth: Student Health and Academic Achievement, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*

This web-based resource provides information on the connection between health and student achievement. It also provides links to pages on the connection between physical activity, coordinated school health, and student success.

[www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/health\\_and\\_academics/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/health_and_academics/index.htm)

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#### *Health and Wellness, National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)*

Web-based resources that contains individual sections of the PTA Healthy Lifestyles: A Parent's Guide. Topics include physical activity, nutrition, grocery shopping, school wellness policies, and vaccinations.

[www.pta.org/pr\\_category\\_details\\_1117232379734.html](http://www.pta.org/pr_category_details_1117232379734.html)