



# Creating a School Food Policy

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## Practice Issue

Munhall Elementary did not have a snack or party policy in place. Classroom teachers were all using different rules for snacks, parties and for using food as a teaching tool.



## Review of Evidence

Research proves children do better in school when they have:

- at least 9-10 hours of sleep
- a balanced diet, including 2 nutritional snacks daily,
- exercise.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest recommends snacks in school be fruit and vegetables, since most children do not eat the recommended number of servings of fruit and vegetables.

References:

Healthy School Snacks, (n.d.), Center for Science in the Public Interest. Retrieved from: <https://cspinet.org/protecting-our-health/nutrition/healthy-school-snacks>

Promoting Fruits and Vegetables in School. (2009) Public Health Law Center. Retrieved from:

<https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/phlc-policy-school-food.pdf>

Childhood Nutrition Facts, (May, 2019) Center for Disease Control. Retrieved from:

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/nutrition/facts.htm>

## Purpose

- To institute a snack policy and a policy for school celebrations/ food as an instructional tool.



## Implementation

- Create a policy for snacks that reinforces the educational instruction the students receive about health and wellness, i.e., "We teach healthy eats, let's reinforce that by having only healthy snacks at school"
- Snack policy will be fruits and vegetables only
- Parties will be spent focused on the occasion for which the party was created for. Parties will not include food
- Food as an instructional tool will only be utilized if it directly correlates to the lesson and with permission.

## Outcomes

- Reviewed policies with Principal of Munhall Elementary, Certified school nurse and Department Chair of Health Services. .
- Presented policies to staff at the end of the school year before it was implemented.
- Jarrod Buxton, Principal presented the policy to the public via website, newsletters and through classroom communication before the start of school year



## Barriers/Benefits

The support of the school Principal, CSN and office staff helped make the policy launch successfully and stay successful during the school year.

Barriers were teachers who did not enforce policy in classroom and parents who disliked policy.

## Practice Implications

The next steps for this policy would be to revise it in order for the policy to be accepted district wide.

The implications for school nurses would be to help implement the policy in all elementary schools in the district and to evaluate the program for effectiveness once implemented.



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