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State of New Jersey

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To: School Business Administrators, Charter School Leads; Non Public School Administrators; Food Service Directors of Schools Participating in the Child Nutrition Programs

From: Arleen Ramos-Szatmary, M.S., Coordinator *Arleen Ramos-Szatmary*
School Nutrition Programs

Date: August 1, 2014

Subject: Local Wellness Policy Update Requirements

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 required all districts to establish local school wellness policies by School Year 2006-2007. In New Jersey, the Model Nutrition Policy used to be acceptable as a wellness policy, but no longer meets requirements. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 expands the scope of wellness policies; brings in additional stakeholders in its development, implementation and review; and requires public updates on the content and implementation of the wellness policies (Section 204). The intent is to strengthen local school wellness policies so they become useful tools in evaluating, establishing, and maintaining healthy school environments, and to provide transparency to the public on key areas that affect the nutrition environment in each school.

It is the LEA's responsibility to amend the local school wellness policy to meet current requirements so that the unique needs of each school under the jurisdiction of the LEA can be addressed. Local wellness policies will be reviewed during Administrative Reviews (AR).

Each local education agency must designate one or more local education agency officials or school officials to ensure that each school complies with the local wellness policy. At a minimum, a local school wellness policy must:

- Include goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness.

- Include nutrition guidelines to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity for all foods available in each school district.
- Permit parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public to participate in the development, implementation, and review and update of the local wellness policy.
- Inform and update the public (including parents, students, and others in the community) about the content and implementation of local wellness policies.
- Be measured periodically on the extent to which schools are in compliance with the local wellness policy, the extent to which the local education agency's local wellness policy compares to model local school wellness policies, and the progress made in attaining the goals of the local wellness policy, and make this assessment available to the public.

For ideas on updating and implementing your wellness policy, the USDA has assembled a clearinghouse for resources through one website. You will find everything from model wellness policies and school site examples to wellness funding opportunities and research on school wellness and academic performance. For more information visit <http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/local-wellness-policy-resources/school-nutrition-environment-and-wellness-resources-0>

A sample Wellness Policy Evaluation Checklist (Form 357) is available at the NJ Department of Agriculture page <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/applic/forms/#5> and will be updated in the near future.