



Office of the
State Superintendent of Education

What does the Healthy Schools Act do?

The Act positions the District to become a national leader on health and wellness in schools. It also works to improve the school environment by “greening” D.C. schools.

These are highlights of what the Act will do for District children:

- **Improve nutrition** by requiring healthier school meals – with more fruits, vegetables, and whole-grains for school meals and healthier options for foods sold outside the cafeteria (such as in school stores and vending machines).
- **Expand access to school meals**, so that no child goes hungry, by providing free breakfast for all students, incorporating breakfast into the school day, and making lunch free for students who used to pay a reduced price.
- **Provide more physical activity opportunities** to help students get moving throughout the school day and develop lifelong healthy habits.
- **Provide more health education** to help students learn about nutrition, safety, and overall personal health.
- **Encourage Farm to School programs** to help students learn about and experience fresh, locally-grown foods in their classrooms and in their school meals.
- **Create greener schools** by encouraging school gardens, recycling programs, and energy-reduction initiatives, and testing for safe water/building materials.

Why does the Healthy Schools Act matter?

Children in the District of Columbia are at risk of serious health problems stemming from hunger, poor nutrition, inadequate physical activity, and environmental degradation in our community. Meanwhile, poor nutrition and lack of physical activity are the second leading cause of preventable death in D.C.

- 40.6% of households with children reported that in 2009 they were unable to afford enough food in the last year.
- 43% of all D.C. school-age children are obese or overweight.
- 81% of children do not get the USDA-recommended 5 fruits and vegetables a day.
- Only about 30% of District children do the CDC-recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day.
- Estimated annual health care costs associated with obesity in D.C. are \$372 million and rising.

Information from: www.dchealthyschools.org. See <http://osse.dc.gov> for more information.