

Food Policy

RETHINKING SCHOOL LUNCH GUIDE

Rethinking School Lunch – a project of the **Center for Ecoliteracy**
2528 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley, California 94702 www.ecoliteracy.org



Food Policy

RETHINKING SCHOOL LUNCH GUIDE

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“To be successful in changing the food in schools . . . there needs to be a sense of experimentation, a kind of open-mindedness about what is possible. . . . The policy process can allow for the integration of school lunch with instructional gardens, kitchen classrooms, with classroom curriculum, and the waste management practices of the school district. It can provide the impetus for the district to begin forging relationships with farmers and sustainable agriculture in the region. . . . The process of engaging all these different points of view into an integrated whole — a whole that is both a policy and a program that’s enacted in a school district — that takes leadership, and it takes commitment, and it takes persistence, and it takes a kind of hope and a belief that change is possible.”

— Zenobia Barlow, executive director and a co-founder of the Center for Ecoliteracy

WHAT’S INSIDE?

RETHINKING FOOD POLICY: The goal, the challenge, and some key points to remember.

THOUGHTS ON IMPLEMENTING A FOOD POLICY: An interview with **Zenobia Barlow**, executive director and a co-founder of the Center for Ecoliteracy.

MODEL SCHOOL DISTRICT FOOD POLICY: The Berkeley (California) Unified School District’s Nutrition Education and Physical Activity Policy, a model of successful change.

FOOD POLICY RESOURCES: Ready to go further? This annotated list of helpful resources on the theory and practice of healthy food policies, including more model policies, is a good start.

RETHINKING FOOD POLICY

The Goal *To undertake a food policy development process, driven by the shared leadership of school administrators, educators, school food service directors, and parent groups, that leads to the adoption of a districtwide fresh food policy.*

The Challenge *Working together effectively and collaboratively over the long term.*

All of the stakeholders — school administrators, educators, food service personnel, and parents alike — are concerned with student health and academic performance and want to help schools make a more positive impact in this area. Often, however, they cannot find the common ground that allows them to solve problems collaboratively or work together effectively. Even when they do begin to work optimistically, expectations of change can lead to frustration when the process moves more slowly than anticipated.

Innovation that occurs at a single school is unlikely to become part of lasting, districtwide change unless the innovations are institutionalized in a district food policy. And innovations that are not supported by all stakeholders have little chance of success. Shared leadership creates the conditions for a real and lasting change in a district's food policy.

KEY POINTS

District Food Policies Can Create a Shared Vision for Child Nutrition Developing a school district food policy is a practical way to create a shared vision and language about needed change. This policy is a guide that spells out the challenges and proposes solutions that have been arrived at through a public process that engages multiple perspectives. When the board of education adopts a district food policy, the entire community knows the district is committed to improving the school environment for children and youth, particularly the school food system.

Implementing District Food Policies Can Bring Exciting Curriculum Opportunities School district food policies often designate the school dining room as a place where learning occurs, and the lunch period as a learning opportunity. Typically, these policies include strategies that make lunch part of the academic curriculum.

Classroom lessons resonate when students are able to connect their learning to the dining experience, and to hands-on activities in school gardens and kitchen classrooms. Visits to local farms add another dimension. Using this kind of multifaceted approach to student learning about nutrition and the food system can be powerful enough to change attitudes and behaviors toward food, health, and the environment.

More and more, educators are coming to recognize nutrition education as a necessary component of the school curriculum. Marilyn Briggs, former director of the Nutrition Services Division and former assistant superintendent of public instruction for the California Department of Education, makes the case: “If one of our primary goals as educators is to help students prepare for healthy and productive lives, then nutrition and health education are central to that goal. . . . You have to connect health, through nutrition education, to the whole curriculum — not merely as one of the components in the curriculum, but as something that’s embedded in all aspects of it. It means making school meals part of the education program.”

District Food Policies Can Build Communications

Bridges School district food policies can also specify the formation of a nutrition advisory committee (NAC). The name may vary — the Food Trust in Philadelphia designates a Nutrition Advisory Council; the Center for Ecoliteracy and the Berkeley Unified School District term it a Child Nutrition Advisory Committee (CNAC) — but the role is the same: to represent the student perspective. Students, chosen by their peers to participate in a CNAC, can report to their classmates on the process and what they are learning from it.

This service group keeps an eye on the project, making recommendations and receiving reports concerning progress in implementing the policy, and is also available to interpret specific policy goals. Nutrition advisory committees comprise a diverse body of interested parties who have a stake in improving student health. In addition to students, they typically include food service directors and staff, educators, principals, school nurses, maintenance staff, educators, and parents.

District Food Policies Can Empower Communities

School food policies join the district’s commitments and resources with those of the local community to improve the health of school-age children. In doing so, they often have far-reaching implications: They can empower the community and the district to become partners in envisioning a better school environment for students, beginning with food but often going beyond it. They are a framework for action within which local school boards can take steps to improve conditions that affect the health and learning ability of students.

District food policies provide another level of responsibility for the public dollars that underwrite school meal programs. They link education to local economies, and student health to local landscapes. This means buying food from local farmers.

Finally, school district food policies can help to raise awareness of the need for more sustainable food systems and the impact individual food choices have on our health, the environment, and our future. This awareness is far-reaching: It influences school culture and the values of the entire learning community.

Communities embrace district food policies when these policies unite district goals for student health with similar concerns for the health of the larger community and the environment. District food policies can be brought into alignment with, or serve as models for, community food policies that are mutually reinforcing.

District Food Policies Make a Commitment to Health

A number of scientific studies support the fact that we develop our attitudes toward food and diet in childhood. That's one reason why it makes sense for school district food policies to promote consistency between what children are taught about health in the classroom and the messages and choices available to them in the lunchroom.

A school district food policy spells out the district's commitment to improving the health of students, staff, and the school community. It provides a framework for action for all food- and health-related activities in the school district. And it is also a local mechanism that restores the authority for decisions affecting the health of children to their parents and the community.

District Food Policies Make a Commitment to Education District food policies can reinforce educational goals by linking them, through the academic curriculum, to students' real-life experiences with their school meal programs. The scale of change for affecting school meal programs is ultimately at the district level, not the classroom or even the single school. A leadership core of individuals concerned with children's health can use the policy process to state concerns in positive terms that make a difference in children's lives.

Lasting Change Calls for Internal Champions The change process can begin anywhere: at the top, with the superintendent of schools, or from outside the formal district structure, with parents, health-care professionals, researchers, and others. But in the end, creating lasting change means that those inside the formal structure of the school district — superintendents, business managers, food service directors, principals, and educators — will become internal champions for change.

Give thought to who will make up the core policy leadership group. Make sure it consists of people who will foster a participatory approach that leads to successful policy development and implementation.

Change Is a Long-Term Process Changing from commercialized, “thaw-and-serve” food service to a farm-to-school model is not something that happens overnight. It takes thought, planning, and ongoing commitment to the well-being of students, and it means working together over the long term to see that the goal is achieved. Implementing such a change can be a complex process, and adopting a food policy is just one phase of it. Having a shared goal of improving the health of our children, and ultimately the health of our planet, can inspire everyone who is involved to make a real commitment to working in partnership.

Beginning to Think About Implementing a District Food Policy At first, the process of implementing a school district food policy may seem daunting. Considering these and other questions in the beginning can provide a framework for changing a school's food service system.

- **What examples of district food policies** can be used as models?
- **How will improvements in the school meal program** become part of the formal learning experience of all students?
- **How will that learning migrate** home to family and community?
- **How can the school district** use the food policy development process to formalize its commitment to improving student health?

- **How will impacts on student health** be monitored?
- **How will student input be elicited** and incorporated into the change process?
- **After the policy is adopted,** what mechanisms can be put in place to ensure that it is implemented?

RETHINKING SCHOOL LUNCH

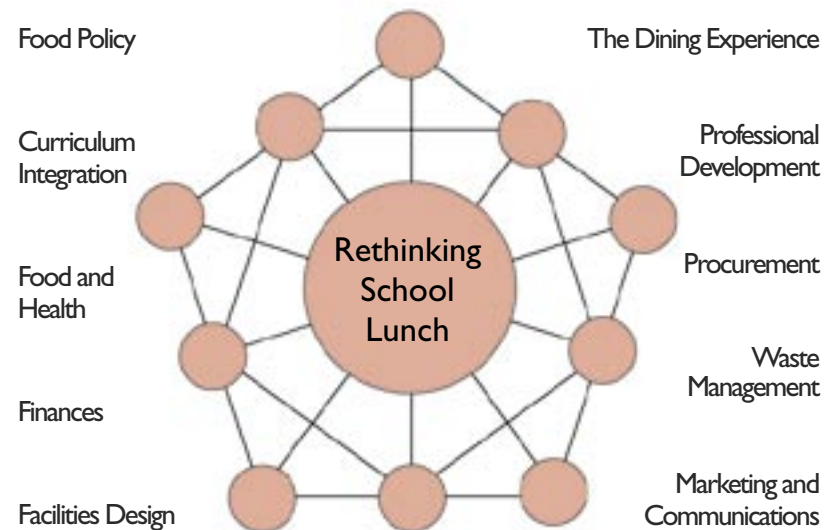
Web of Connections

This document is part of a comprehensive **Center for Ecoliteracy** project that provides helpful information on topics related to redesigning school lunch programs.

The diagram illustrates our systems approach to integrating school lunch programs with curriculum, improving student health and behavior, and creating sustainable communities.

School administrators, food service directors, teachers, and parents will each approach this project from their unique perspective. Readers can begin with the topic that interests them most, then explore the other related topics.

The entire Rethinking School Lunch project is available at: www.ecoliteracy.org/rethinking/rsll.html





Thoughts on Implementing a Food Policy

An interview with Zenobia Barlow, executive director and a co-founder of the Center for Ecoliteracy

by Janet Brown, program officer for food systems at the Center for Ecoliteracy

Center for Ecoliteracy: *If people outside the school system wanted to improve the food served to students at the school, what would be your advice to them?*

Zenobia Barlow: Well, it's interesting to think about a school system, because you can think about it in two ways. One is as a district-wide, formal, hierarchical structure. People reporting to each other. There's a board of education at the top. There's a

superintendent, and so on. So first, you need to understand that a school system is a formal structure.

But a school system is also an informal network of relationships, and those networks of relationships are nested at individual schools. The parent community, by and large, has a commitment to a particular neighborhood school and a particular student body. They know each other, and they know the teachers and the principal.

Part of the challenge of this effort to improve school meals is that the district food service is a *district-wide phenomenon*. It exists in the formal structure at the district-wide level. But many parents who are concerned about the food in their particular child's school probably don't know, or have never met, the food service director who is making the decisions at the district level. Depending on the scale of the district, those decisions are made downtown, or farther and farther away from the PTA at the local, individual school. So, there's this scale question and it presents a challenge to change.

I would say that to be successful in changing the food in schools, I would start top down, bottom up, and horizontally across all the networks of relationships in the school community. I think you're going to need to do all three. You could probably start anywhere. You could start as a single parent in a single classroom at a single school. If a person were so motivated and moved, he or she could begin to work with members of the community, the network of people at the local school, and also begin to work with the structure—with the principal, for example.

Ideally, the superintendent and the board of education would feel inclined to make this change, but maybe it's not going to start there. And in our experience, where superintendents were committed to doing this, what they've done is to encourage a very wide circle of participation and conversations in a rather lengthy process that begins to gain momentum. I think the answer is that it's a network of conversations that rides on the enthusiasm, commitment and caring of individual people. You can't overestimate the power and

persistence of individual people who genuinely care about this, who have a heart commitment to the care and feeding of children.

And at the same time, there needs to be an awareness that this is, or can be, a long-term progression. Advocates at one school will need the engagement and participation of advocates at other individual schools in the district, and the whole group of people needs to work together across the district to focus on the leverage points within the system. That cross-district networking could evolve into a process that leads to the adoption of a district food policy.

One of the things we discovered is the clarifying effect of the policy process. The policy process can begin with an individual school, but eventually, it needs to include groups of parents and informal networks of people who really care about this issue from schools across the entire city or the entire school district. At the same time, those groups also need to engage the formal structure of the district: the principals and superintendents, and the district food service director. That way, the system is engaged both vertically and horizontally, through informal networks of conversations and through formal structures.

Our experience is that it's not a linear process. There needs to be a sense of experimentation, a kind of open-mindedness about what's possible. Many of us who start out with a fixed notion about how long it will take, find that it takes longer than that, or it's more complicated, or that obstacles that seem insurmountable lead to innovation and emergence. And so there's a sort of unpredictable nonlinear quality to this work. It takes persistence, and holding a positive outcome in spite of discouragement, obstacles or seemingly insurmountable odds. It takes remaining open-minded, building coalitions across areas of interest, across the school district, and waiting to see what's possible.

We've seen schools experiment, for example, with "Pack it in...pack it out," removing garbage cans from the lunch area and requiring

students to take home any food scraps leftover from the lunches they brought to school. We've seen salad bar experiments. We just keep seeing people come at this with different procurement models, with ways of getting breakfast served inside the classroom without changing the bus routes and the bus times, experiments with physical exercise preceding or following the lunch period. I mean, despite the fact that the system may seem to be resisting, there remains a sense of experimentation, problem solving, and excitement about possibilities. If it persists, it can lead to unexpected and amazingly wonderful discoveries.

CEL: *Let's talk about leadership and change.*

ZB: Sometimes we think of leadership in a sort of top down way, as hierarchical. It's the person at the top. And certainly when it comes to changing food in schools, you really do need the leadership of an innovative food service director. You need an innovative and experimental superintendent who's willing to see the curriculum implications. You need principals who observe that children's attention spans increase significantly when they are well fed from breakfast on. So, every place along the way, there's an opportunity for leadership. And that includes parent communities, and that one individual who has a commitment in their heart to this. There's no person too small or too unimportant to provide leadership. There are so many examples of how a single person in a school system, in a school community, can be the person or the team of people who can carry the leadership at any given stage.

We think it becomes possible to transform school systems to the degree that the leadership is as widely distributed as possible, up and down the formal structure, and horizontally across the network of relationships. At times, when the formal leaders become fatigued or overwhelmed, the commitment and persistence of people who are not perceived to be the most powerful in the community matters the most.

We've advocated, as one model, this idea of a Child Nutrition Advisory Council (CNAC). A CNAC might be the formalization over time of a network of conversations within the district that has coalesced through the policy process. The conversation can begin with the PTA or the food service director. Or the superintendent can initiate it, and as it builds participation, it can culminate in a formal policy and a formal body of people, the Child Nutrition Advisory Council, who make recommendations about the implementation of the policy. It requires the participation of the widest possible complement of the community.

CEL: *When you say “policy process,” it’s understandable that people would focus on the instrument at the end—the policy—but isn’t it the process itself that generates momentum for change?*

ZB: Well, the first phase of engagement of a community process might feel a lot like going backwards. It creates a circumstance that brings out people with single issue commitments: the recycling people, the garden people, the waste management people, the people who advocate for one or another kind of diet, or the people who think it’s all about physical exercise. So, there’s an opportunity at the beginning to coalesce people with very strong feelings and diverse viewpoints, many of whom are frustrated and angry and rightly so, that might not previously have thought they had much in common with the others. This first phase might be thought of as creating a safe space for people to air things that concern them or frustrate them. And as those issues that people are against are given voice, the possibility begins to be presented for people to be *for* something.

When that happens, the policy they create together is going to be multifaceted and, hopefully, increasingly integrated. It can, if the process is effectively facilitated, transform the concern and frustration into more than a policy. It can become the reinvention, the *rethinking* of school lunch, and the rethinking of where school lunch fits in an integrated school system and community.

The policy process can allow for the integration of school lunch with instructional gardens, kitchen classrooms, with core curriculum, and the waste management practices of the school district. It can provide the impetus for the district to begin forging relationships with farmers and sustainable agriculture in the region.

At first, each of those areas of interest is merely a fragment of the whole pattern. They tend to be fragments, special interest groups, and people who are not necessarily in conversation with one another. So, the process of engaging all these different points of view into an integrated whole—a whole that is both a policy *and* a program that’s enacted in a school district—that takes leadership, and it takes commitment, and it takes persistence, and it takes a kind of hope and a belief that change is possible. And that’s all dependent on the goodwill of individuals who are earnestly committed to improving the lives of school-age children.

We hear many voices of people who care about this and are willing to commit their time and energy to it. There is a policy process, a change process really, that has been observed over time in many communities. It gives expression to the frustration, and that expression can lead to an improvement in the lives of children and the practices of a whole school system. In Berkeley, we benefited through the participation of some people who had a background in the political process. That might be something that people who are getting started would look for: Who do they know in their community who has a political background, who understands how to work through community process? It requires someone who knows how to engage people in public hearings that lead to the drafting of a policy that can be presented for adoption to the board of education.

The policy process encourages all the different voices to express themselves toward some kind of positive end. And I think there’s always a fear about opening up a public process. It entails listening and patience. It usually requires an airing of resentment, blame

and frustration, so that those concerns can be heard and can become incorporated in envisioning something that can truly be implemented.

That original school district food policy has certainly traveled. In fact, we recently saw that it is acknowledged on the Grab 5 website from Great Britain. They acknowledge the Berkeley school board, and the food policy they adopted in 1999, as the inspiration for their work.

CEL: *Where would you suggest someone start looking for examples of food policies that other districts have adopted, or additional materials that can assist the policy process?*

ZB: Well, on our Rethinking School Lunch website, there's an example of a food policy that was adopted by a community. One of the commitments in that policy is that it would be shared with other school communities. There are organizations such as Commercial Alert who have on their website examples of how to work with and change school district policies. There are many resources. There are models. There are examples of how other communities, over long processes, have formalized their concerns into a policy. You don't need to start with a blank page. But it still will require a process and some time to accomplish.

Even in a place such as Lagunitas Unified School District, with a strong commitment, beginning with a policy that already existed as a template, they still needed to engage in a dialogue over a period of at least two years to make that policy their own. So, I don't think you can, I don't think it's even desirable to try to, skip over the discourse in order to try to implement.

There's always this urge to move immediately and directly into implementation. I think it's because that might appear to be the fast track. In reality though, it usually turns out to be the track where you have to back up and go through the process of hearing what people really care about. There's no shortcut to engaging enough members of the total community. It's the engagement that

generates the kind of commitment across the system and across the community that it's going to take to really implement this kind of change.

School systems are so susceptible to the issues, concerns, demands and requests of every kind of interest group that I think it's reasonable to expect that they resist being changed immediately by anyone, from the superintendent down. Systems cohere. It's their very resilience that protects them from transforming overnight, every time someone has a big idea. I think it is reasonable to expect that the system, no matter how much it wants to change and how much it should change, is going to have a tendency to resist dramatic and immediate change.

CEL: *How does change occur, and how can a school district improve conditions out of which innovation emerges?*

ZB: Strangely enough, emergence of innovation, in our experience, comes frequently out of failure, comes from the fork in the road where *neither* path seems feasible. It's in the impossible situation frequently, that the most amazing surprises and innovations occur. One should expect resistance from the system. One should be prepared to encounter obstacles. The good news is that frequently it's just at that point, just when it seems to be at its height of resistance, where you disturb the system, and that disturbance leads to fortuitous changes that were unanticipated.

So, this change process is unlikely to be linear, sequential, able to be managed, and absolutely planned for. I mean, you do need to have plans, and you really do need to have a sense of a calendar. But the change itself might happen in its own time and in its own way. Leaders need to remind themselves, while working within a sort of managed process that, actually, an *unmanageable* process or unpredictable event is the place out of which the most exciting innovations are likely to emerge.

CEL: *Who should be there from the beginning and how does the process begin?*

ZB: I think you start where the readiness is, where people really have cares and concerns. And I suppose the caveat is that you don't want to get too far along a path and have left out really important constituencies.

CEL: *What are some of the important constituencies?*

ZB: Well, let's say a superintendent decides to make this change. That begins to engage groups of people in a pattern of activity that leads to fundamental change, such as the parent group. Consider that when you describe the parent group, it's not likely to be a homogenous group. You've got many different constituencies in the parent group, and food is a very emotionally charged issue. Meeting and working together brings up culturally diverse feelings and opinions about food, and what's appropriate, and what it looks like, how it's delivered.

Even if you could get the parent group, in all of its diversity, to agree about all of this, there is still one group that is chronically left out of the conversation and that happens to be food service staff. Our experience is that the food service staff are frequently invisible to those who are managing the process. They're not given as many opportunities to participate in the dialogue. Frequently, they are part time employees of the district. Their schedules are not attuned to the regular schedule of the larger learning community. The care and concern that many food service employees do have about children, about the food they are serving, is a potential and valuable resource to a change process, but it's a challenging group to engage. It is the responsibility of the leaders, or change agents, to create a comprehensive inventory of who needs to be included, and then systematically visit those people, collect comments, keep information flowing, and make every effort to invite those people into the process.

Part of what we know about change is that there are better and worse places to start. Rather than beginning with the group who

is inalterably opposed to the change, probably the more effective path might be that second tier of people, those who are ambivalent, or for whom this isn't a burning issue. You might not start with the early adapters since those people are already on board for it. You might not go directly to setting up dialogues between the people who are fervently for something and fervently opposed. The most effective path is likely to be in that second tier of people who might be invited along the path. It's probably the most strategic leverage place.

Again, I think you can start anywhere, and through a sensitive, committed process of engaging many different people in this conversation, it builds momentum that has a kind of resilience over time. Someone needs to dedicate him or herself to touching bases with all the different people. The custodial staff is very important in this change and has a role to play. All those parents who care. Homeroom teachers who notice which children come to school hungry. Principals who see the improvement in the children who have eaten breakfast, the improvement in their attention span between 10 o'clock and noon. PE teachers, farmers, school nurses—so many people who can be important to the process.

Much of our most exciting work has been with educators, teachers and principals committed to linking core curriculum to school gardens, kitchen classrooms, school lunch, and regional sustainable agriculture. "Where does our food come from?" is such an evocative question that has the potential for integrating curriculum across subject matter and grade level, and connecting to some of the most important problems of our time.

CEL: *In following the policy process in different communities, what have you learned about expectations and time frames? How much does the adoption of a policy have to do with when and how the meals served to students will improve?*

ZB: Schools have many policies. The complexity of implementing a policy might signal the second phase of a very long process. The

second phase might require the partners in the effort to think through how to change a complicated system that's already been intact for a long time. Remember that systems are resilient, and they have boundaries, and part of how they express those boundaries is by repelling external influences. A food policy is another phase in a change process.

There are so many variables that come into play in school food service. Each of those systems interacts in what we call school food service; transportation, labor, personnel, facilities, procurement, all of those gears need to be shifted at the same time. So, the process of implementing a school food policy could be a matter of years. Changing systems is a long haul. Sometimes it seems to happen overnight, and sometimes it takes a long time.

CEL: *In light of the difficulties and the unpredictable time frames, why would you say that you still find this work worthwhile? What do you sense is possible that inspires you to continue?*

ZB: Well, these are the lives of our children. This is our future. It's the health and the real well-being of our learning communities and the future of our larger communities. What I find very hopeful is that the infrastructure is already there. Children are already being fed something in schools. The school lunch program is supported by taxpayer dollars. There's already a significant revenue stream attached to this effort. We're currently investing billions of dollars in that system. So, this is also an opportunity to make sure that our tax dollars are invested wisely, and that our investment in these children leads to the most life affirming future for them, for our communities, and for the planet. The absence of making a wise investment has dire consequences that are becoming clearer each day. Here we are with an opportunity to invest wisely, and in a way that has these synergistic effects. It's better for everyone. I think it's noble work. I think it's essential work. And it's inherently life affirming.

Zenobia Barlow is executive director and a co-founder of the Center for Ecoliteracy, a public foundation in Berkeley, California. She is a member of the steering committee of the California-based Funders for Sustainable Food Systems (FSFS) and of the national Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Funders (SAFSF). Barlow is the former executive director of The Elmwood Institute, an ecological think tank and international network of scholars and activists. She previously worked with the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Office of Child Development of the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.



Model School District Food Policy

The Berkeley (California) Unified School District's Nutrition Education and Physical Activity Policy

Responsibilities

The Board of Education recognizes the important connection between a healthy diet, physical activity, and a student's ability to learn effectively and achieve high standards in school. The Board also recognizes the school's role, as part of the larger community, to promote family health, physical activity, nutrition education, sustainable agriculture and environmental restoration.

The Board of Education recognizes that the sharing of food and participation in physical activity are fundamental experiences for all people; are primary ways to nurture and celebrate our cultural diversity; and are excellent bridges for building friendships, and inter-generational bonds.

Mission

The educational mission is to improve the health of the entire community by teaching students and families ways to establish and maintain life-long healthy eating and physical activity habits. The mission shall be accomplished through nutrition education, physical education, garden experiences, the food served in schools, and core academic content in the classroom.

Goals

1. Ensure that no student in Berkeley is hungry.
2. Ensure that an economically sustainable meal program that provides healthy and nutritious breakfast, lunch, and after school snack is available to every student at every school so that students are prepared to learn to their fullest potential.
3. Ensure that eating experiences, gardens, and nutrition education are integrated into the curriculum for math, science, social studies and language arts at all grade levels to the maximum extent possible.
4. Ensure that the nutritional value of the food served significantly improves upon USDA Dietary Guidelines by providing nutritious, fresh, tasty, locally grown food that reflects Berkeley's cultural diversity.
5. Ensure that the food served shall be organic to the maximum extent possible, as defined by the USDA National Organic Program.
6. Eliminate potential harmful food additives and processes, such as bovine growth hormones, irradiation, hydrogenated oils, and genetically modified foods.
7. Serve attractively presented meals in a pleasant environment with sufficient time for eating, while fostering good manners and respect for fellow students.
8. Maximize the reduction of waste by recycling, reusing, composting and purchasing recycled products. Each school site shall have a recycling program.
9. Ensure appropriate infrastructure, facilities, equipment, supplies and staff support to achieve the district Nutrition and Physical Activity goals.
10. Encourage maximum participation in the school meal program by developing a coordinated, comprehensive outreach and promotion plan for the school meal programs.
11. In Elementary and Middle Schools (K-8)*, no food sales of any type, other than by Nutrition Services, may take place until the end of the last regularly scheduled food service period of the day. However, up to two days during the year may be designated on which any number of organizations may conduct sales of food items with the prior authorization of the Food

Service Director. At his/her sole discretion, and subject to any conditions he/she may require, the Food Service Director may authorize up to two additional food sale days.

12. Snack foods provided to students during any daily snack period or in school offices should conform with food policies 4-6 above.
13. Elementary School class parties at which food or snacks is/are provided to students, should be held after that class' lunch period. Middle School class parties at which food or snacks is/are provided to students, should be held after that class' lunch period, unless the class does not meet after lunch.
14. In recognition that physical education is a crucial and integral part of a child's education, BUSD will provide opportunities to ensure that students engage in healthful levels of vigorous physical activity and develop physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being as directed by the State Education Code and the Physical Education Framework.
15. Ensure that movement skills, self-image, personal development, and social development are integrated into the curricula through team sports, individual sports, dance, and cooperative physical activities.
16. Improve the quality of physical education curricula and increase training of physical education teachers through district-wide staff development.
17. This policy shall be distributed and publicized to the entire school community including classrooms, PTA meetings, teacher and principal meetings, etc.

*A competitive food policy for the high school will be developed after the new Food Court has opened and after consultation with the BHS Principal, Staff and Students.

Food Policy Resources

For Parents

Information and resources for parents, school staff, and community members to improve the food served in their schools

Childhood Obesity and the Marketing of Junk Food in Schools

Statistics on obesity and the marketing of junk food in schools helps Commercial Alert, a national nonprofit organization protecting children from commercialism, arm community members with statistics that help make the case for healthier food in schools. (PDF: 2 pages)

www.commercialalert.org/obesity.pdf

Healthy School Food Policies: A Checklist

This working paper collects many of the innovative policies that have been adopted or proposed to improve school food, providing a checklist of around 50 such policies.

www.healthyschoolscampaign.org/farm-paper-1.htm

How to Start a School Garden

From organizing a garden committee to getting students outside planting, the Environmental Education Council of Marin (EECOM) spells out a step-by-step process to creating a garden on school grounds. (PDF: 2 pages)

www.eecom.net/projects_school_garden.pdf

Local Food Connections: From Farms to Schools

Developed by researchers at Iowa State University, this resource discusses the fiscal and nutritional benefits to both local farms and

schools when they are connected to each other through a farm-to-school program. (PDF: 4 pages)

www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PMI853A.pdf

Organizing Cafeteria Recycling Programs in Elementary Schools: A How-to Guide

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works provides the steps to implement a cafeteria recycling program in a school. They also discuss other ways to save the environment during lunchtime and offer a case study from an elementary school in Los Angeles. (PDF: 9 pages)

<http://ladpw.org/epd/envdef/Teacher-PrincipalPacket.pdf>

School Lunches, Smart Yet Satisfying! Healthy Eating at School: Ten Steps for Parents

The U. S. Department of Agriculture offers ten important steps for parents to show their child's school that healthy, nutritious meals matter.

www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Parents/lunch.html

Ten Steps to Expel Commercialism from Schools in Your Neighborhood and State

Commercial Alert notes ways, such as coalition building and engaging local news media, to work toward removing Coke and fast food from your local schools. (PDF: 1 page)

www.commercialalert.org/schoolcommercialism.pdf

Center for Ecoliteracy Newsletter

Inspiring stories and information that illustrate the efforts of educators and students whose work the Center supports

Community Food Security

Spring 2002: Sara Marcellino interviews Robert Gottlieb

www.ecoliteracy.org/pages/newsletter3_gottlieb.html

The Fertile Crescent Network

Summer 2003: Farm-to-school advocates in the San Francisco area

www.ecoliteracy.org/pages/newsletter5_fertilecrescent.html

The Marriage of Farm-Fresh Food and Schools

Spring 2002: The Center for Ecoliteracy's Food Systems Project

www.ecoliteracy.org/pages/newsletter3_brown.html

Changing the School Nutrition Environment Planning Tools and Resources

For more information about ways to implement the change process in schools

ASCD Advocacy Toolkit

This kit offers educators the basics for developing an advocacy plan on behalf of their students. It also includes tips for communicating with policymakers and the media.

www.ascd.org/advocacykit/

Changing the Scene: Improving the School Nutrition Environment

The U.S. Department of Agriculture designed a guide for the school community (school administrators, school food service employees, parents, teachers and other concerned community members) that first examines a school's "nutrition environment," and then guides the user through developing a plan and putting it into action.

www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Healthy/changing.html

Guidelines for School Health Programs to Promote Lifelong Healthy Eating

Developed by the Centers for Disease Control in collaboration with other experts, “these guidelines identify strategies most likely to be effective in promoting lifelong healthy eating among young people.” (PDF: 47 pages)

<ftp://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Publications/mmwr/rr/rr4509.pdf>

Healthy Food Policy Resource Guide

This step-by-step guide provides school governance leaders with ways to enhance the school environment so students can develop and practice healthy eating habits. It describes the link between nutrition, physical activity and learning; provides sample policies and resources, and more. The site includes PDFs of selected sections of the guide, which can be ordered online.

www.csba.org/PS/hf.htm

Healthy School Food Policies: A Checklist

The Center for Food and Justice, Urban and Environmental Policy Institute’s working paper brings together some of the innovative policies that have been created to improve school food. This document is a source of good ideas for organizations working to create or strengthen school food policies.

<http://departments.oxy.edu/uepi/schoolfoodschecklist.htm>

Healthy Schools

The National Association of State Boards of Education website offers links to its “Healthy Schools” projects. Resources include the Healthy Schools Network, publications, articles, state-level school health policies, sample policies and more.

www.nasbe.org

Iowa Food Policy Council

This website includes news, publications, current legal issues, Q&A, new developments, and links to other resources.

www.iowafoodpolicy.org/index.htm

Leading in a Culture of Change

Michael Fullan

Fullan’s “practical guide is designed to help leaders in all sectors (corporate, education, public, and nonprofit) manage and drive productive change within their organizations.”

www.josseybass.com/WileyCDA/wiley/Title/productCd-0787953954.html

Leading in a Culture of Change: Personal Action Guide and Workbook

Michael Fullan

This workbook is a companion to Fullan’s best-selling book. It’s filled with case examples, exercises and resources that help change agents “the five core competencies—attending to a broader moral purpose, keeping on top of the change process, cultivating relationships, sharing knowledge, and setting a vision and context for creating coherence in organizations.

www.josseybass.com/WileyCDA/wiley/Title/productCd-0787969699.html

National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity

For more about national policies and programs to promote healthy eating and physical activity, visit the website of The National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA).

www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/nana.html

School Foods Tool Kit: A Guide to Improving School Food and Beverages
The Center for Science in the Public Interest designed this tool kit to help parents, teachers, and others interested in improving the nutritional quality of food and beverages served to children in school. (Three PDFs: Part I: 35 pages, Part II: 28 pages, Part III: 23 pages)

www.cspinet.org/schoolfood/school_foods_kit_part1.pdf

www.cspinet.org/schoolfood/school_foods_kit_part2.pdf

www.cspinet.org/schoolfood/school_foods_kit_part3.pdf

Model School Food Policies

Here are a few more examples of model school food policies

Building Strong Communities through Healthy Food

This site includes the Comprehensive School Nutrition Policy for the School District of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

www.thefoodtrust.org/policy.html

Sample School Food Policy: Lagunitas Elementary School

This Marin County (California) elementary school's food policy is modeled after the Berkeley Food Policy. (PDF: 2 pages)

www.eecom.net/projects_school_examplepolicy.pdf

Reports, Research, and Information

See these references for research articles related to school health programs and food policies

Minnesota School Food Policies and Practices

French, Simone A., Mary Story and Jayne A. Fulkerson. "School Food Policies and Practices: A State-Wide Survey of Secondary School Practices." *JADA* 102(12) (2002): 1785-1789. This is a study of the Minnesota secondary school food environment and practices, including "the presence of à la carte, snack bars and vending machines, school food and nutrition policies and principals' attitudes about the school food environment." (PDF: 5 pages)

www.eatright.org/images/journal/1202/r5.pdf

School Health Policies and Programs Study

U. S. Dept. of Health and Human Services/CDC/Division of Adolescent and School Health. School Health Policies and Programs Study. *Journal of School Health* 71 (7) (2001). This national survey periodically is conducted to assess school health policies and programs at the state, district, school, and classroom levels. It includes fact sheets, state report cards, state-level summaries and more.

www.cdc.gov/shpps

Soft Drinks in Schools

This American Academy of Pediatrics' policy statement warns pediatricians and other health care professionals, parents, superintendents, and school board members about nutritional concerns regarding soft drink consumption in schools.

www.aap.org/policy/s010119.html

The New Agriculture

Hamilton, Neil D. "Putting A Face on Our Food: How State and Local Food Policies Can Promote the New Agriculture." *Drake Journal of Agricultural Law* Vol. 7 (2002). This report discusses: what is state and local food policy; the use of state food policy councils, the purpose

of such councils and how they are created; and it raises the idea of “developing a model state law reflecting a comprehensive legislative proposal to improve state and local food policy.” (PDF: 37 pages)

www.statefoodpolicy.org/faceon.pdf

Systems Perspective

Leadership and the New Science Revised: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World

Margaret J. Wheatley

“The new science offers a radically different understanding of change as a natural and continuous process. This science challenges us to think about new processes for engaging with life’s creative force for change.”

Berrett-Koehler Publications, Inc., 1999. \$24.95

The Hidden Connections: Integrating the Biological, Cognitive, and Social Dimensions of Life into a Science of Sustainability

Fritjof Capra

Dr. Capra offers a systems approach to leadership and change in the 21st Century.

Doubleday, 2002. \$24.95

International

For information about school food policies outside the U. S.

A Model School Food Policy: A Practical Guide (Grab 5)

This booklet is intended to outline the advantages to a school of adopting a food policy and to provide practical guidance on how to go about this.

www.sustainweb.org/g5fp/index.htm

Establishing A Whole School Food Policy

This section of the British Nutrition Foundation’s website guides users through the process of writing and implementing a school food policy.

Other pages of the BNF site offer downloadables, information for teachers and parents, and links to other helpful information.

www.nutrition.org.uk/schoolfoodpolicy.htm

Healthy Eating & Active Living in Northern British Columbia

Website includes sample school nutrition proposal, links to school and youth food and activity programs and policies.

www.healbc.ca/schools.htm

School Meals: Healthy Eating & Sustainable Food Chains

The Regeneration Institute’s report that positions the school meal as a “...litmus test for our collective commitment to sustainable development.” (PDF: 4 pages)

www.cf.ac.uk/cplan/ri/publications/sm-execsum.pdf

Cover photo: Tyler/Center for Ecoliteracy



Learning in the Real World

©2004 Published by Learning in the Real World®

Learning in the Real World® is a publishing imprint of the Center for Ecoliteracy, a public foundation located in Berkeley, California.

The Center for Ecoliteracy is dedicated to education for sustainable living by fostering a profound understanding of the natural world, grounded in direct experience.

Center for Ecoliteracy
2528 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley, California 94702
www.ecoliteracy.org
email: info@ecoliteracy.org