

# Protect Our Children's Health!

## PROMOTE HEALTHY SCHOOL NUTRITION

**THE PROBLEM:** Junk food and sugary drinks are contributing to an epidemic of obesity and diabetes among our children.

In Massachusetts, 26% of high school students are overweight or obese. Rates of obesity among children have more than doubled in the past two decades.

Overweight children are at higher risk of developing diabetes, asthma, heart disease, depression and low self-esteem. Poor nutrition also reduces children's ability to learn.

Children are over-eating food and drinks high in fat and sugar. One source of this problem is the sale of junk food in schools. The easy availability of candy bars, chips, and soda in school vending machines encourage unhealthy eating habits.



**A SOLUTION:** Healthy food choices for our children at school.

The time to prevent obesity is in childhood and schools are an excellent place to start. Children learn the habits of a lifetime in school – one of those habits should be healthy eating.

### **An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition, House Bill 4459** (formerly H2092)

- Directs the Department of Public Health (DPH) to establish healthy standards for snacks and beverages sold in vending machines, school stores, and cafeteria ala carte lines. These standards are to be in accordance with Institute of Medicine guidelines, which recommend that sodas be replaced with water, low- and non-fat milk, and juice; fat and sugar be reduced in snacks; and fresh fruits and vegetables be made available in cafeterias.
- Makes it easier for schools to purchase direct from MA farmers in order to support the MA agricultural economy and help schools access local healthy produce.
- Establishes a Commission on Childhood Obesity to develop a coordinated statewide plan.
- Requires DPH and the Department of Education (DOE) to set guidelines for the training of school nurses to help children with diabetes and eating disorders and to collect and evaluate data on these conditions.



Almost 80% of children who are overweight will become obese adults.

**ACTION:** Your help is needed to pass this bill!

- **ENDORSE** the bill by contacting MPHA.
- **CONTACT** your state legislators and urge them to support An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition. To determine who they are, visit [www.WhereDoIVoteMA.com](http://www.WhereDoIVoteMA.com), or contact MPHA. Then call your legislators at the State House: (617) 722-2000.
- **SHARE** copies of this fact sheet with your friends, family, and neighbors and urge them to contact their legislators.
- **ASK** your school board members, PTA, church, or hospital to endorse this bill.
- **WRITE** a letter to your local newspaper in support of this bill.

## Endorsers

American Cancer Society  
American Diabetes Association  
Amesbury Board of Health  
Arthritis Foundation, Massachusetts Chapter  
Berkshire Food Project  
Berkshire SHARE  
Boston Organization of Nutritionists & Dieticians (BOND) of Color  
Boston City Council  
Boston Healthcare for the Homeless  
Boston Public Health Commission  
Boston Public Schools Department of Food & Nutrition Services  
Boston Teachers Union  
Boston Urban Asthma Coalition  
Bowdoin Street Health Center  
Cambridge City Council  
Cambridge School Committee  
Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood  
Ctr. for Community Engagement, Williams College  
Center for Informed Food Choices  
Center for Science in the Public Interest  
Chelsea Board of Health  
Child Care Resource Center, Cambridge  
Children's Hospital Boston  
Citizens for Adequate Housing  
Codman Square Health Center  
Community Health Connections, Inc.  
Dedham Board of Health  
Diabetes Association, Inc.  
Dorchester House Multi-Service Center  
Duxbury Public Schools School Committee  
Eliot School of Fine & Applied Arts  
Erna Yaffe Foundation  
Fairhaven Board of Health  
Fall River Dept. of Health and Human Services  
FoodPlay Productions  
Food Bank of Western Massachusetts  
Friedman School of Nutrition Science & Policy at Tufts University  
Greater Boston Food Bank  
Harvard Vanguard Associates  
HealthFirst Family Care Center, Inc.  
Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts  
Healthy Malden, Inc.  
HilltownFamilies.org  
Holyoke City Council  
Holyoke Food & Fitness Policy Council  
Holyoke Health Center  
Holyoke Pediatric Associates  
Holyoke Planning Network  
Hub Comics  
Immigrant Service Providers Group/Health Kids Can Cook  
Lawrence Public Schools, Nutrition Services  
Live Well Springfield Initiative  
Lynn Community Health Center  
Manet Community Health Center  
Marblehead Board of Health  
Marion Board of Health  
MA Assoc. of Health Plans  
MA Assoc. for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance  
MA Assoc. of Community Health Workers  
MA Assoc. of Public Health Nurses  
MA Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics  
MA Coalition of Nurse Practitioners  
MA Coalition of School Based Health Centers  
MA Dental Hygienists Association  
MA Dental Society  
MA Dietetic Association

MA Health Council  
MA Medical Society  
MA Nurses Association  
MA Nutrition Board  
MA Organization of Nurse Executives  
MA Public Health Association  
MA Parent Teacher Association (PTA)  
MA School Nurse Organization  
MA School Physicians  
MA Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children  
MA Teachers Association  
Marblehead Board of Health  
Mattapoisset Board of Health  
Meal Makeover Moms  
Medford Public Schools  
Merrimack Valley Food Bank, Inc.  
MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation  
Middlesex Community College  
National Association of Social Workers  
Needham Eat Well Be Fit Committee  
New Bedford Health Department  
New England Coalition for Health Promotion/Disease Prevention  
New England Family Health Center  
Oak Square YMCA  
Occupational Health Connections  
Our Bodies, Ourselves  
Parents Against Junk Food  
Partners for a Healthier Community  
Performance Pediatrics  
Project Bread-The Walk for Hunger  
Randolph Board of Health  
School Nutrition Association of MA  
Shutesbury School Committee  
Sociedad Latina  
South End Community Health Center  
Springfield Partners for Community Action  
Swampscott Board of Health  
Health Resources in Action  
Tapestry Health  
Tufts Medical Center  
Tufts Univ. School of Med., Division of Family Medicine  
United Cerebral Palsy Association of Berkshire County  
Western MA Center for Health Communities  
Whitman Board of Health  
Whittier Street Health Center  
Women's Health Institute  
Worcester City Council  
YMCA of Greater Boston  
YMCA of Greater Springfield  
Thomas M. Menino, Mayor, City of Boston  
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John Tobin, Boston City Councilor

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Senator Thomas P. Kennedy

## YES! I SUPPORT AN ACT TO PROMOTE PROPER SCHOOL NUTRITION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- My organization endorses *An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition*.
- I endorse *An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition*.