



KIDS' SAFE & HEALTHFUL FOODS PROJECT

A Federal HIA: USDA Rulemaking Process on Snack Foods and Beverages

Megan Lott, MPH, RD
mlott@pewtrusts.org



The Kids Safe and Healthful Foods Project

Purpose:

To advance administrative and legislative actions that improve the safety and healthfulness of foods sold in schools.



Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act

- Passed by Congress in December 2010
- Investment of \$4.5 Billion additional dollars in school feeding programs
- First MAJOR improvements in more than 15 years
 - Updated nutrition guidelines for all foods sold in schools throughout the school day
 - Includes snack and a la carte foods and beverages – i.e. “Competitive Foods”
 - USDA will propose updated standards for the public to comment on

Why does it matter?

Bridging the Gap June 2010:

- Sixty-two percent of public **elementary** students can purchase “competitive” foods or beverages on campus.
- Less-healthy competitive products are commonly available:
 - 44 percent of public **elementary** school students can buy foods such as potato chips, candy, cookies or french fries;
 - 17 percent could buy sugar-sweetened beverages
 - 38 percent could buy high-fat milks through vending machines, à la carte lines or other competitive venues on campus.



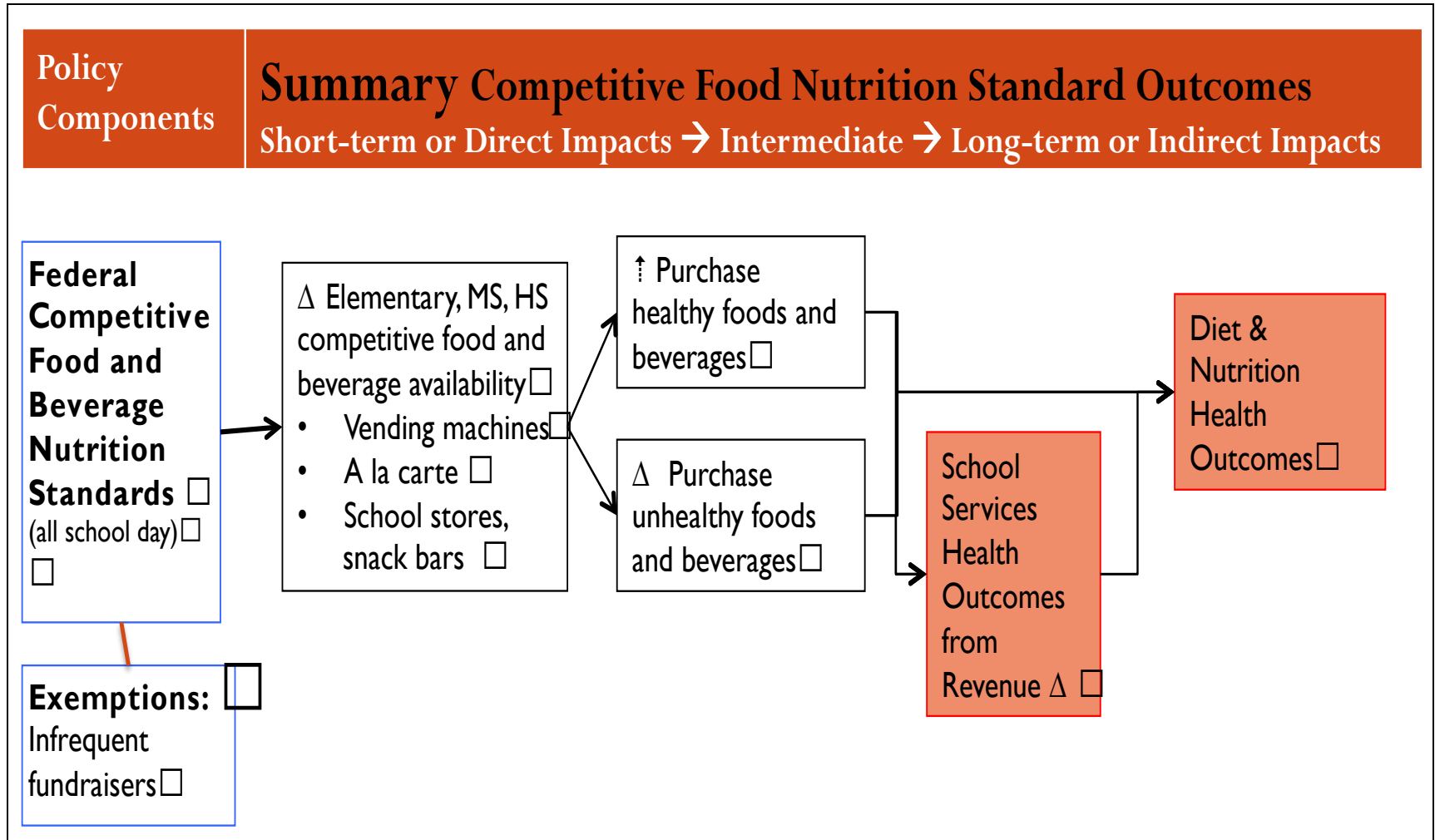
Why does it matter?

- The average child who buys snacks at school consumes nearly 300 calories per day from these foods – a significant amount considering that as little as 165 additional calories per day may be responsible for children’s excessive weight gain (Wang, Peds, 06)
- The presence of these snack foods and beverages on the school campus, undermines the federal investment in school meal programs.



Section 208 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act

- The nutrition standards shall apply to all foods sold
 - i. outside the school meal programs;
 - ii. on the school campus; and
 - iii. at any time during the school day.
- The secretary is required to establish standards that are consistent with the most recent DGA (2010)
- The Secretary is also required to consider the following in drafting the guidelines:
 - i. authoritative scientific recommendations for nutrition standards;
 - ii. existing school nutrition standards;
 - iii. the practical application of the nutrition standards; and
 - iv. special exemptions for “infrequent” school-sponsored fundraisers



Research Questions and Findings

- School Services
 - Will the new standards affect meal participation and school food service revenue?
 - Will the new standards affect school district or other types of revenue that pays for school services?
 - If revenue changes occur, will they affect student health?

Research Questions and Findings

- Diet and Nutrition
 - Will the new standards affect snack and drink availability, student purchases, and student consumption?
 - Will changes in student consumption of snacks or of school meals affect different chronic disease health outcomes?

Research Questions and Findings

- Vulnerable Populations
 - Will vulnerable populations be affected differently by USDA's national snack food and beverage policy?
- Attempted to also look at:
 - Academics
 - Stigmatization of students

Recommendations:

- Developed a set of 11 policy recommendations to USDA:
 - Nutrition Standards for Foods
 - Nutrition Standards for Beverages
 - Implementation Recommendations
- Developed a list of promising practices geared towards states and local school districts to assist with implementation

Challenges

- Translating HIA practice into a federal policy
- Project Management
- Research Gaps
- USDAs Timing

How Can You Get Involved with this HIA and Federal Policy?

1. Visit us at www.healthyschoolfoodsnow.org and sign up for alerts
2. Take note when USDA proposes the new rule and offer comments to USDA. (Input does matter!)
3. Spread the word, tell your friends and colleagues, and garner support for continued improvements to the school nutrition environment.

Questions???

