

## ADVOCACY FOR STUDENT WELLNESS

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Imminently school districts in California will be acting to create a '*Student Wellness Policy*' to meet federal requirements (*Public Law 108-265*). You, a California pediatrician are a community resource. This effort of school communities targeting nutritional and physical health is an opportunity to liaison with school boards and committees as they work to establish best policy and administrative regulations for comprehensive health program in community schools. Yes, this is an opportunity to assure children and youth are "*Fit, Healthy and Ready to Learn*".

"*Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn*" is a school health policy guide published March 2000 by the **National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)** [[www.nasbe.org](http://www.nasbe.org)]. in collaboration with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. Members of the AAP Council on School Health, Drs. Howard Taras, Community Pediatrics, UCSD and Philip Nader, Chief UCSD Division of Community Pediatrics, participated in the development of this important resource. Mary Vernon, MD,MPH of the Division of Adolescent and School Health, U.S. CDC, and a broad representation of officers of Boards of Education throughout the United States also reviewed and adopted this iteration of 'best policies'.

The Unified School District of Napa, California, like other CA school districts is now in the process of adopting a new and comprehensive statement of a '*Student Wellness Policy*'. The NASBE policy guide and the *Health Framework for California Schools* (adopted , California State Board of Education, 2002) serve as a resources for the draft of the policies and regulations promoting eight components of a coordinated school health system:

- Health Education
- Physical Education
- Nutrition Services
- Health Services
- Psychological and Counseling Services
- Safe and Healthy School Environment
- Health Promotion for Staff
- Parent and Community Involvement

California pediatricians understand that the children and youth of Californian schools are their constituency and our future. You have chosen and dedicated yourself to become the best professional school health resource for your community. Endorse the creation of a '*Student Wellness Policy*' and assist. Contact your school!

