



# Moving Policy Forward

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Education  
Health Promotion  
and Protection

*Evidence and Policy: Preventing Cancer and Chronic Disease*  
*March 31, 2009*



Launch of the *Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools* September 12, 2006

# *A Coordinated Investment in Children and Youth*

## **The Policy is part of...**

- ✓ Healthy Eating Nova Scotia  
(HENS) [www.gov.ns.ca/hpp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp)
- ✓ Learning for Life II: Brighter  
Futures Together  
[www.ednet.ns.ca](http://www.ednet.ns.ca)
- ✓ Provincial Health Promoting  
Schools



Great  
😊 Job!

# *Policy Development*



The policy was created by educators, parents, health professionals, and students committed to health and improving the food and beverage choices in schools.

In September 2004, the Department of Education, in partnership with the Department of Health Promotion and Protection, established a Policy Work Group to coordinate policy development efforts provincially.

# Purpose



“The Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools is intended to increase access to and enjoyment of health promoting, safe, and affordable food and beverages served and sold in Nova Scotia public schools.”

*The objective is to make the healthy food and beverage choice the easy choice in the school setting.*

# *The Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools*



- Impacts all students in the public school system
- Includes standards for food and beverages
- Provides a supportive environment for healthy choices
- Is comprehensive – extends to the curriculum and reaches out to the broader school community
- Complements the actions and messages of other settings to support healthy eating (e.g. home, community)
- Focuses on the role of the school setting in promoting healthy eating (*does not apply to items brought from home*)

# 12 Directives and 5 Guidelines



## Directives – Required

- **Food & Beverages (*Standards*)**
- **Pricing**
- Fundraising
- Food as a Reinforcer
- Special Functions
- ***Promotion & Advertising***
- Portion Size
- Food Safety
- Nutrition Education...etc.

## Guidelines – Encouraged

- Time to Eat
- Nova Scotia Produce & Products
- Food Packaging & Environmental Consciousness
- Role Models
- School Partnerships & Commitment

# Implementation Schedule



Policy has been phased-in over three years  
beginning the 2006-2007 school year with full  
implementation expected by June 2009

## *Implementation Supports ([www.gov.ns.ca/hpp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp))*

- Q & A's, presentations, targeted resources (e.g. fundraising, fruit and vegetable promotion and recipes)
- Funding, staff, coordination of efforts



# *Monitoring and Evaluation*



School Boards are responsible for monitoring implementation and participating in provincial evaluation of the policy (*No food police!*)

Monitoring of policy implementation - conducted in 2008

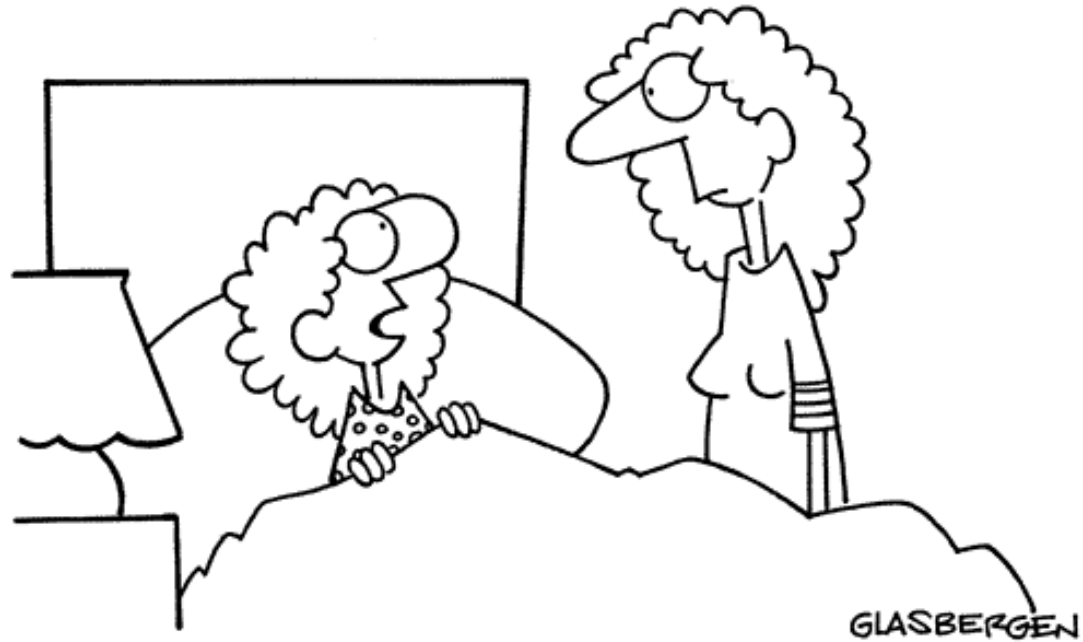


# ***Rationale & Evidence***



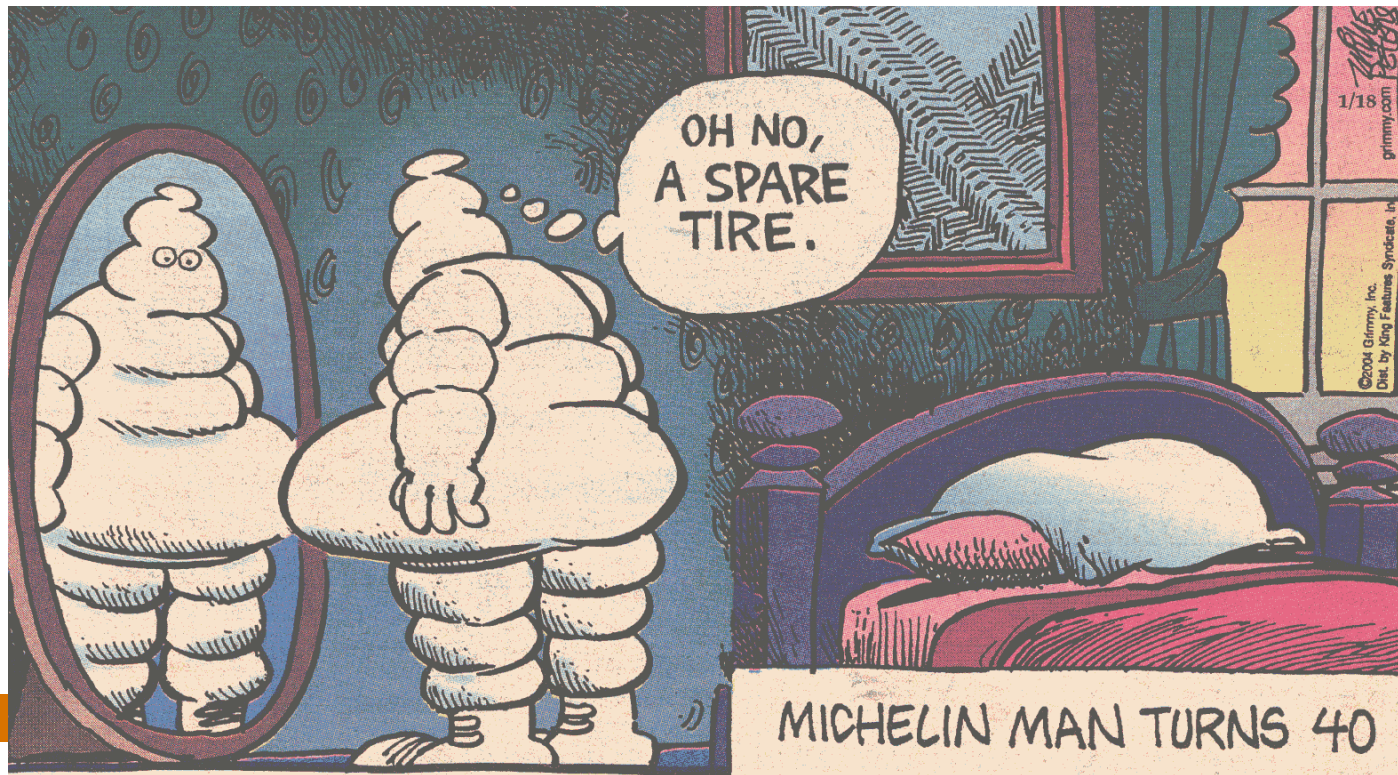
*“A secure, healthy environment supporting physical activity, healthy eating, and emotional well-being needs to be created alongside academics. Academic achievement cannot happen without these.”*

--Junior High School Principal, Nova Scotia



**“My teacher says we should eat 5 fruits and vegetables every day. Today I had 3 raisins and 2 peas.”**

**Schools influence food choices & eating habits  
(role models)**



**Healthy eating improves the quality of life and can help reduce the risk of developing chronic diseases**

*Nova Scotia children and youth are experiencing poor eating habits and declining health*

# *Rationale*



- Eating well and making informed choices takes more than willpower.
- School food and beverages should exist for the purpose of nourishment rather than revenue generation.
- Schools are publicly funded institutions

# Evidence-Based and Consultative Process

## Evidence

- Existing policies and healthy eating momentum in NS schools
- Review of local, national, and international school food policies
- Examination of the health evidence and data (e.g. CLASS 2003, CCHS 2004)

## Consultation

- Key Informant Survey (June 2004)
- Education Partner's Forum (February 2005)
- Principals' Conference (May 2005)
- **Public consultation (September-October 2005) ~1000 responses**
- **School board, student, and industry focus groups**
- Nova Scotia Teachers Union support
- Working Group discussion and expertise



# Successes & Lessons



Policy well accepted because of development process  
(engage and involve—build from the ground upward)

“Policy pressure” on other sectors, e.g. healthcare/hospitals,  
recreation (share processes and lessons)

Media stories (communicate through many channels)

Food industry responded with new products (communicate;  
support local companies with local products)



Timely funding, information, staffing, dedicated resources, and links to support people and resources proved essential

It was important to invest in building local capacity for school food and nutrition (e.g. students, parents, educators, board staff, nutritionists)



- Coordinated planning and budgeting between government departments
- Partnerships between sectors—vertical and horizontal
- Shared funding, supports, and accountability for implementation

# Preliminary Monitoring Results

- ✓ Good progress toward implementation
- ✓ Elementary schools closer to implementation, e.g. pricing and fundraising
- ✓ Greatest challenges identified: school partnerships, fundraising, and role modelling



# Challenges & Lessons

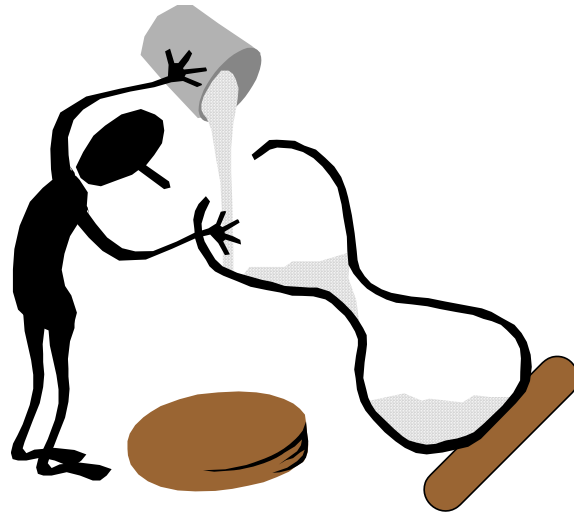


- Mixed support from foodservice companies & suppliers (keep communicating)
- Fundraising directives and school need (continue sharing options and successes)
- Advertising and sponsorship (be persistent, challenge)
- Pricing of food (new philosophy and approaches)

Loopholes...Confusion regarding policy interpretation...

Resistance to change...Fear of lost revenue...

*Change is inevitable—except from a vending machine!*



Policy available in English or French  
from the Department of Education  
[www.ednet.ns.ca](http://www.ednet.ns.ca) or the  
Department of Health Promotion  
and Protection  
[www.gov.ns.ca/hpp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp)

Thank you!

