

Wellness is a state of well-being defined by WHO as "the optimal state of health of individuals and groups."

Howard County School Health Council

Who are we?

The Howard County School Health Council (SHC) is an advisory board jointly sponsored by the Howard County Health Department (HCHD) and Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). Our mission is to serve as a bridge between these entities and work with other community partners to identify, evaluate and improve the status of health and wellness of the populations served by the public school system. The SHC also encourages health and wellness activities.

Come Learn More About What We Do and How You Can Participate

The SHC encourages members of the community to attend our meetings, learn more about school health and wellness initiatives, and share your thoughts and experiences. Our general meetings are held on the second Thursday of every odd month.

The SHC Current Advisory Review

HCPSS Policy 9090: *Wellness through Nutrition and Physical Activity*

Due to the issuance of new federal requirements, this policy is slated for review in the Fall of 2012. This Spring, the SHC undertook a systematic assessment of the policy, which revealed that it tends to be more comprehensive than it is strong, in that it does not require the public school system and individual schools to undertake certain tasks but rather encourages them to do so. At the same time, many school-based, voluntary initiatives have sprouted since 2006, when Policy 9090 was first adopted, which meet the new requirements and are considered "best practices." Based on these findings and other insights, the SHC will be making recommendations to the HCPSS, HCHD, and other local entities.

Assessment of HCPSS 9090: Sample Findings

Content of Wellness Policy	Comprehensiveness Score (Max.=100%, with 100% being most comprehensive language)	Strength Score (Max.=100%, with 100% being strongest language)
Nutrition Education	56%	11%
School Meals	62%	31%
Other School Food and Beverages Number	66%	10%
Physical Education	24%	6%
Physical Activity	70%	40%
Communication and Promotion	25%	25%
Evaluation	33%	0%
Total: All above combined	48%	18%

Source: Analysis by George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services Department of Health Policy Child Health Policy Center, March - May 2012.

Example of Program Supported by the SHC HS Culinary Arts Recipe Contest

This annual competition challenges HS students to develop innovative, appealing and healthy recipes for our school lunches.

For further information, visit us online at http://www.hcpss.org/parents/advisory_committee.shtml