Research Highlights from the ACT II Study

School Assessments

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School Assessments: Sources of Data

- **School Written Questionnaires**
  - Physical Education, Interscholastic Athletics, Food Service, Health Education, Transportation

- **Onsite Observations**
  - Cafeteria, Vending machines, School stores and snack bars

- **Wellness Interviews**
School Assessments:
School Participation & Demographics

32 schools participated

- **School Location**
  - 59% - Vermont
  - 41% - New Hampshire

- **Town Median Household Income**
  - 44% of towns <= $42,000

- **School Type**
  - 62% High School (grade 9-12)
  - 19% Middle/High school combined
  - 19% Elementary/Middle school combined
School Assessments:
School Participation & Demographics

- **School Size**

![School Size - Enrollment Groups](chart)

- <=350: 15%
- 351-600: 22%
- 601-950: 19%
- >950: 43%

% of schools vs. # of students
School Assessments:
School Participation & Demographics

- **School Location: Urban-Rural Status**

![Pie chart showing school location distribution]

- City: 43%
- Suburb: 13%
- Town: 31%
- Rural: 13%
ACT II Research Highlights:
Physical Education, Intramurals
and
Interscholastic Athletics
Physical Activity Guidelines

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2008

Children and adolescents aged 6-17:

- At least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity daily

Institute of Medicine, 2004

- At least 30 minutes of physical activity during the school day, daily
- Expanded opportunities: interscholastic athletics, intramurals & clubs
School Assessments: Physical Education

Physical Education Requirements
(High School Data Only)
- NH: 25% require more than 1 credit
- VT: 23% require more than 1.5 credits

Length of PE Class & Time Spent Moving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School Data</th>
<th>Middle School Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Range: 30-120 min.</td>
<td>Range: 40-50 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. length: 70 min.</td>
<td>Avg. length: 45 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving: 48 min.</td>
<td>Moving: 33 min.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Assessments: Physical Education

PE Courses & Electives (High school data only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of schools</th>
<th>Total # courses &amp; electives offered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46%</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27%</td>
<td>3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27%</td>
<td>5+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- About two-thirds offered PE electives beyond graduation requirements
- 25% of boys & 11% of girls take PE electives beyond graduation requirements
School Assessments: Intramurals

ACT II Data

- 83% middle schools
- 78% high schools
- Skiing, snowboarding, frisbee, dance, basketball
- ~20% of students participate

National Data*

- 49% middle schools
- 45% high schools
- Basketball, volleyball, running, weight training, baseball/softball
- ~18% of students participate

School Assessments: Interscholastic Athletics

Interscholastic Athletic Offerings & Participation:

• 100% of schools offered athletics to boys and girls
• Avg. 10 sports for boys (range 4-17) & 10 for girls (range 4-18)
• 1 in 5 schools charged a fee for athletics, but most waived the fee if student could not afford
• Overall, 49% of boys & 49% of girls participate in at least 1 sport
School Assessments: Interscholastic Athletics

Limits on Athletics

- 23% of schools indicated “every student makes a team”
- Most limiting factors: (lack of) indoor facilities, financial reasons, (lack of) field space
ACT II Research Highlights:

School Food Environment
School Assessments: Food Environment

Daily Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Offerings

Total number of choices per day

Veggies
Fruit

Schools
School Assessments: Food Environment

Times/Wk Fried & Pre-Fried Food Offered for Lunch

# of times per week fried food offered

- Entrée
- A la carte

Schools
## School Assessments: Food Environment

### A La Carte Lunch Offerings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruits and Veggies</th>
<th>Sweet/Salty Snacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>Chips/popcorn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veggies</td>
<td>Cookies/brownies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-made salads</td>
<td>Ice cream/Fro-Yo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salad bar</td>
<td>Donuts/muffins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Candy/chocolate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Prepared Foods

- Pizza bar 84%
- Grill station 78%
- Sandwich station 78%
- Soup bar 50%
School Assessments: Food Environment

School Stores & Snack Bars

• 12 schools had stores/snack bars outside cafeteria

• 83% of stores/snack bars sold the following items:
  Water
  Flavored waters
  Sugar-sweetened beverages
  Cookies
  Chips

• Fruit available in 17% of stores

• Coffee available to students in 42% of stores
## School Assessments: Food Environment

### Vending Machines

- 31 schools had VMs. Among these schools:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item available in VM</th>
<th>% of schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plain water</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flavored water</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar-sweetened beverages</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chips/popcorn, cookies, crackers</td>
<td>50-60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candy / chocolate</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diet soda</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular soda</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Assessments: Food Environment

**Beverage Vending Machines**

- 123 working beverage vending machines
- Range: 0-13 beverage VM / school

**Percent of filled beverage vending slots by type of beverage**

- Flavored waters: 36%
- Plain waters: 23%
- SSBs: 23%
- Juice: 9%
- Diet beverages: 4%
- Milk: 4%
- Other beverages: 1%
## Reasons for Food Purchases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Purchase Reason</th>
<th>% “Very Important”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting <em>minimum</em> food guidelines</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering students choice / variety of foods</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimize food waste</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting <em>healthier</em> food guidelines</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student preferences</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACT II Research Highlights:

School Wellness Interviews
Wellness Policy Interviews

Participants

- School or District Senior Administration: 29%
- School Nurse: 29%
- PE/Athletics Director: 14%
- Food Services Director: 28%
Wellness Policy Interviews

Key Issues

- Support needed at multiple levels.

“You need the administrative support, you need the faculty support, student support. And then, Superintendent & School Board. There’s lots of levels that need to be considered.”
Wellness Policy Interviews

Key Issues

• Support needed at multiple levels.

“You need the administrative support, you need the faculty support, student support. And then, Superintendent & School Board. There’s lots of levels that need to be considered.”

• Lack of funding.

• Improved evaluation plan.
Wellness Policy Interviews
Physical Activity Environment

Challenges
• Maintaining academic standards limit extra PE time
• Limited availability of facilities

Successes
• Offer activity clubs based on student interest
• PE programs more inclusive, emphasize lifetime fitness
Wellness Policy Interviews

Food Environment

Challenges

• Food service needs to be self-sustaining.

• Reliance on federal food commodities.

Successes

• Soda no longer available.

• Students still have choices, but choices are healthier.
Summary