



POLICY ON HEALTHY EATING AND ACTIVE LIVING *(Adopted December 12, 2008)*

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In October 2006, the Québec Government launched its *Plan d'action gouvernemental de promotion des saines habitudes de vie et de prévention des problèmes reliés au poids 2006-2012, Investir pour l'avenir*. In this action plan designed to promote healthy lifestyles and prevent weight-related problems, the government declared its commitment to improving the quality of life and well-being of Quebecers by enabling them to live in environments that promote the adoption and maintenance of healthy living habits.

In September 2007, the *ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport* (MELS) published the *Framework Policy on Healthy Eating and Active Living: Going the Healthy Route at School*, demonstrating its firm intention to make Québec schools a place where students can eat better and be more active.

2. AIM

To support schools and centres in providing an environment conducive to the adoption and maintenance of healthy eating and active living habits and the development of students' personal competencies in this regard.

3. OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 To ensure that food supplied in the school/centre environment promotes the adoption of healthy eating habits;
- 3.2 To increase physical activity opportunities for all **students**;
- 3.3 To create education, communication and promotion programs to facilitate the adoption of sustainable healthy living habits;
- 3.4 To mobilize the different school and community partners to undertake comprehensive, concerted actions that support the adoption of healthy eating and active living habits.

4. INTENDED AUDIENCE

- 4.1 This policy is intended mainly for school board administrators, principals of schools

- 7.4 Actions on diet and physical activity must comply with current educational frameworks, such as the Québec Education Program, the School Board's Strategic Plan, Complementary Educational Services programs and the schools'/centres' educational projects and success plans, in order to facilitate the implementation of the policy.
- 7.5 Continuity must be sought at every educational level, in order to provide an environment that is conducive to healthy eating and active living.

8. ORIENTATIONS

The school/centre environment is an essential factor to consider when planning measures to encourage healthy lifestyles. The orientations described below aim to improve this environment in order to modify both eating habits and patterns of physical activity.

In each school/centre, through the school/centre success plans, the orientations will be translated into concrete actions that can promote the adoption and long-term maintenance of healthy eating and active living.

8.1 Theme: School environment

Orientations related to healthy eating

	Orientations	Priority Elements
8.1.1	Offer a variety of foods and give priority to foods of good nutritional value.	1. Offer meals that include foods from each of the four food groups in the <i>Canada's Food Guide</i>: vegetables and fruit, grain products, milk and alternatives, and meat and alternatives. 2. Prepare a main course accompanied by at least one vegetable. 3. Provide a variety of fruits and vegetables. 4. Provide a variety of 100% pure (unsweetened) fruit juices and vegetable juices, in addition to milk and water. 5. Give priority to whole grain products. 6. Offer desserts made with fruit, milk products and whole grain products; avoid desserts that have a high fat or sugar content. 7. Reduce the fat content of meats. 8. Favour low-fat or non-fat cooking methods, such as steaming, baking, braising, poaching, grilling or roasting. 9. Avoid products containing saturated or hydrogenated fats (trans fats).

8.1.2	Eliminate foods of low nutritional value from all school and centre food supplies.	10. Eliminate sugar-sweetened and artificially sweetened (diet) soft drinks as well as sugar-sweetened beverages. 11. Eliminate products in which sugar or a sugar substitute is the first ingredient listed. 12. Eliminate french fries. 13. Eliminate frying and deep-frying and avoid commercial or pre-fried breaded foods. 14. Sell or offer some foods and beverages that meet dietary guidelines at fundraising events, special events, on school trips, outings, etc.
8.1.3	Provide appropriate areas and favourable conditions for meals.	15. Make sure that eating areas are clean and safe at all times. 16. Make lunchtime an enjoyable part of the school day by ensuring that eating areas are orderly, pleasant and inviting.

Orientations related to active living

	Orientations	Possible actions
8.1.4	Increase physical activity opportunities, principally during recess, lunchtime, daycare or extracurricular activities.	1. Offer a wide range of recreational activities. 2. Develop leadership in students' attitudes in the area of health and physical activity. 3. Train and support daycare workers and student supervisors. 4. Incorporate physical activity opportunities into the timetable.
8.1.5	Offer activities that meet students' varied interests and abilities	5. Involve students in selecting the activities to be offered. 6. Plan activities that are specially geared to girls. 7. Offer elementary school students more activities to develop their motor skills. 8. Offer activities that focus on games and the pleasure of being physically active. 9. Encourage coaches and leaders to involve all students in activities.

8.1.6	Plan the layouts of indoor and outdoor play areas and animate the activities carried out in them in order to optimize the opportunities to be physically active	10. Ensure that students have an adequate supply of safe and well-maintained equipment. 11. Plan the layout of the schoolyard to encourage students to be more physically active. 12. Animate activities in areas where students assemble during breaks.
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8.2 Theme: Education, Promotion and Communication

	Orientations	Possible actions
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8.2.1 and outdoor

		12. Hand out brochures published by government ministries or other organizations. 13. Distribute newsletters on a regular basis. 14. Distribute pamphlets produced in conjunction with partner organizations (CSSS, municipality, etc.). 15. Set up information booths in the schools during parent visits or social activities in the community.
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8.3 Theme: Mobilizing partners

	Orientations	Possible actions
8.3.1	Establish or consolidate partnerships with the community	1. Share or use infrastructure and human resources in the community (e.g. municipality, community centre, private club). 2. Establish with the help of the municipality, safe access routes to school (e.g. appropriate signage, safe access, traffic regulations). 3. Implement consolidated projects that call on various community groups. 4. Carry out comprehensive and concerned promotion and prevention projects, in conjunction with various partners 5. Encourage family and community volunteers to participate.

9. IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

- 9.1 The implementation timetable set by the *Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport* (MELS) stipulates that these orientations should be put into place starting September 2008.
- 9.2 Orientations related to active living, education, promotion and communication as well as partnerships with the community, may be implemented progressively from 2008 to 2010.
- 9.3 The Central Québec School Board schools have respected the orientation schedule pertaining to healthy eating established by the MELS for September 2008.