



**Other School Foods and Beverages**

This is the fourth in a series of eight handouts summarizing the statewide results for each category of the School Wellness Policy Report. All handouts are available at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322168>.

**Background**

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265) required that schools participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s child nutrition programs establish a school wellness policy by the 2006-07 school year. During the 2007-08 school year, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) conducted a review of district school wellness policies in partnership with the Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity at Yale University. In June 2008, each district received a *School Wellness Policy Report*, which included district, state and District Reference Group (DRG) scores for comprehensiveness and strength in seven policy categories: Nutrition Education; School Meals; Other School Food and Beverages; Physical Education; Physical Activity; Communication and Promotion; and Evaluation.

**Results**

Federal law specifies that school wellness policies must include nutrition guidelines for all foods available on school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity (see Data Summary 1). Most Connecticut school wellness policies (89 percent) met this requirement.

Based on state standards, Figure 1 (see next page) indicates the percent of public school districts receiving a rating of 2 (strong statement), 1 (weak statement) or 0 (not mentioned) for each policy item in the *Other School Food and Beverages* component. Weak statements are hard to enforce because they are vague and/or only recommended. Strong statements include a concept followed by specific plans or strategies for implementation and use wording that indicates action is required. Detailed information on policy scoring is contained in the *Coding Tool for Connecticut School Wellness Policies* at [http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Student/NutritionEd/SWP/SW\\_CodingTool.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Student/NutritionEd/SWP/SW_CodingTool.pdf).

Weak statements often use words such as *may, can, could, should, might, encourage, suggest, urge, some, partial, make an effort and try*. Strong statements use words such as *shall, will, must, have to, insist, require, all, total, comply and enforce*.

**Impact of Healthy Food Certification**

Under Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes, healthy food certification (HFC) requires that all public school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program must certify whether they will follow state nutrition standards. Districts that choose to implement HFC receive a financial incentive and must follow the Connecticut Nutrition Standards for all food sold to students separately from reimbursable school meals, including but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias and any fundraising activities on school premises. (Additional information on HFC is available at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=320754#Standards>.)

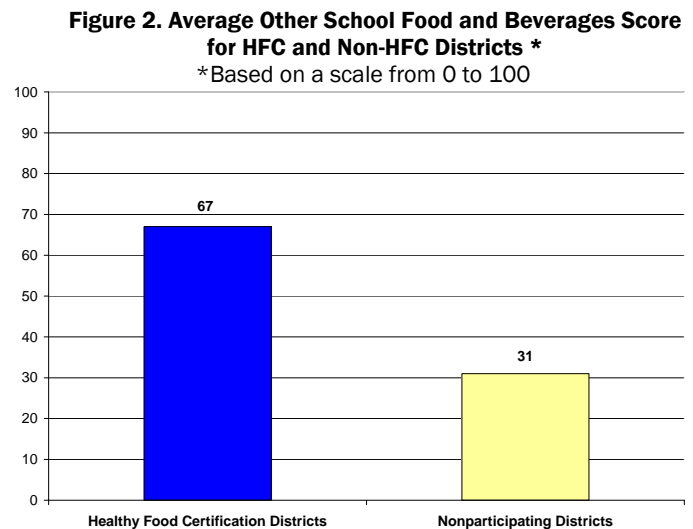


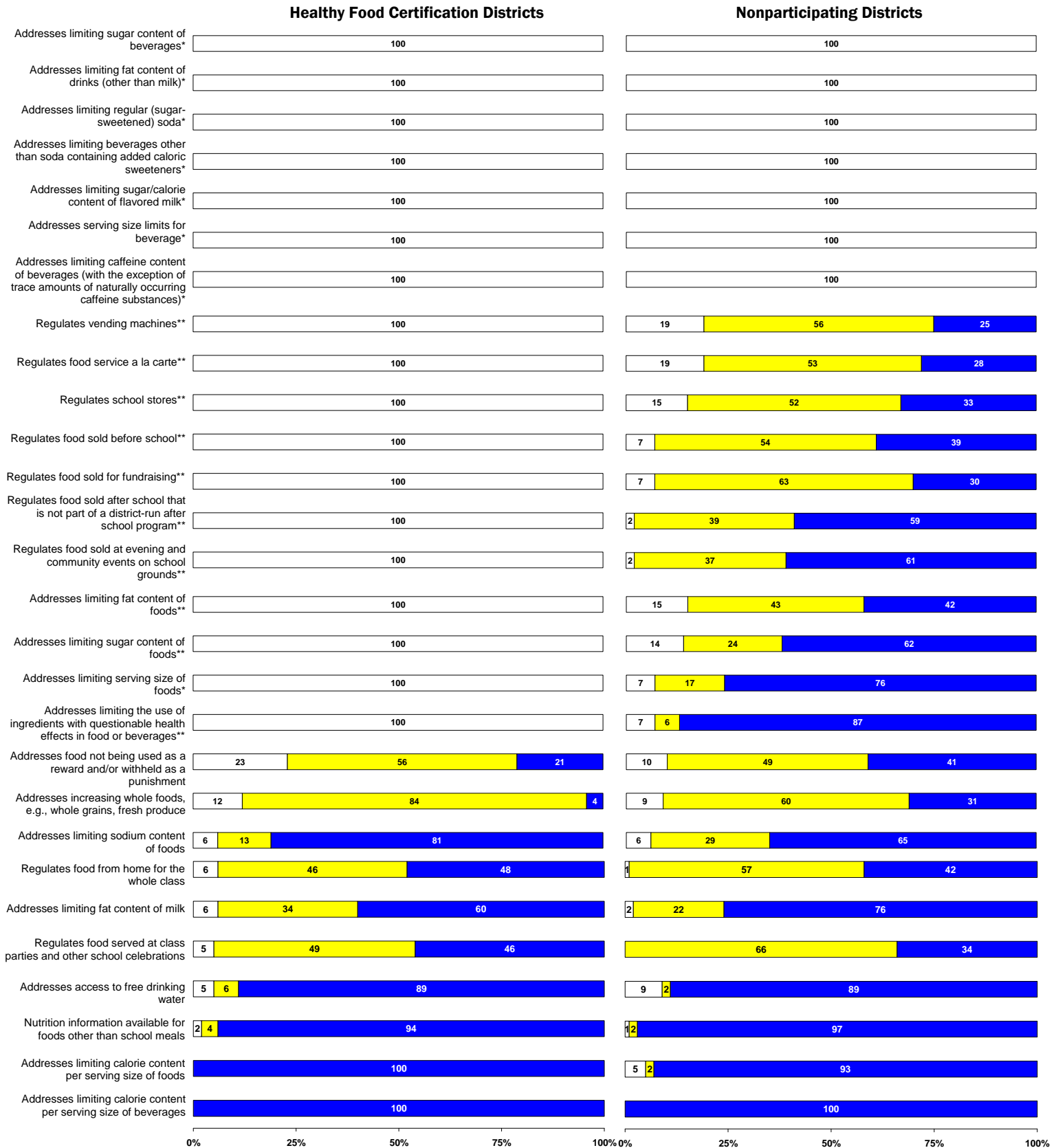
Figure 2 shows the average *Other School Food and Beverages* strength scores for HFC districts versus nonparticipating districts. These scores are based on the federal requirement and the policy items indicated in Figure 1. Districts participating in HFC made stronger policy statements and received higher average scores for the *Other School Food and Beverages* component than districts that did not participate in HFC. Policies of nonparticipating districts generally did not contain clear language addressing the nutrient content of foods, such as limiting sugar, fat, sodium, calories and ingredients with questionable health effects (e.g., artificial sweeteners, trans fats) or increasing whole foods (e.g., whole grains, fresh produce). Most nonparticipating districts did not set specific nutrition standards for a la carte foods, vending machines, school stores and fundraisers and very few clearly regulated food sales before or after school or at events on school premises.

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## Other School Foods and Beverages, continued

Figure 1. Percent of District Policies with Strong, Weak and No Statements for Other School Foods and Beverages

□ Strong Statement □ Weak Statement ■ No Statement



\*All districts received a default score of 2 because beverage requirements are mandated by Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes.

\*\*Districts participating in healthy food certification received default scores because these items are required by the Connecticut Nutrition Standards.

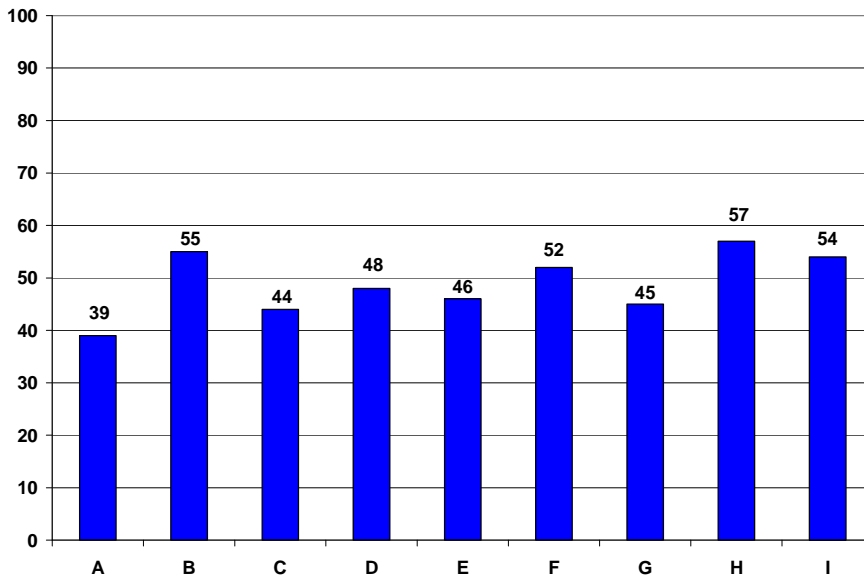
Other School Foods and Beverages, continued

**Results by District Reference Group**

District Reference Group (DRG) is a classification system in which districts that have public school students with similar socioeconomic status and need are grouped together. DRGs are based on the following seven variables: income, education, occupation, family structure, poverty, home language and district enrollment. They include nine groups, from group A (very affluent, low-need suburban districts) to group I (high-need, low socioeconomic urban districts). Charter schools, Connecticut Technical High Schools and Regional Educational Service Centers are not given DRGs. For additional information, see [http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/cedar/databulletins/db\\_drg\\_06\\_2006.pdf](http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/cedar/databulletins/db_drg_06_2006.pdf).

Figure 3 shows the average *Other School Food and Beverages* strength score for each DRG. There were no reliable differences among the DRGs in scores for this component.

**Figure 3. Average Other School Food and Beverages Scores by DRG\***  
\*Based on a scale from 0 to 100



**Connecticut District Reference Groups**

**DRG A:** Darien, Easton, New Canaan, Redding, Ridgefield, Weston, Westport, Wilton, Region 9

**DRG B:** Avon, Brookfield, Cheshire, Fairfield, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, Greenwich, Guilford, Madison, Monroe, New Fairfield, Newtown, Orange, Simsbury, South Windsor, Trumbull, West Hartford, Woodbridge, Region 5, Region 15

**DRG C:** Andover, Barkhamsted, Bethany, Bolton, Canton, Columbia, Cornwall, Ellington, Essex, Hebron, Mansfield, Marlborough, New Hartford, Oxford, Pomfret, Salem, Sherman, Somers, Suffield, Tolland, Region 4, Region 7, Region 8, Region 10, Region 12, Region 13, Region 14, Region 17, Region 18, Region 19

**DRG D:** Berlin, Bethel, Branford, Clinton, Colchester, Cromwell, East Granby, East Hampton, East Lyme, Ledyard, Milford, Newington, New Milford, North Haven, Old Saybrook, Rocky Hill, Shelton, Southington, Stonington, Wallingford, Waterford, Watertown, Wethersfield, Windsor

**DRG E:** Ashford, Bozrah, Brooklyn, Canaan, Chaplin, Chester, Colebrook, Coventry, Deep River, Eastford, East Haddam, Franklin, Hampton, Hartland, Kent, Lebanon, Lisbon, Litchfield, Norfolk, North Branford, North Stonington, Portland, Preston, Salisbury, Scotland, Sharon, Thomaston, Union, Westbrook, Willington, Woodstock, Region 1, Region 6, Region 16, Woodstock Academy,

**DRG F:** Canterbury, East Windsor, Enfield, Griswold, Montville, North Canaan, Plainville, Plymouth, Seymour, Sprague, Stafford, Sterling, Thompson, Voluntown, Windsor Locks, Wolcott, Region 11

**DRG G:** Bloomfield, Bristol, East Haven, Groton, Hamden, Killingly, Manchester, Middletown, Naugatuck, Plainfield, Putnam, Stratford, Torrington, Vernon, Winchester, Gilbert School, Norwich Free Academy

**DRG H:** Ansonia, Danbury, Derby, East Hartford, Meriden, Norwalk, Norwich, Stamford, West Haven

**DRG I:** Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Waterbury, Windham

District school wellness policy reports can be accessed online at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=320754#SW>. For additional information, please contact Susan Fiore, Nutrition Education Coordinator, CSDE, at [susan.fiore@ct.gov](mailto:susan.fiore@ct.gov) or (860) 807-2075 or Marlene Schwartz, Deputy Director, Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity, at (203) 432-0662 or [marlene.schwartz@yale.edu](mailto:marlene.schwartz@yale.edu).

The State of Connecticut Department of Education is an equal opportunity/affirmative action entity. For more information, please call the Affirmative Action Administrator, State of Connecticut Department of Education, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut 06106, (860) 713-6530.