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**Health Care Committee**

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**HB 1866**

**Brief Description:** Improving nutrition in public schools.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Cody, Campbell, Morrell, Schual-Berke, Haigh, Dickerson, Chase, Simpson, Santos and McIntire.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- The Department of Health and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction must develop recommendations regarding nutrition for local school boards to use in determining food policies.
- Local school boards must create "Nutritional Integrity Policies" to address issues regarding weight, healthy eating, and disease prevention in their school meal programs.
- The Superintendent of Public Instruction must adopt protocols for schools to use to measure the height and weight of students and provide the information to the Department of Health.

**Hearing Date:** 2/19/03

**Staff:** Chris Blake (786-7392).

**Background:**

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 15 percent of children between 6 and 19 years of age are overweight. This proportion has tripled since 1980. Obesity in children can increase the likelihood of developing asthma or diabetes during childhood. Obesity is estimated to be a contributing factor in the death of over 300,000 Americans per year.

The United States Department of Agriculture administers the National School Lunch Program (Program). The Program provides low-cost or free lunches to students in grades K-12. Participating school districts are given cash subsidies for the meals they serve as long as eligible children receive reduced price or free meals and the meals meet federal nutritional requirements. These requirements are based on the "Dietary Guidelines for Americans."

These standards require that no more than 30 percent of calories come from fat and 10 percent of calories from saturated fat. The meals must also provide the student with one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances for protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium, and calories.

The regulations for the Program place limitations on the sale of foods that compete with the Program's meals in food service areas during mealtimes. The Program prohibits the sale of "food of minimal nutritional value" in school cafeterias during mealtimes. These foods are primarily soda waters and various types of candies. States and school districts may permit the sale of other competitive foods in the cafeteria during lunch periods, as long as the income from these sales goes to the non-profit school food service, the school, or student organizations.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Department of Health (Department) with the assistance of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (Office) must develop recommendations regarding nutrition in public schools. The recommendations must address the nutritional content of meals, the content of course curricula, and policies regarding the availability of competitive foods.

Each local school board, with parental involvement, must develop a "Nutritional Integrity Policy" (Policy) based on the school district's nutrition curriculum and the recommendations of the Department and the United States Department of Agriculture. The Policy must address weight control, unsafe weight loss practices, healthy eating habits, and avoidance of diseases related to unhealthy diets. If the Policy permits competitive foods, then there must be at least as many foods meeting healthy standards as foods that do not meet healthy standards and the Policy must address the time, location, and pricing structures for these foods.

The Office is required to develop protocols for schools to use to measure the height and weight of students. The protocols must address parental consent, confidentiality of records, respectfulness training for screeners, and clothing requirements. The data must be sent to the Department which will compile it and create an annual report on obesity trends.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 14, 2003.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.