

# School Wellness Committees

## What is a School Wellness Committee?

A school wellness committee is essentially an advisory group concerned with the health and wellbeing of staff and students. The PSD Wellness Committee has been created to enhance the acceptance and success of the wellness program activities by encouraging faculty and student ownership of the program.

## District versus Building Level Councils

- District Level Wellness Council: Focus is on policy and the common mission of several district programs. Able to identify gaps and locate the district and community resources to address them. These groups typically have 10-20 members and include school staff, community members, family members and students
- School Level Wellness Committee: Focus is on the needs of students, families and staff in a specific building. Able to implement programs and activities to meet these needs.

## Why Focus on Health?

### Did you know...?

- More than 1 in 3 youth are obese or overweight
- 17 percent (12.5 million) of the nation's children and adolescents are obese, according to the most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Since 1980, obesity prevalence among this age group has almost tripled
- 79 percent of children ages 7 to 12 have a diet that needs improvement
- If trends continue, many experts believe that today's kids may be the first generation in American history to live shorter lives than their parents
- Collectively, over 20 percent of the United States population can be found in the school community
- Because of the size and accessibility of the school community, school health programs are one of the most efficient ways to encourage healthy habits

## Benefits of a Healthier School:

- Studies show that students with better nutrition have better attention spans, better class participation and higher test scores
- In some cases, improved nutrition seems to reduce behavioral problems
- Higher levels of physical activity seem to be related to higher self-esteem and lower levels of anxiety and stress—all of which are associated with better academic performance
- Poor nutrition and lack of physical activity are linked with health problems and increased school absences