

bridging the gap

Research Informing Policies & Practices
for Healthy Youth

A look back at the first three years of school district wellness policies in the U.S.

Progress and opportunities

Jamie F. Chriqui, Ph.D., M.H.S.
University of Illinois at Chicago
jchriqui@uic.edu

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Co-authors: Linda Schneider, Frank Chaloupka, Ph.D., Camille Gourdet, J.D., Amy Bruursema, Kristen Ide

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Presentation Overview

- ✓ Overview of federal wellness policy requirement
- ✓ Describe study methods
- ✓ Highlight key findings
- ✓ Report/data accessibility
- ✓ Next steps

Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-265, Section 204) –aka: Wellness Policy Requirement

Wellness policy required by 1st day '06-'07 school year

All school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program or Child Nutrition Programs

Required components:

1. Goals for nutrition education, physical activity, other school-based activities
2. Guidelines for all foods/sold served (i.e., competitive foods)
3. Assurance that reimbursable meal guidelines at least meet Federal regulations
4. Implementation plans
5. Involvement of key stakeholders in policy development

Brief Study Overview

Ongoing nationwide evaluation of school district wellness policies

- Nationally representative sample of 579, 641, and 593 school districts, respectively, for school years 06-07, 07-08, and 08-09; 09-10 data being compiled
- Data presented weighted to %age of students nationwide in districts with given policy provision
- 94% response (collection) rate for 06-07 and 07-08
- 97% response rate for 08-09

Primary policy collection and analysis, included wellness policy and all associated regulations/guidelines/procedures

- Also included cross-referenced policies/models/embedded state laws

Related studies examining school-level policies and practices

Brief Study Overview (cont.)

Policies coded by grade level using adaptation of Schwartz et al. (2009) scheme

Focus on required wellness policy elements:

Goals for nutrition education

School meal requirements

Competitive food guidelines

Goals for physical activity

Implementation plans

Also included provisions for physical education

Brief Study Overview (cont.)

Policies evaluated using an ordinal coding scheme:

0: No policy

1: Weak policy (should, encourage, may, try, attempt)

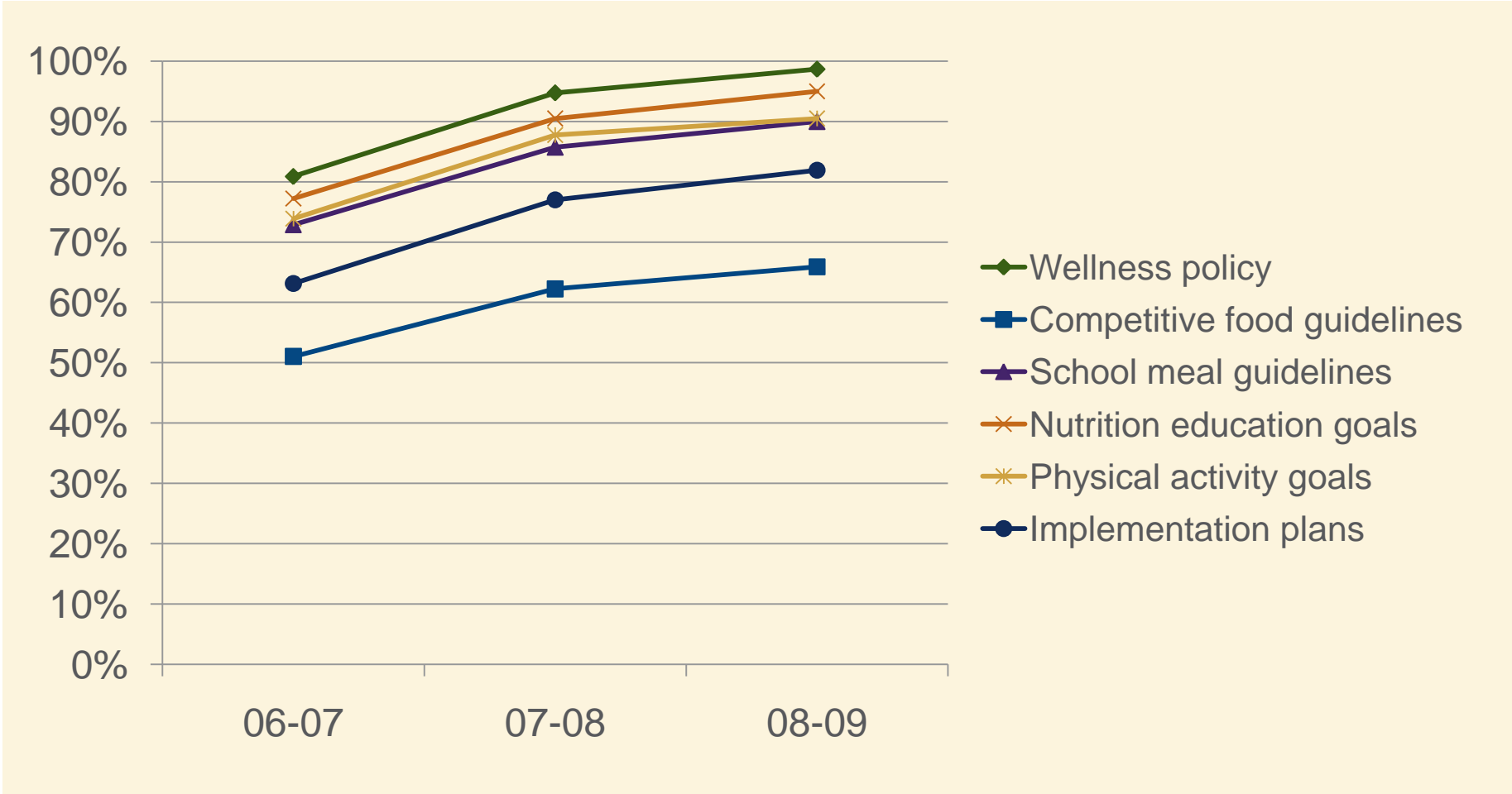
2: Strong policy (must, shall, require)

For competitive food and beverage content restrictions, policies coded using additional coding scheme that accounts for the 2007 IOM competitive food standards (Linda will discuss)

Highlights of Key Findings

Wellness Policy Requirements

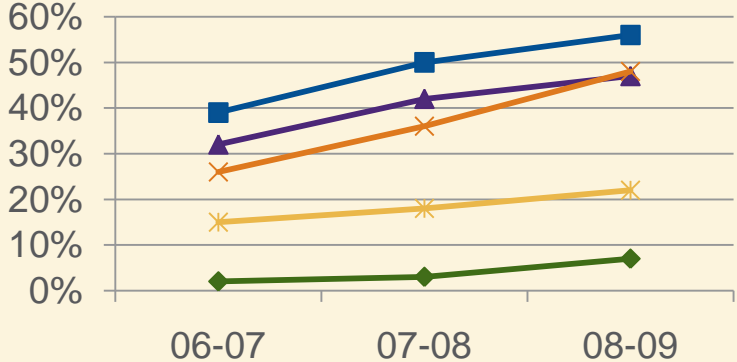
% of Students in Districts with Policy by Year



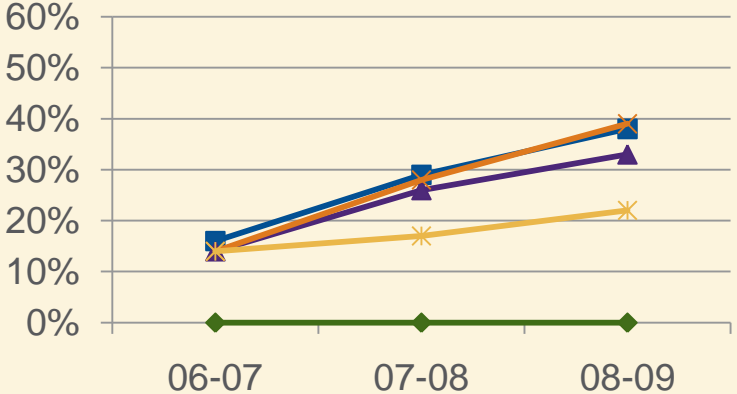
Competitive Food & Beverage Location Restrictions by Grade Level and Year

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Grade Level and Year

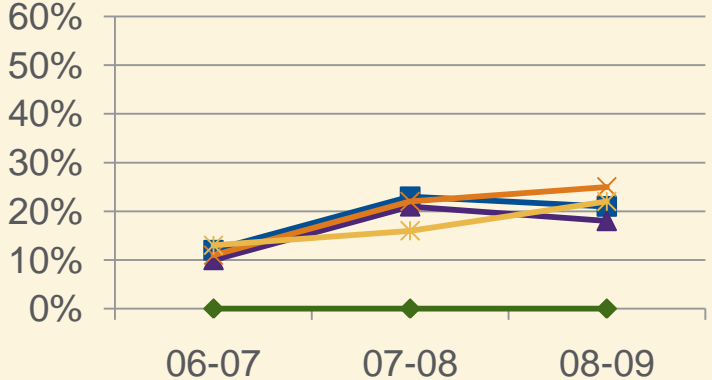
Elementary



Middle



High

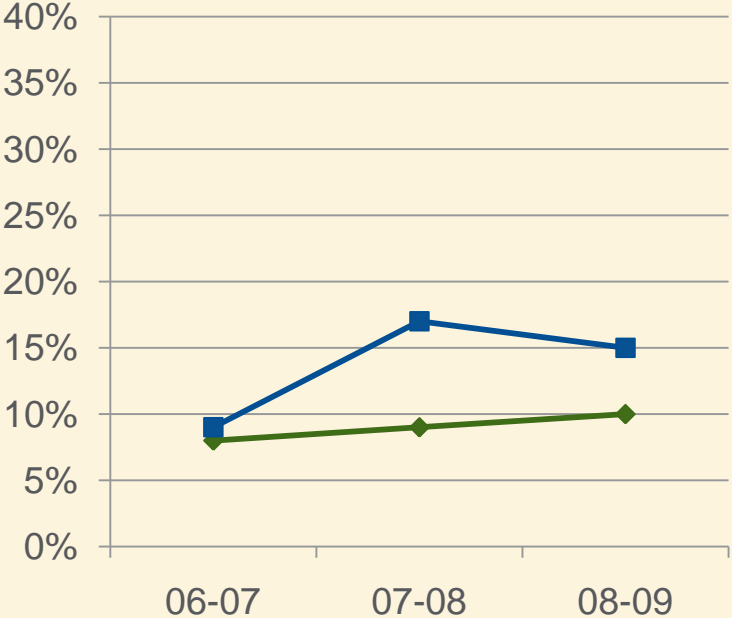


- ◆ Ban
- Vending Machines
- ▲ School Stores
- ✕ A la Carte
- * Guidelines apply to contracts

Policies Related to Advertising and Marketing of Foods & Beverages in Schools

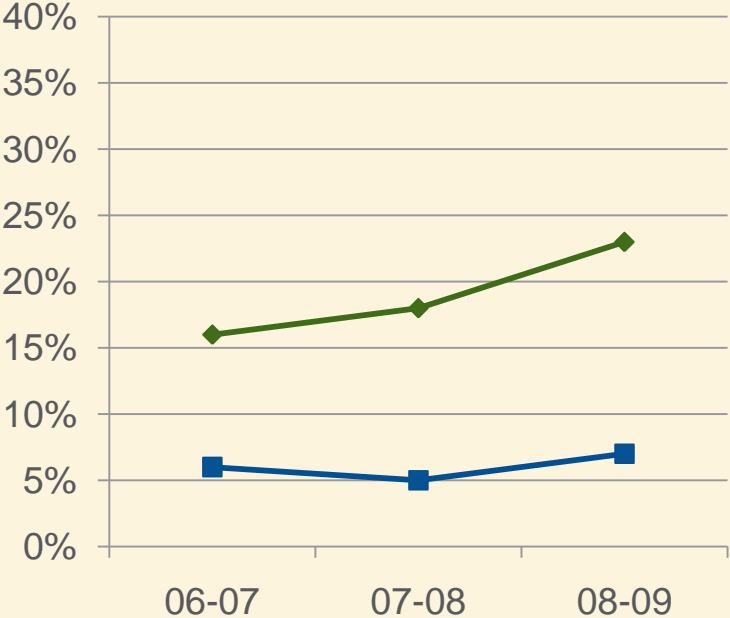
% of Students in Districts with Policy by Year

Restrict Advertising of Unhealthy Food & Beverages



Weak Policy Strong Policy

Promotion of Healthy Foods and Beverages

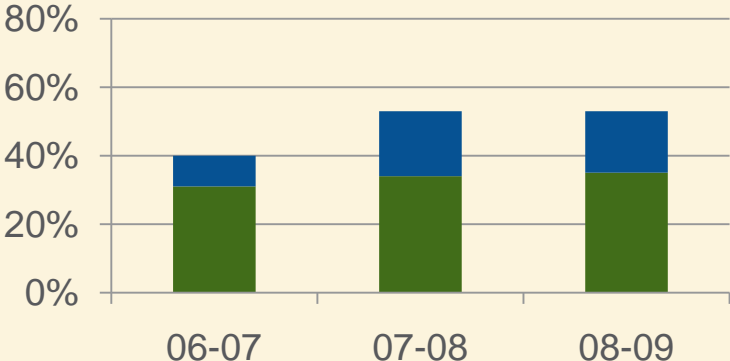


Weak Policy Strong Policy

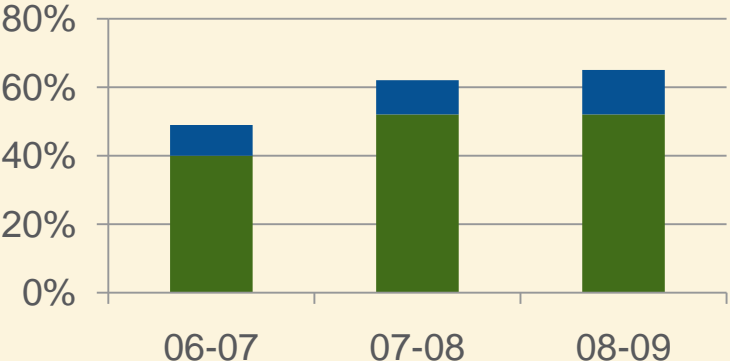
Selected School Meal Policy Provisions

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Year

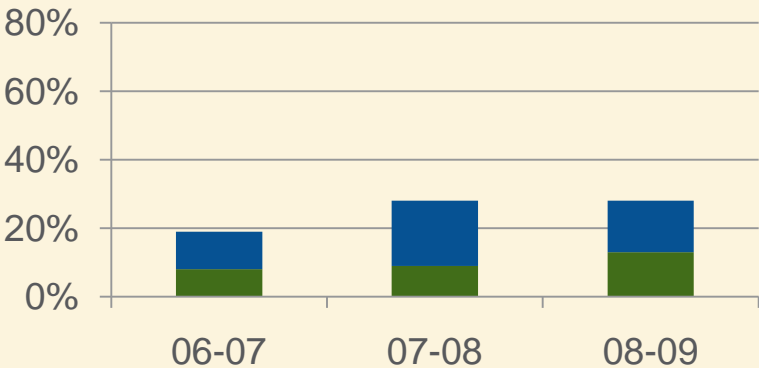
Meals Meet Dietary Guidelines



Adequate Time to Eat



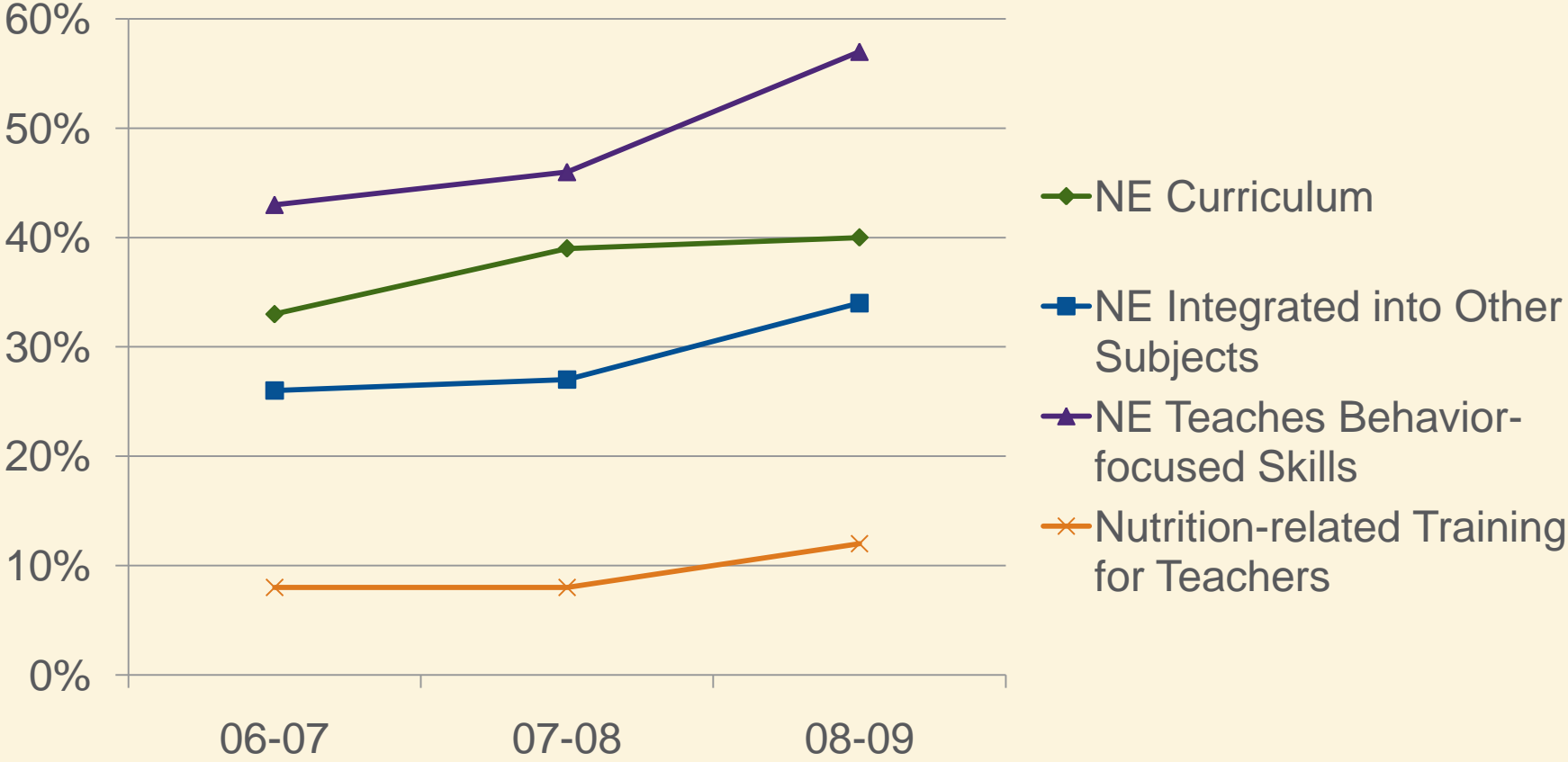
Nutritional Content Info for Meals



■ Strong policy
■ Weak policy

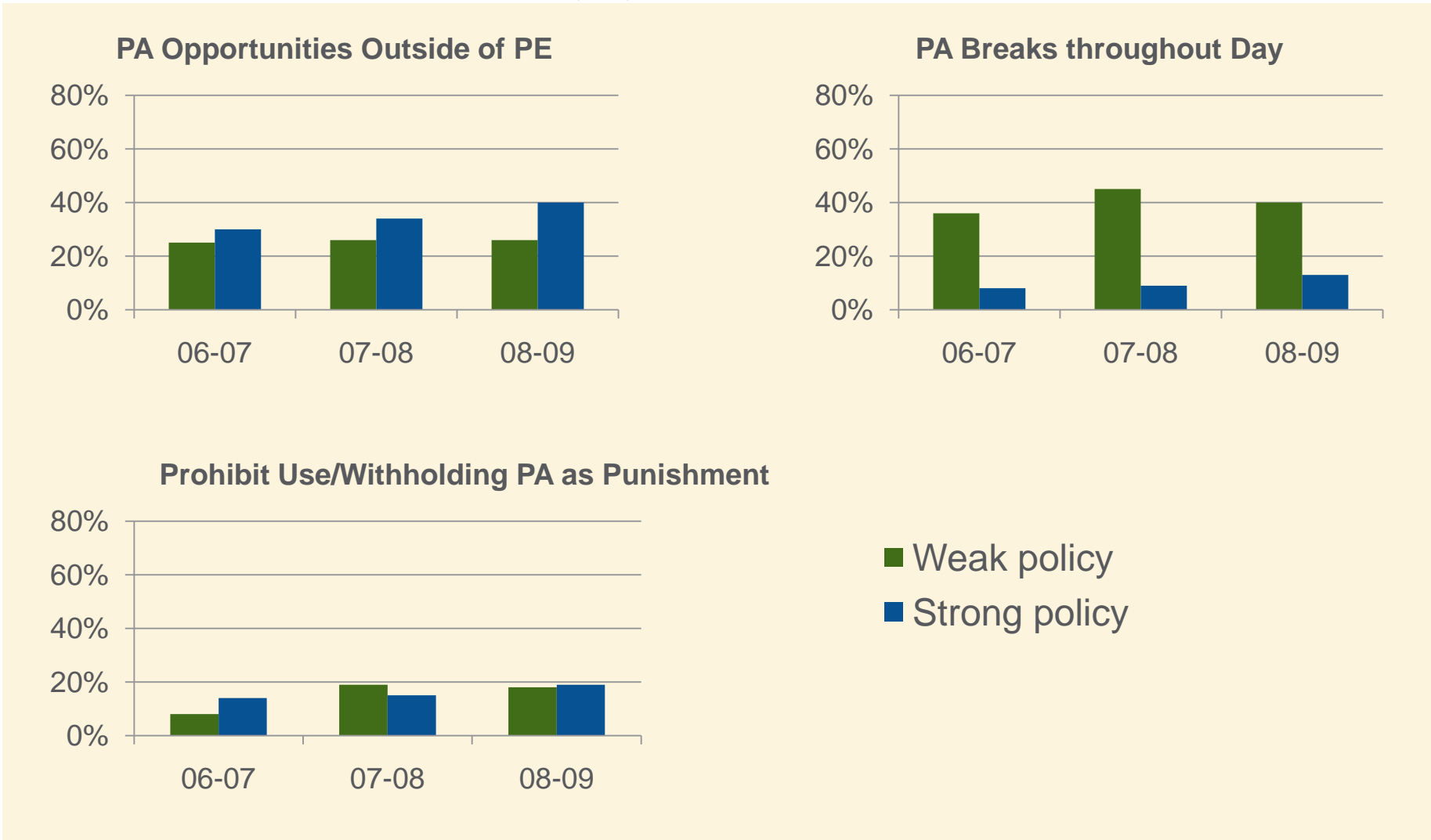
Selected Nutrition Education Policy Requirements

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Year



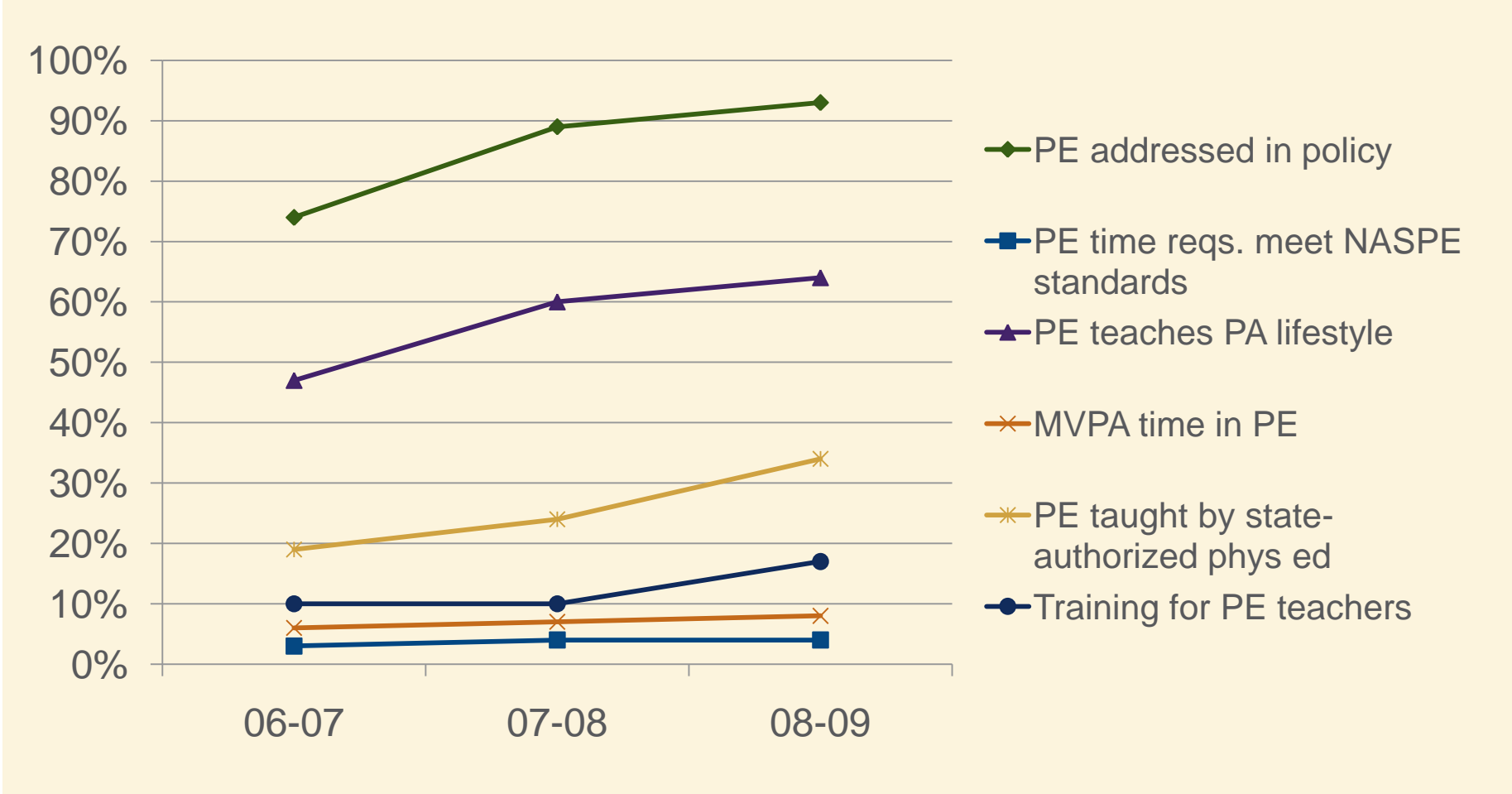
Selected Physical Activity Policy Provisions

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Grade Level and Year



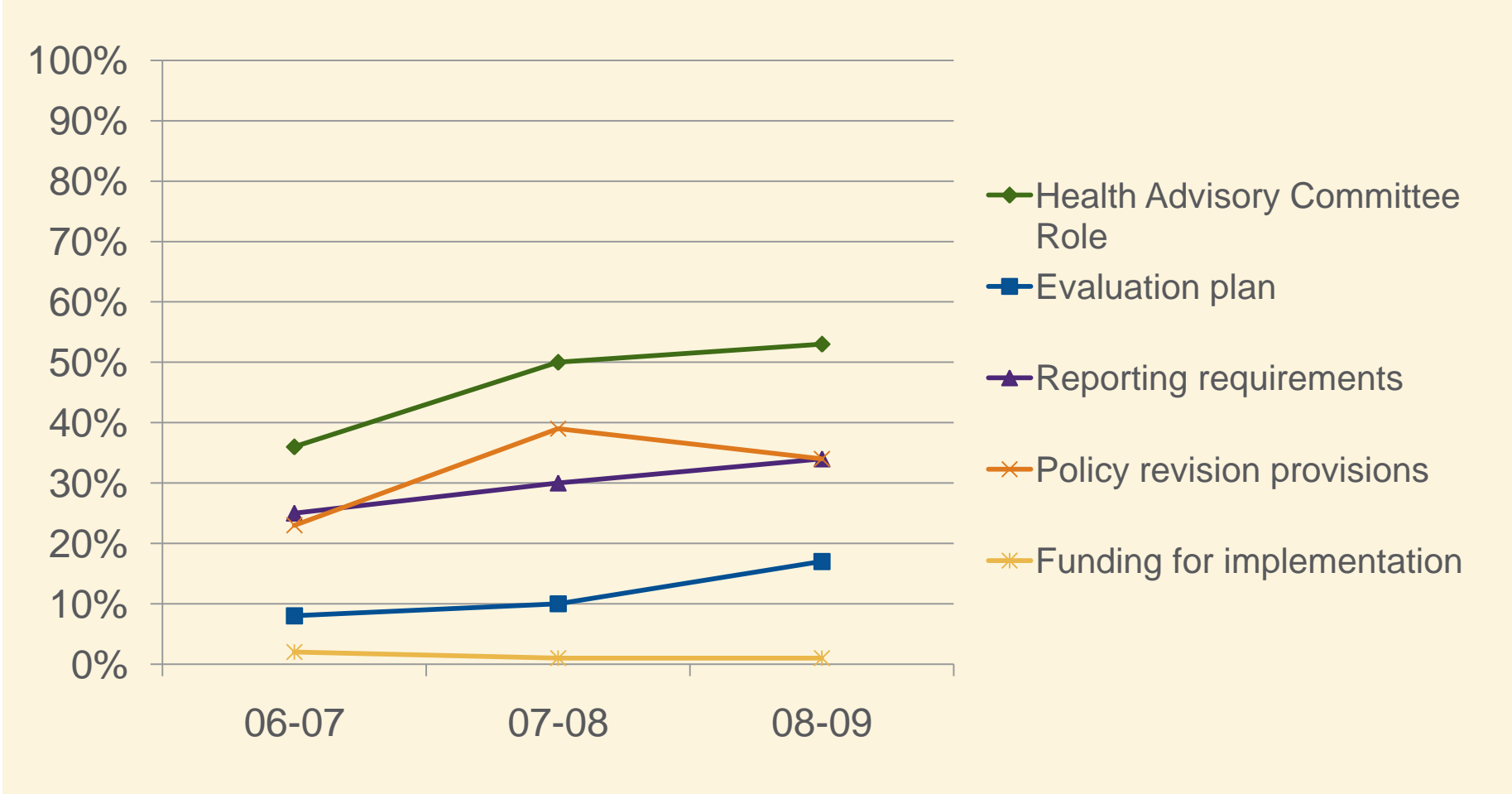
Selected Physical Education Policy Provisions

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Grade Level and Year



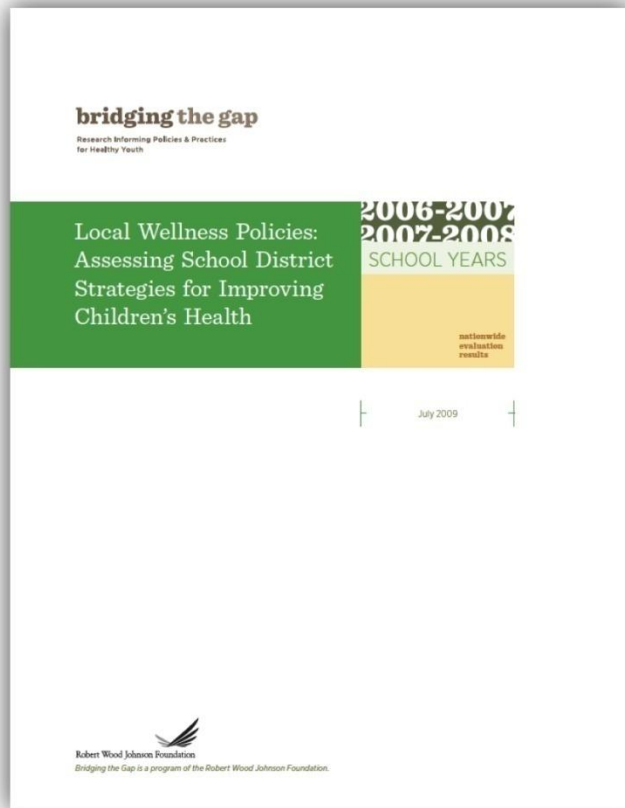
Requirements for Wellness Policy Implementation and Evaluation Plans

% of Students in Districts with Policy by Grade Level and Year



Report/Data Availability and Next Steps

Data Monographs/Reports-Wellness Policy



First report released July 2009

Local Wellness Policies: Assessing School District Strategies for Improving Children's Health. School Years 2006-07 and 2007-08.

Executive Summary, Monograph and backup data available at:

www.bridgingthegapresearch.org

New Update report containing 2008-09 data forthcoming, expected release, end of June/early July

Data Monographs/Reports-Primary School Survey



Executive summary released June 8, 2010

School Policies and Practices to Improve Health and Prevent Obesity: National Elementary School Survey Results

Executive Summary, surveys, research briefs, and video Q&A available at:

www.bridgingthegapresearch.org

Complete report to be released in July 2010

Continued Research Planned

- Analyses examining factors associated with variation in wellness policy components and strength as well as changes over time
- Companion monographs on implementation of the wellness policies and related practices in elementary, middle and high schools
- Analyses examining the relationships between the wellness policies and school practices and student weight outcomes (2ry only)
- Ongoing surveillance of wellness policy and implementation progress and innovation following congressional reauthorization

For more information: www.bridgingthegapresearch.org

The screenshot shows the homepage of the 'bridging the gap' website. At the top left is the logo 'bridging the gap' with the tagline 'Research Informing Policies and Practices for Healthy Youth'. To the right is a search bar with the text 'Enter Keywords' and a 'SEARCH!' button. Below the logo is a navigation menu with links for 'HOME', 'ABOUT US', 'RESEARCH PRODUCTS', 'CONTACT US', and 'RELATED SITES'. The main content area features a large banner with a photograph of children in a classroom. The banner text reads 'Evaluating school district wellness policies' and 'District Wellness Policy Report'. Below the banner, there are three columns of text. The first column, 'Bridging the Gap', describes the program's goal to improve understanding of policies and environmental factors. The second column, 'What We Do', lists three bullet points: identifying policy factors, tracking trends, and disseminating findings. The third column, 'New Products', features two items: a 'Report' titled 'Local Wellness Policies: Assessing School District Strategies for Improving Children's Health: School Years 2006-07 and 2007-08' and an 'Executive Summary' of the same report. Each item includes a small thumbnail image and a 'Download PDF' link.

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Enter Keywords **SEARCH!**

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District Wellness Policy Report

Landmark study reveals majority of district wellness policies fail to provide healthy school environment for kids.
[LEARN MORE >](#)

Evaluating school district wellness policies

Bridging the Gap

Bridging the Gap is a nationally recognized research program. Our goal is to improve the understanding of how policies and environmental factors affect diet, physical activity and obesity among youth, as well as youth tobacco use.

What We Do

- Identify the policy and environmental factors that have the greatest impact on diet, physical activity, obesity and tobacco use among youth.
- Track trends and changes in these factors over time at the state, community and school levels.
- Disseminate findings to help advance solutions for reversing the childhood obesity epidemic and preventing young people from smoking.

Sign Up to Receive News and Updates

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New Products

Major New Study Reveals Strengths and Weaknesses of School District Wellness Policies

Local Wellness Policies: Assessing School District Strategies for Improving Children's Health: School Years 2006-07 and 2007-08 is the most comprehensive ongoing analysis of the federally-mandated district wellness policies.

Report
Local Wellness Policies: Assessing School District Strategies for Improving Children's Health: School Years 2006-07 and 2007-08.
More information

[Download PDF](#)

Executive Summary
Major findings from *Local Wellness Policies: Assessing School District Strategies for Improving Children's Health: School Years 2006-07 and 2007-08.* More information

[Download PDF](#)


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Contact for additional information

Jamie F. Chriqui, Ph.D., M.H.S.

Research Associate Professor

Senior Research Scientist

Bridging the Gap Program

Health Policy Center

Institute for Health Research and Policy

(312) 996-6410

jchriqui@uic.edu