

# Impact of School District Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Policies on Student Beverage Availability and Consumption in Middle Schools



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Until recently most adolescents in the US had easy access to sugar-sweetened beverages (SSB) at school. SSB include any non-dairy beverage with added sugars like fruit drinks, sweetened tea, sports drinks and soda. SSB consumption is associated with childhood obesity and low diet quality. In the last two years, many states and school districts have limited access to SSB during the school day. Washington State does not mandate the types of beverages that can be sold in schools. Washington's school districts were charged with developing their own nutrition policies. We recorded the beverages available at 64 WA middle schools, collected the district policies and surveyed over 10,000 seventh graders on what they drank at school over the previous week. We evaluated the relationship between district SSB policies, SSB availability at school and the students' SSB consumption in 64 WA middle schools.

## Key Results

### Beverage availability at the 64 schools

- 3 did not allow students to purchase beverages outside of the school lunch program
- 61 schools had beverage vending machines (a third used timers to restrict availability)
- 17 schools sold no SSB at all

**On average 58% of students consumed SSB at school. (Range between schools 19% - 80%)**

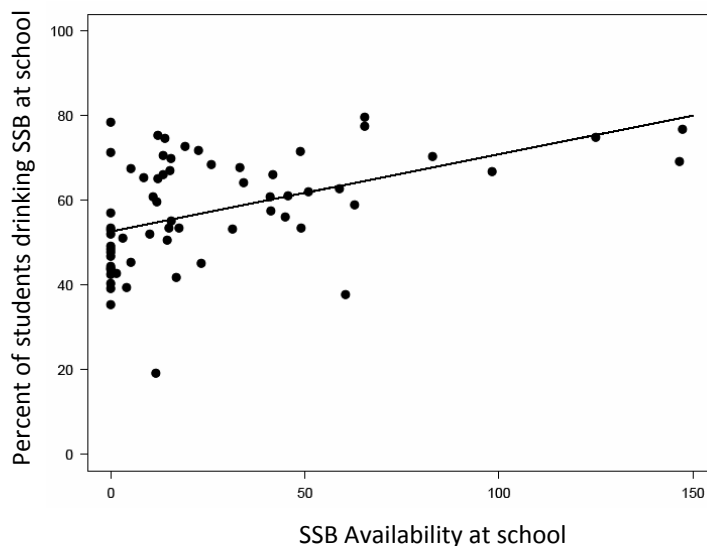
### District SSB policies were implemented.

- Evidence: In schools with stronger SSB policies there were fewer SSB available

### School nutrition environments impact student intake.

- Evidence: Students in schools with fewer SSB available drank fewer SSB at school **AND** students in schools with more SSB available drank more SSB.

### Students in schools with most SSB available drank significantly more SSB



## Conclusion



- School district sugar-sweetened policies and availability of sugar-sweetened beverages in middle schools are associated with student sugar-sweetened consumption.
- Policies and policy implementation (limiting SSB availability in schools) can improve the diets of adolescents.

Peer reviewed publication: Donna B. Johnson, PhD, RD, Barbara Bruemmer, PhD, RD, Anne E. Lund, MPH, RD, Carina C. Evens MS, MPH, PhD, Corinne M. Mar, PhD. Impact of School District Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Policies on Student Beverage Exposure and Consumption in Middle Schools. Journal of Adolescent Health. 2009; 45 (Supplement 3):S30.