



GILPIN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

10595 Highway 119
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Home of the Eagles

January 29, 2009

Dear Senate Education Committee:

This letter is in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 46.

I am writing this letter as the superintendent of the Gilpin County School District. We are a school district of less than 500 students serving children from the communities of Black Hawk, Central City and Gilpin County. Our school board crafted a policy outlining nutritious choices for food being served in the schools. I have attached a copy of this policy and the corresponding regulation for your consideration.

As an administrator I voiced many of the same arguments that you may be hearing today against Senate Bill 46. Such as, this bill will have financial impact on school programs that rely on profit from snack sales. Or, children should be taught to make good choices so they will determine the snack sales by the healthy choices that they should make.

Food choice is intimately personal to each of us. As such we believe that we make the best daily food choice decisions simply based on the personal information that we carry. Generally, we are ignorant, and it is in the food industry's best interest for us to remain uninformed. Recent federal labeling requirements have had a dramatic impact on the awareness of the general public. We are manipulated by food labeling and advertising, and children need to be protected from it. School snacks that have nutritional value standards established by law places children in a safe environment where they can be protected from pressure and influence.

It was only when leadership from my school board and the community became actively involved in developing this nutritious choices policy that I truly began to educate myself regarding food, nutrition and choice. The importance of leadership around highly charged values issues such as food choice cannot be overstated. Not every school district has this kind of leadership on this issue.

As public officials we have a responsibility to our children to not manipulate them for any of our own gains, even if it means finding funds from other sources for important programs. We have a responsibility to ensure that our children understand how food is manipulated and that it is not necessarily in their best interests, especially when it is unhealthy. We must try to inform children to take care of their own wellness, and that nutrition and food choices are key in that ownership.

Could this all be done without the necessity of legislation? Possibly, but not likely. If hard choices were easy to make, much of your work would be unnecessary. I encourage you to approve the snack bill as presented. I believe that it represents solid research into food and nutrition and is important work for Colorado and Coloradans well-being.

Sincerely,

Ken Ladouceur PhD
Superintendent

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