



# Strong support for children's health policies in schools

A safe and healthy school environment is important for Kentucky children's learning and development. Many health policies already exist in Kentucky schools. Thirty-three Kentucky school districts have adopted 100% Tobacco Free Campus policies.<sup>1</sup> Kentucky schools are also applying new United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) nutrition guidelines. Farm to School programs have been developed with local farmers, bringing fresh fruits and vegetables to school cafeterias.

The **Kentucky Health Issues Poll (KHIP)** asked Kentucky adults their opinions about policies related to tobacco-free air, healthy food and exercise in Kentucky schools.

## Large majorities favor tobacco-free, nutrition and exercise policies

Eight in 10 Kentucky adults (84%) favored schools adopting tobacco-free campus policies

<sup>1</sup>As of April 3, 2014, see the complete list of Kentucky school districts with 100% Tobacco Free Schools at [www.tobaccofreeky.org/ky-schools.html](http://www.tobaccofreeky.org/ky-schools.html).

### Percentage of Kentucky adults who favor various school policies

#### Tobacco-free campus policies\*



#### New USDA school nutrition standards



#### Requiring schools provide 30 minutes a day of physical activity to students\*\*



Strongly favor

Somewhat favor

\*KHIP asked, "And ... research indicates that the younger a person is when they first try tobacco, the more susceptible they are to becoming addicted. To help keep kids from smoking, some school systems are adopting tobacco-free campus policies that would prohibit the use of tobacco by students, staff, parents or guests while they are on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities, such as field trips and sporting events. Would you favor or oppose schools adopting tobacco-free campus policies in your community?"

\*\* KHIP asked, "Do you favor or oppose requiring schools to provide 30 minutes a day of physical activity to students?"

in their communities. Support was high even among current smokers (72%). Large majorities of Kentucky adults who reported never smoking (91%) and former smokers (89%) favored this policy.

About school nutrition guidelines KHIP asked, "Recently the USDA adopted new school nutrition standards for meals served to students.

These standards include things like reducing (sic) the amount of salt and saturated fats in meals, offer more whole grain food choices, establish age-based calorie limits and portion sizes, and require students to select a fruit or vegetable in their meal offerings. Would you say that you favor or oppose

**Continued on back**

These findings unless otherwise noted are from the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, funded by the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky and Interact for Health. The Kentucky Health Issues Poll was conducted Oct. 25-Nov. 26, 2013, by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati.

A random sample of 1,551 adults from throughout Kentucky was interviewed by telephone. This included 951 landline interviews and 600 cell phone interviews with cell phone users. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to  $\pm 2.5\%$ . There are other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording, or context effects that can introduce error or bias. For more information about the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, please visit [www.healthy-ky.org](http://www.healthy-ky.org) or [www.interactforhealth.org/kentucky-health-issues-poll](http://www.interactforhealth.org/kentucky-health-issues-poll).

these new school nutrition standards?” Overall, nearly 8 in 10 respondents (78%) favored the new USDA school nutrition standards<sup>2</sup> for meals served to students.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that children and adolescents get 60 minutes of physical activity daily.<sup>3</sup> KHIP asked Kentucky adults their opinions about requiring schools to provide 30 minutes a day of physical activity to students. More than 9 in 10 respondents (97%) favored a policy requiring physical activity for students.

### Strong support for policies across political parties

Large majorities of Democrats, Republicans and Independents favored school-based children’s health policies regarding tobacco-free campuses, nutrition standards and required physical activity.

<sup>2</sup> [www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/child-nutrition-programs](http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/child-nutrition-programs)

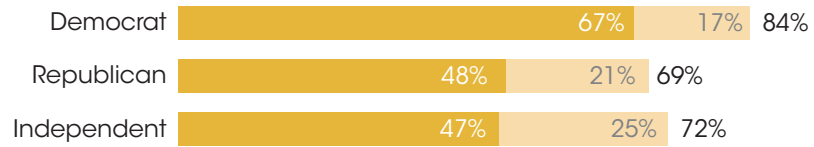
<sup>3</sup> Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans Midcourse Report Subcommittee of the President’s Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition. Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans Midcourse Report: Strategies to Increase Physical Activity among Youth. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012. Accessed 04/07/14. [www.health.gov/paguidelines/midcourse/pag-mid-course-report-final.pdf](http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/midcourse/pag-mid-course-report-final.pdf)

### Percentage of Kentucky adults who favor various school policies by political party identification

#### Tobacco-free campus policies



#### New USDA school nutrition standards



#### Requiring schools provide 30 minutes a day of physical activity to students



■ Strongly favor                      ■ Somewhat favor