

Public Health Association of New York City

Policy and Legislative Committee



Memo of Support for S.4118 “Healthy Schools Act”

We at the Public Health Association of New York City (PHANYC) strongly support S.4118, the “Healthy Schools Act,” for the following reasons:

- ❖ The NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene together with the Board of Education found, in a 2003 survey, that nearly half of NYC public school children were not of healthy weight.
- ❖ Research shows a direct link between nutritional intake and academic performance.
- ❖ There are serious long-term health consequences associated with being obese in childhood, including asthma, severe depression, diabetes, and heart disease. Rising rates of obesity and diabetes, without intervention, are likely to shorten the lifespan of our children and grandchildren.
- ❖ Poor food choices in our schools continue to be a serious contributing factor to unhealthy lifelong eating habits. Schools are the ideal place to teach and model healthful eating habits.
- ❖ According to government studies and nutrition experts, because government rules limiting fat to 30 percent of school lunch calories are not enforced, three out of four schools still serve too much fat and not enough vegetables and fruits.

The Public Health Association of New York City strongly commends the Senate’s efforts to enact this proposal into law.