

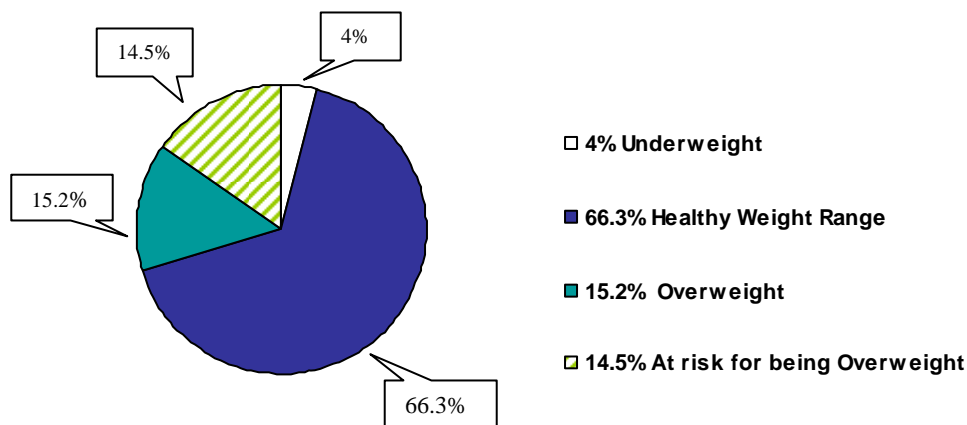
Warwick Public Schools
2007-2008 BMI Study Results
April 2009

The Warwick Public Schools, during the 2007-2008 school year, as part of the district's Wellness Policy and Strategic Plan, conducted a yearlong gathering of BMI (body mass index) data on the student population in grades K-12. This report provides parents and the school community with information regarding our students' BMI profile resulting from this analysis.

In Rhode Island, we are now learning that one child in four is overweight and the number of overweight children continues to grow. Overweight children are also at risk for becoming overweight adolescents and adults. Overweight adults tend to have many more health problems, including heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, strokes, and some forms of cancer.

The district BMI data mirrors and is actually slightly higher than the Rhode Island and national data. When reviewing the information below, please remember, BMI is a screening tool, NOT a diagnostic tool. It is being used to provide a profile of the number of students in the various BMI ranges to district staff, parents, and community members. For simplicity of this dissemination, the data is presented as a district-wide group, kindergarten through grade 12. The data is presented by showing the total percent of students, as measured by a BMI, who are "under weight" (below the fifth percentile), within the "healthy weight range" (sixth percentile to 84th percentile), within the "at risk for overweight" range (85th to 94th percentile), and within the "overweight range" (in the highest 95th percentile).

BMI STUDY RESULTS



The total enrollment included in this study was 10,434 students in grades K – 12 (preschool students are not included). The total participation rate of students K- 12 at the time of

the study was 77.4%. The elementary participation rate was very high at 88.1%. However, a statistically significant difference in the outcome between the clusters of elementary, junior high and senior high does not exist. The combined percentage of students at risk for being overweight and those who are presently over weight totals an average of 29.7%. This is greater than the Rhode Island or national average at this time.

What are the next steps to be taken by the district? Fortunately, we have become well aware of the importance of BMI analysis at the local level. BMI data will be tracked and monitored over time to see if the district's multiple efforts to promote good nutritional are having an impact. Obesity is a local and national concern for our children and youth. Solutions will come from many sources including family, health care, community organizations, and governmental agencies, including the schools.

In our district, numerous steps have been taken during the past six months to better educate the school community regarding health issues. A brief summary follows:

- The Warwick Public Schools Strategic Plan has included goals and action steps since the 2006-2007 school year and will continue to do so for the near future. The focus is upon awareness raising, alignment of curriculum to state frame works and the implementation of nutritional steps in school lunch programs, curriculum instruction and foods available to students in the schools;

- Mrs. Karen Wetherill, from Kids First, responded to questions and comments from members of the School Committee regarding implementation of the district policy JHCE-June 2008;

- All principals and central office staff participated in the Healthy Schools Leadership Workshop sponsored by Kids First-June 2008;

- All district grade 2 teachers participated in a workshop with the Kent Hospital staff for the implementation of the "Warwick Wellness Collaborative"; a RI Foundation funded program to enhance nutritional instruction in the elementary schools;

- Mr. Robert Bushel, Director of Elementary Education, notified all parents of grade two students of the special opportunity afforded the district to focus on nutritional education during the current year. The information may be found on the district's web page at www.WarwickSchools.org- September 2008;

- The first series of the workshop, Kids Choose to Be Healthy was offered to parents of students after school at the Oakland Beach and Greenwood Elementary Schools. This 8-week program was fully enrolled and was funded by the RI Foundation grant. A duplicate series has been offered this spring;
- Elementary and Junior High Principals and the schools' PTA/PTO presidents were invited to participate in a special workshop which focused on "Re-thinking Fund Raising" in order to develop healthy fund raising projects. Thirty-three individuals participated- November 2008;
- The district is now compliant with Rhode Island statutes governing school lunch requirements, the health and wellness policy, and the sale of a la carte food items in the schools;

The district's Health and Wellness Sub-Committee of the School Committee will maintain the district's web page providing updated nutritional information, community information, and links to state and national organizations that provide meaningful information for parents, students and other interested community members.

The district will continue to collect and review BMI data to measure the progress of efforts to improve the health of all students

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