

# SOCIETY *of* BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE

*Better Health Through Behavior Change*

**EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE**

**8:45 a.m. Eastern**

**Friday, April 29, 2011**

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## **Policy as a Tool to Change School Nutrition and Physical Education Environments**

**Washington, DC** - Evaluation of changes in school policy is particularly relevant at the middle school level when the largest decrease in physical activity occurs and many dietary changes evolve. An expert panel at the Society of Behavioral Medicine's 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting and Scientific Sessions will review changes in school nutrition and physical education state laws in middle schools on Friday April 29<sup>th</sup> from 8:45-10:15 a.m. in Columbia Hall-8 at the Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, DC.

The symposium, *Policy as a Tool to Change School Nutrition and Physical Education Environments*, will highlight changes in state codified laws related to school nutrition and physical education, discuss childhood obesity implications, and demonstrate Classification of Laws Associated with School Students (C.L.A.S.S.), a publicly available online tool that displays state laws in relation to recommended standards for school nutrition and physical education. C.L.A.S.S. was developed by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and other nationally recognized experts.

The panel will include Dr. Louise Mâsse, Associate Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of British Columbia and Associate Editor of the *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, who will provide an overview of school policy assessment. The panel will also feature Dr. Tanya Agurs-Collins, a nutrition scientist Program Director in the Behavioral Research Program at NCI, who will present a 5-year analysis of competitive food laws in USA middle schools; Dr. Frank Perna, a health psychology Program Director in the Behavioral Research Program at NCI, who will present data on the relative concordance between changes in competitive food and physical activity laws; and Dr. April Oh, Senior Behavioral Scientist at SAIC-Fredrick, in support to the Behavioral Research Program at NCI, who will demonstrate the policy analysis tools available in C.L.A.S.S.; Dr. Sarah Lee, Senior Health Scientist in the Division of School and Adolescent Health at the CDC, will serve as a discussant.

*The Society of Behavioral Medicine is a multidisciplinary organization of clinicians, educators, and scientists dedicated to promoting the study of the interactions of behavior with biology and the environment and the application of that knowledge to improve the health and well being of individuals, families, communities, and populations.*

[www.sbm.org](http://www.sbm.org)

*This study was presented during the 2011 Annual Meeting and Scientific Session of the Society of Behavioral Medicine (SBM) from April 27 – 30 in Washington, DC. However, it does not reflect the policies or the opinion of the SBM.*

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