

Montana Beverage Association

“Model Business Practices” BEVERAGES IN SCHOOLS PROGRAMS

Childhood obesity is a serious and complex problem that cannot be solved by simplistic means. Many experts agree that the most effective approach is to encourage children to choose a balanced diet and engage in regular physical activity. Individual industry members will work with parents, teachers, school administrators and local officials to create “beverages in schools programs” that:

■ **Maximize Choice**

The soft drink industry will provide a wide variety of appropriate beverages to the school community—water, 100% fruit juices, juice drinks, milk-based drinks, sports drinks, teas—in addition to non-caloric and traditional beverages.

■ **Provide Product Choices Appropriate to Each Grade Level**

The industry will provide beverages appropriate to all grade levels. At the *elementary school level*, we will provide fruit juices, sports drinks and water. At the *middle school level*, we will make available a wide variety of beverages, including water, milk-based beverages and juices. At the *high school level*, we will make available a full range of beverage choices—including non-caloric and traditional beverages—based on the local needs and policies of a school or school district.

■ **Promote Regulatory Compliance**

The industry recognizes that beverages in schools programs are subject to a wide range of federal, state and local regulations that govern the types of beverages sold and the manner of distribution of these beverages. Federally-subsidized school lunch programs prohibit the sale of carbonated soft drinks in the food service area during meals. We will provide technical assistance, such as vending machine timers, to enhance regulatory compliance.

■ **Support Local Responsibility and Control**

The industry recognizes that the ultimate responsibility for beverages in schools programs lies with local school administrators and elected school boards. We pledge to work with local officials and parents to provide information required to implement programs tailored to the specific needs of individual communities.

■ **Provide Benefits of Public/Private Partnerships**

The soft drink industry recognizes that local officials use revenues from public/private partnerships to fund a variety of important school programs. We will encourage school officials to apply these financial resources to physical activity and positive youth development initiatives, subject to local control.

■ **Encourage Nutrition Education and Physical Activity Initiatives**

The soft drink industry recognizes that a growing body of scientific evidence links obesity to lack of exercise and sedentary lifestyles among the student population. We will encourage school officials to design and implement beverages in schools programs that encourage healthy lifestyles through nutrition education and physical activity programs.