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Action for Healthy Kids Applauds Senate Focus on School Environment

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## Action for Healthy Kids Applauds Senate Focus on School Environment

Chicago, IL. (March 31, 2009)--Action for Healthy Kids applauds Senate attention to the impact of the total school environment on the overall nutritional and physical health of our nation's children and youth. A diverse group of individuals with links to parents, education, nutrition and physical activity, and the food industry, among others will appear before the Senate Agriculture Committee today at the hearing, Beyond Federal School Meal Programs: Reforming Nutrition for Kids in Schools. Speakers will share perspectives about ways to bring better nutrition and health to students through efforts across the school setting.

"Action for Healthy Kids was founded on the vision to improve the school environment so that all kids will develop the lifelong habits necessary to promote health and learning, and as a nation, we can address the epidemic of overweight, undernourished and sedentary youth," said Rob Bisceglie, Action for Healthy Kids executive director. "We urge the Committee Members and speakers to take a holistic approach toward this challenge, seriously examining what our kids eat and drink while at school, and the physical education and activity opportunities available to them."

As an organization, Action for Healthy Kids also has worked to draw attention to the documented relationships between what children eat, how active they are, and their performance in school. "We know that children who eat poorly or who participate in too little physical activity do not perform as well as they could academically. Conversely, it has been shown that improvements in nutrition, in particular eating breakfast, and physical activity can result in improvements in academic performance," said Bisceglie. "As our policymakers look at 'reforming nutrition for kids in schools' it's critical that school breakfast and other efforts to make nutrient-rich foods more available receive high priority and adequate funding."

"Our children deserve decisive action supported by our best thinking to give them a fair chance as they grow up," Bisceglie added. "We hope that today's Senate hearing will add meaningful substance to the child health discussion."

### **About Action for Healthy Kids**

Action for Healthy Kids® is a national nonprofit organization that addresses the epidemic of overweight, undernourished and sedentary youth by focusing on improving nutrition and physical activity policies and practices in schools. This grassroots public-private partnership of 65 organizations and government agencies supports the efforts of Teams comprised of more than 11,200 volunteers in all states and the District of Columbia. Action for Healthy Kids was founded in 2002 by former U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher, in response to the Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity, which identified the school environment as one of five key sites of change. To learn more, visit

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