



## **<sup>1</sup> A U.S. law requires that schools provide healthy choices for students.**

Public schools across the country have been on a health kick since 2010. Thanks to a federal law, students said goodbye to fatty foods and hello to better eating habits in school. They also have been exercising more during the school day.

## **<sup>2</sup> New School Rules**

It's up to schools to decide how they comply with the law. Many districts mandate, or require, schools to provide healthy choices for lunch. In Tennessee, most schools removed sugary snacks and soft drinks from vending machines. In their place are more nutritious choices, such as granola bars, nuts, water, and juice.

In Florida, Missouri, and Texas, some schools have rules that restrict desserts such as cupcakes and lollipops from parties. Instead, school officials encourage teachers and parents to provide more nutritious treats.

To get kids to exercise more, the northwestern Minnesota district of Perham Dent added more physical activity to the school day. Many school districts also make sure that kids have break time outdoors every day.

## **<sup>3</sup> A Growing Problem**

The goals of the law are to promote good health and to combat obesity. Obesity is the condition of being very overweight. Being obese can lead to serious health problems later in life. Experts say the percentage of children aged 6-11 years old who were obese more than doubled from 1980 to 2012, and the percentage of obese young people aged 12-19 years old quadrupled in the same time period. "We know that adults who are very overweight get sick more often and lose time at work," Julia Lear, the director of the Center for Health and Health Care in Schools, told WR News. "The best thing to do is get kids in the habit of getting lots of exercise and eating healthy meals."