

# FROM THE EDITOR

## Body of Evidence



The late 1970s brought us disco and soaring interest rates. It brought me to middle school adolescence, the dreaded place where my children now reside. During the Iran hostage crisis, I felt like a hostage in my own body, a kid who didn't understand why after-school reruns and bad eating habits were leading my mom to purchase my jeans in the "husky" section at JC Penney.

Now, of course, I do, even though I struggle with fluctuating weight and a tendency to eat the wrong things. As a parent, I also know how difficult in today's fast-paced world it can be to ensure your children get the proper amount of fruits, vegetables, and exercise.

But, as Senior Editor Naomi Dillon notes in her cover story, "Body of Evidence," we must do everything we can—sooner rather than later.

As school leaders, you've seen the stories and read the headlines. Obesity is threatening future generations like never before. The incidence of Type 2 diabetes in young children is climbing dramatically. Employers are fearful that today's students won't be healthy enough to be tomorrow's workers.

All of these point to the need to do something on a national scale, which is one reason for First Lady Michelle

Obama's "Let's Move!" initiative. But as Naomi's story points out, a number of local school districts already are setting excellent examples.

Concerns about a mandatory nationwide movement are being raised as Congress considers the reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act this fall. No one disagrees that dramatic steps and action need to be taken to ensure student health and safety, but the cost to feed our school children continues to rise as districts struggle to keep budgets balanced.

Unfortunately, the bill's current provisions do not fund those additional costs. School board members need to run to their phones or computers and get in touch with their representatives and senators. Let them know what you're doing in your district to combat childhood obesity. Show them how your program could be greatly improved if the bill is funded properly.

Read Naomi's story, and visit the ASBJ.com archive for another story she wrote called "Breakfast For All." If these stories don't convince you that a phone call or e-mail is worth it, nothing will.

Believe me, a husky middle schooler will thank you for it in 30 years or so.

Until next month ...

*Glenn Cook, Editor-in-Chief*