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Period 1,2 Language Arts

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### Junk Food Ban?

Obesity is an ever growing problem, but putting a ban on “junk food” at school isn’t going to prevent it. There may be some benefits to a ban, but these sources say otherwise ; Source A: The New York Times UpFront - The News Magazine for Teens, Source B: MedicalDaily.com, Source C: Norton Center Infographic, and Source E: HealthLine News, sources which show both sides of what a ban would do and their effectiveness. Obesity in America is spreading and affecting our youth and school and health officials want to ban junk foods from schools. A ban on junk foods won’t do anything because most schools serve these ‘junk foods’, kids can still get their hands on junk food, and it isn’t just junk food that is the reason for obesity. Agreeing to ban junk food would just not work with the expected or wanted outcome.

To construct my first point, schools serve junk food, sometimes the food isn’t junk food, but school lunches have a lot of sodium in them. The food we often eat are considered junk food by most, “...fried chicken fingers, cheeseburgers, and pizza - foods many school cafeterias serve (Source A).” At Mendez we are served pizza every Thursday, and if pizza is banned and replaced with something healthy like a salad, most people won’t eat it and it would be wasted. And then there are cheese burgers, which I probably see every week, if it was banned you have a lot of kids not eating lunch, and they might as well just wait to go home and then eat a cheeseburger or pizza. This ban would not even stop at foods, “ middle schools would no longer be allowed to provide sugary drinks (Source B).” If we are to class ‘sugary drinks’ to be anything with over 10 grams of sugar most if not all the things that

are served for lunch being banned. You're looking at only low fat milk being the only thing that is there to drink, and I don't see many people drink it. This ban would only change what student eat at school, but it's not like they can't eat elsewhere.

Further elaborating on my second point, children can still get their hands on junk food they can go to any convenience store and buy some chips or a Pizza Hut and get pizza. Some children don't always have the luxury of being able to buy clean water, but, "As long as a bottle of water cost more than a soda [Food Companies] market to lower income kids (Source E)." So honestly schools should sell water at a lower price than a soda, but still other places will still sell soda for less than water. Still it doesn't really matter if schools sell sodas, because there are plenty more places that do, and maybe for a lower price. Now if you couple the fact that soda cost less than water with the fact that, "Even though it's harder to get a soda on campus, children in lower income neighborhoods are disproportionately targeted by food and beverage advertising (Source E)." The reason for obesity more or less falls in the hands of these food companies, which do things like make lower income children buy a soda over a bottle of water. So to prevent this maybe teach children that something that cost a bit more, but is healthy, is better than a cheap soda.

To build my final point, it's not just junk food that causes obesity, there are more reasons. One can eat junk food, and still be healthy as long as they exercise, but, "our kids spend nearly 8 hours everyday watching t.v., playing video games, using computers, talking on cell phones, and texting (Source C)." Junk food may be bad, but not being active enough is just as bad. In elementary we ate a lot of junk food, but at recess we would run around. There is also a lack of knowledge about a healthy nutrition, because, "92% of elementary schools don't have year round P.E. programs (Source C)." Without Physical Education, no one really tells us to exercise. In elementary we probably had a few

runs, less than 10 in total, and we were never really told to eat healthy. Some people may argue as long as banning junk foods changes a child's diet and make it healthier, it is good. A problem with that is at school they may not be able to get their hands on it but it's not hard to get a bag of chips, pizza and a soda outside of school. The best way to combat obesity is to educate children on how to eat healthy and exercise.

In conclusion a ban on junk food would be inefficient, ineffective, and worthless. A ban wouldn't mean anything since schools mainly serve junk food, children can easily get junk food, and it's not only junk food that causes obesity. Obesity is a big problem, a ban isn't the right way to go, if anything it's education children on eating and exercising.