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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG AND WHOLE FOODS MARKET OPEN NEW STORE AND  
ANNOUNCE DONATION OF 57 SALAD BARS TO CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AS  
PART OF CITY'S NEW PLAN TO INSTALL SALAD BARS IN ALL SCHOOLS**

*Task Force Will Bring Salad Bars To All Schools by 2015; More Than 1,000 Already in Place*

*City's Bold Initiatives Have Driven Progress on Childhood Obesity*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas A. Farley, Food Policy Coordinator Kim Kessler and Community Affairs Commissioner Nazli Parvizi today joined Whole Foods Market and their Whole Kids Foundation as they celebrated the opening of their new East 57<sup>th</sup> Street store located at 226 East 57<sup>th</sup> Street by donating 57 salad bars, valued at more than \$300,000, to New York City public elementary schools throughout the five boroughs. The Department of Education, with the support of the Mayor's Fund and Fund for Public Schools, has already installed more than 1,000 salad bars in City schools through the NYC School Salad Bar Initiative. As part of the Mayor's Task Force on Obesity, the City will finish installing salad bars in all public schools city-wide by 2015 to ensure that New York City school children have access to fresh vegetables on a daily basis. Increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables help children develop food preferences and the new salad bars will give thousands of children exposure to fresh produce, helping them learn to make healthy choices for life. The Mayor was joined by Whole Foods Market Regional President Christina Minardi, Whole Kids Foundation Executive Director Nona Evans, Department of Education Deputy Chancellor Kathleen Grimm, Executive Director of the Educational Construction Fund Jamie Smarr, State Senator Liz Krueger, Assembly Member Dan Quart and City Council Member Dan Gardnick, which took place at the new Whole Foods location, part of a new Department of Education complex that includes three new, state-of-the-art public schools.

"Thanks to our pioneering initiatives, New York City has recently defied the national trend and seen an unprecedented decline in childhood obesity," said Mayor Bloomberg. "Giving every student access to healthy fruit and vegetables is the next step in countering the obesity epidemic and getting kids started on a healthy habit for life. Kids love salad bars in schools – I keep hearing that they are often the first choice for lunch – and this donation from Whole Foods will help bring this delicious and healthy option to more kids."

*(more)*

“The City made strides in reducing childhood obesity but more work remains to be done,” said Deputy Mayor Gibbs. “The City’s Obesity Task Force’s commitment to increasing kids’ access to healthy food and introducing healthy behaviors is helped today by the donation of salad bars. Even more students – and younger ones – can now look forward to enjoying fruits and vegetables every day at lunch.”

“Whole Foods Market is proud to celebrate the opening of E. 57th Street location, our seventh store in Manhattan, with this incredible partnership with the Whole Kids Foundation and the Mayor’s Fund,” said Christina Minardi, Northeast Regional President for Whole Foods Market. “In opening up a new location we are always committed to serving and supporting the local community not only with good food, but also as a good neighbor. Being located in the same development as the High School for Art and Design and P.S. 59, we thought of no better way to do so than to offer our support to New York City Schools with 57 salad bars to increase access and education about healthy foods for children throughout the city.”

“We provide students with healthy and delicious school meals that are low in fat, sodium and calories and thanks to Whole Foods we can add to our inventory of salad bars,” Chancellor Walcott said. “Currently, we have more than 1,000 salad bars in our schools and the new donation will ensure that more students will have more options. We have been at the forefront of providing healthy meals. Since 2004, we have replaced whole milk with low-fat milk, white bread with whole wheat and this year we are introducing organic yogurt.”

“Reversing the obesity epidemic requires actions by individuals, corporations, and government, working together,” said Health Commissioner Farley. “Whole Foods is playing a part by donating salad bars for our kids, which is just the kind of action we need. Improving childhood nutrition and offering more ways for kids to be physically active in schools are both critically important in reducing obesity among school-aged children.”

“Healthy communities start with healthy children,” said Commissioner Parvizi. “I believe strongly in the ability of our youth to become the future leaders their neighborhoods need them to be but children need to be active and healthy in order to be contributing members of our society. Providing access to fresh vegetables in the schools is a great start to putting kids in the best frame of mind to learn and serve. I applaud Whole Foods and the Whole Kids Foundation for their leadership on this issue and urge others to join us in our efforts to combat childhood obesity.”

“We know that more students will adopt healthy behaviors when their school environments reinforce good choices – through school gardens, wellness councils, exercise programs, and of course, salad bars,” said Food Policy Coordinator Kessler. “That’s why schools were a focus for the Mayor’s Obesity Task Force, and it’s why we are thrilled about this donation today, and the opportunity to highlight that because of increased City funding we will have NYC salad bars in every public school by 2015. We hope that other private sector partners will be encouraged to help the City expand its reach of nutrition programs.”

In December 2011, the City achieved a significant victory in the battle against obesity when, after years of effort to improve nutrition and expand physical activity opportunities for New Yorkers, New York City experienced a statistically significant drop in rates of childhood obesity. Contrary to national trends, rates of obesity for New York City kindergartners through eighth graders decreased 5.5 percent from 2006 to 2011.

Despite this good news, two out of every five New York City elementary school children remain overweight or obese and the health consequences are dire, ranging from hypertension to high cholesterol to Type II diabetes. Obese children and adolescents also are more likely to become obese adults.

As part of the Mayor's Obesity Task Force, the City is committed to expanding the salad bars already installed in roughly three-fourths of the City's 1,200 school buildings to all of the public schools by 2015. The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City partnered with the Department of Education to help provide lower-height, accessible salad bar units in targeted elementary schools throughout the city. Today's Whole Foods Donation of 57 salad bars specifically for elementary schools is through Whole Kids Foundation™, a Whole Foods Market foundation dedicated to improving childhood nutrition through increased access to healthy foods. Past private donors to the Salad Bar Initiative include Agnes Gund and the Joyce and Irving Goldman Family Foundation. The City's recent budget adoption includes funding to provide salad bars for all schools that can support one.

In addition to expanding the availability of salad bars, the City is ramping up the installation of water jets, which make cold, fresh tap water easily available to students in schools. Water jets are currently in more than 350 city school cafeterias and the City is aiming to add an additional 700 new water jets in schools to reach the vast majority of City students. Because behaviors are established at an early age – and considering that approximately one-third of added sugar in our diet comes from carbonated beverages – encouraging children to drink water can play an important role in addressing childhood obesity.

Through the Obesity Task Force, the City also expanded its support for schools gardens as well as its School Wellness Council Grant program, which allocate mini-grants to schools to create wellness policies and provides technical assistance. To learn more about the Citywide School Gardens Initiative, which was founded by GrowNYC and the Mayor's Fund, contact the Mayor's Fund at [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov).

### **About the Obesity Task Force**

In December 2011, Mayor Bloomberg charged Deputy Mayor Gibbs and Deputy Mayor of Operations Holloway with significantly strengthening the City's anti-obesity efforts by convening a multi-agency task force that would recommend innovative, aggressive solutions to address the obesity crisis in New York City. The Obesity Task Force was convened in January 2012 and conducted its work over the following several months.

Chaired by Deputy Mayors Gibbs and Holloway, Commissioners from eleven City agencies and representatives from the Mayor's Office participated including: Health and Hospitals Corporation President Alan Aviles; Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe; Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability Director David Bragdon; City Planning Commissioner Amanda Burden.; Design and Construction Commissioner David Burney, FAIA; Human Resources Administration Commissioner Robert Doar; Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas Farley; Food Policy Coordinator Kim Kessler; Buildings Commissioner Robert LiMandri; NYC Housing Authority Chairman John Rhea; Transportation Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan; Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Carter Strickland; and Schools Chancellor Dennis Walcott.

## About Overweight and Obesity

Obesity is defined as a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or more and overweight is a BMI of 25 or more. BMI is a metric that measures excess weight in relation to height. More information about how to calculate BMI for children is available on the CDC website ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)). Many serious health conditions are related to being overweight or obese, such as depression, diabetes, high blood pressure, respiratory problems and heart disease.

## About Whole Foods Market®

Founded in 1980 in Austin, Texas, Whole Foods, is the leading natural and organic food retailer. As America's first national certified organic grocer, Whole Foods Market was named "America's Healthiest Grocery Store" by Health magazine. The company's motto, "Whole Foods, Whole People, Whole Planet"™ captures its mission to ensure customer satisfaction and health, Team Member excellence and happiness, enhanced shareholder value, community support and environmental improvement. Thanks to the company's more than 69,000 Team Members, Whole Foods Market has been ranked as one of the "100 Best Companies to Work For" in America by FORTUNE magazine for 15 consecutive years. In fiscal year 2011, the company had sales of more than \$10 billion and currently has more than 330 stores in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

## About Whole Kids Foundation

The Whole Kids Foundation, a Whole Foods Market foundation, is based in Austin, Texas, and operates as an independent, nonprofit organization. By empowering schools and inspiring families, the Foundation aims to help children reach optimal health through the strength of a healthy body fueled by nutritious food.

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