



Building Healthy Communities:

Step Up for School Wellness

2016–2017 Request for Applications

Applications due:
September 30, 2016



More information can be found
at bcbsm.com/buildhealth

Welcome to Building Healthy Communities: Step Up for School Wellness!

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Michigan Department of Education, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Michigan Fitness Foundation, Michigan State University Extension, Michigan Team Nutrition, United Dairy Industry of Michigan and Action for Healthy Kids have partnered to create a school-based program—Building Healthy Communities: Step Up for School Wellness—that supports childhood wellness. The program empowers school leaders to build a healthy school environment that leads to a culture of wellness. A culture of wellness is present when members of a community consider health and well-being a priority. Why is this important in schools? There is a positive connection between health and academic achievement. A positive school culture that includes an emphasis on wellness builds a culture of success.

Program goals for participating schools

- Build or re-energize a School Health Team.
- Assess the school health environment using the Healthy School Action Tools (HSAT).
- Empower students to make healthy choices that include fruit, vegetables, low-fat dairy, whole grains and lean protein every day.
- Empower students to be more physically active every day.
- Evaluate, sustain and share successful implementation strategies.



Program overview

The Building Healthy Communities: Step Up for School Wellness program provides students, teachers and administrators with the tools they need to create a healthy school environment that supports a culture of wellness. This program integrates the recommended process from Michigan’s new **Steps to a Healthy School*** website and uses the same five action-focused steps outlined below. The Building Healthy Communities: Step Up for School Wellness program also allows schools to:

- **Choose two or more components to improve the school environment.** Choose at least one physical activity or physical education component and at least one healthy eating or nutrition education component from seven options.
- Receive the training, curriculum, resources, communication tools and equipment needed for successful implementation of their chosen components.



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Step 1

Build or re-energize a School Health Team

A School Health Team is a group of individuals from within and outside the school community interested in improving the health and wellness of youth. The overall goal of School Health Teams is to create a healthy school environment where students can learn about and practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors that ultimately have a positive effect on health and academic performance.

Participating schools will:

- Identify a primary school contact to oversee this program and the work of establishing a culture of wellness.
- Identify a team that includes:
 - 1) Primary school contact
 - 2) School administrator
 - 3) Focus Area 1 contact(s) for Physical Activity and Physical Education
 - 4) Focus Area 2 contact(s) for Healthy Eating and Nutrition Education
 - 5) Two additional team members, such as a classroom teacher, health education teacher, physical education teacher, school food service director, student representative, parent, school nurse, school counselor, community member or school board member.
- Participate in a one-hour, online orientation webinar on program steps and expectations.
- Set up short, monthly, internal team meetings to stay on task with action planning and discuss program implementation.
- Work together to complete each of the five steps in the program.
- Display program signage and use communication tools that include daily morning announcements, social media posts, newsletter articles and media messages that support a culture of wellness.

Step 2

Assess the school health environment

Conducting an assessment of a school health environment allows a school to identify strengths and weaknesses of current practices and policies. It also offers an opportunity to prioritize actions to improve or eliminate the challenges or barriers to achieving a healthy school environment. Michigan's **Healthy School Action Tools** (HSAT) provides comprehensive tools for Michigan schools to create a culture that supports learning by first measuring the health of school environments, then establishing an action plan that encourages interventions based on best practices. The school-level tools include a School Core Assessment, seven topic areas for assessment, feedback reports and an action plan. These tools allow schools to quickly measure how well their existing foundation supports school health and, in turn, suggest meaningful improvements that are prioritized into a customized action plan.

Participating schools will:

- Receive \$500 for substitute teacher pay or stipends to allow participating staff time to complete the HSAT assessments outlined below and develop an action plan.
- Receive \$500 for implementation of the HSAT action plan items that improve physical activity, physical education, healthy eating or nutrition education for students and staff.
- Complete the HSAT Core Assessment with their School Health Team.
- Complete the HSAT Healthy Eating Assessment and Physical Education—Physical Activity Assessment with their School Health Team once at the beginning of the program and again at the end of the school year.
- Receive funding described above upon completion of all three assessments.
- Develop and maintain an HSAT action plan based on the results of the Core Assessment and topic area assessments.
- Be provided with an external coach to answer questions about the HSAT assessments and action plan.



Step 3

Gather your tools and take action

Building Healthy Communities provides schools with an opportunity to target efforts on high priority actions, chosen by the individual school. These efforts will improve student health and transform the school environment through education, healthy eating and physical activity. This healthy school transformation looks different for every school. The Building Healthy Communities: Step Up for School Wellness program is specifically designed to be flexible and fit the unique needs of each individual school environment and its community. Students, teachers and administrators will be provided the tools they need to change their school environment. They will work together as a team, one step at a time, using best practices that are theoretically sound and evidence-based, linked with state and national health and education standards, school friendly, and supported by schools here in Michigan.

The Building Healthy Communities: Step Up for School Wellness program has two focus areas with multiple components to choose from:

Focus Area 1: Physical Activity and Physical Education	Focus Area 2: Healthy Eating and Nutrition Education
Classroom Physical Activity Breaks	Healthy Smoothies
Active Recess	Smarter Lunchrooms
Quality Physical Education	Healthy Parties and Celebrations
	Nutrition Education

Participating schools will:

- **Choose two or more components**, at least one from each Focus Area, and integrate these components into their school environment:
 - **Focus Area 1:** Physical Activity and Physical Education
 - **Focus Area 2:** Healthy Eating and Nutrition Education
- Have each Focus Area contact participate in an online, one-hour training on their component and share the information with other team members as appropriate.
- Receive and use the necessary program materials and equipment to support chosen components.

- Receive and use the *Step Up for School Wellness Program Guide* and *Program Guide Supplements* for each component selected. Each guide includes a detailed list of program materials and equipment, a tracking log with program requirements and timeline, and a step-by-step how to with best practices.
- Work with an external coach provided by the program for technical assistance and to answer focus area questions.

Focus Area 1: Component options

Classroom Physical Activity Breaks

Focus Area 1:
Physical Activity and
Physical Education

Classroom Physical
Activity Breaks

Active Recess

Quality Physical
Education

(Can be selected for grades K-5 or K-8. Schools with grades 6-8 only should not select this component.)

GoNoodle brings physical activity to the classroom by providing a variety of online games and videos that lead students in two to 15 minutes of stretching, running, dancing and deep breathing exercises. GoNoodle channels students' natural energy and enhances classroom engagement, behavior, focus and achievement. Each class selects a champ, a virtual mascot, who grows and changes as the class earns the minutes of physical activity needed to advance to the next level. Students can play GoNoodle's activities on an interactive whiteboard, projector or computer screen. GoNoodle Plus offers easy-to-use, exclusive games and activities that incorporate movement into core subjects to develop fluency

in math and English language arts. Combining physical movement, repetition and skills practice to support memory and recall, the games reinforce classroom lessons and create an opportunity for kinesthetic learning. Students get measurable, incremental minutes of physical activity and teachers see immediate benefits of improved engagement with students, leading to better classroom performance. GoNoodle Plus also includes the My Questions feature that allows teachers to create custom sets of lists and questions.

Participating schools will:

- Receive access to the online GoNoodle Plus program for all teachers, administrators and support staff.
- Have their teachers commit to implementing daily classroom physical activity breaks through GoNoodle Plus.
- Confirm their school can support the following technical requirements in each classroom:
 - A computer that runs a modern browser and Flash (v11 or higher).
 - A broadband Internet connection.
 - A screen that all students can see (for example, a projector, interactive whiteboard or big monitor).
- Identify an administrator or teacher as the Focus Area 1 contact responsible for implementation.

Active Recess

(Can be selected for grades K-8)

Physical activity equipment and suggested activities, on a convenient mobile cart, were designed to help increase students' daily physical activity. Active Recess isn't intended to replace physical education. Instead it provides students with much needed opportunities for active play that allows them to release energy and reduce stress, both of which help improve attention in the classroom and decrease disruptive behavior.

Participating schools will:

- Receive an equipment package, which includes a Recess Pack with Cart and Series 1 and Series 2 Playground Activity Cards.
- Commit to use the cart and physical activity equipment at each recess period with all students.
- Carry out a plan for equipment use and storage.
- Provide routine physical activity demonstrations to maximize utilization, which offer opportunities for students to replicate these activities at home.
- Identify an administrator, teacher or other school staff member as the Focus Area 1 contact responsible for implementation.

Quality Physical Education

(Can be selected for grades K-12)

The *Exemplary Physical Education Curriculum*[™] (EPEC), introduced in 1994, was developed in Michigan and is a nationally recognized, quality comprehensive education program. Grades K-5 EPEC is nutrition-enhanced and includes FitBits[™], brief, fun physical activity breaks. Grade 6-12 EPEC includes Lifetime Activity Modules. EPEC leads to physical literacy for learners where the aim is to help students achieve the skills, confidence and motivation to be physically active today and tomorrow. EPEC can boost school success while reinforcing healthy eating and physical literacy.

Participating schools will:

- Receive grade-specific EPEC materials at training. The K-5 curriculum is a boxed set that includes objectives related to a wide range of physical activities. The 6-12 curriculum is broken into six Lifetime Activity Modules: Personal Conditioning, Basketball, Golf, Resistance Training, Volleyball and Soccer.
- Receive grade-specific equipment package (K-5 equipment package or 6-12 personal conditioning starter kit) and other support materials needed to teach EPEC lessons.
- Receive funding for training-related expenses (namely registration fee, physical education teacher substitute pay and travel).
- Have their physical education teachers commit to best practice. For grades K-5, teach at least three EPEC objectives per semester. For grades 6-12, implement the Personal Conditioning overview that includes full lessons for a set period of time (for example, two weeks) and then apply the skills learned in 10-15 minute time blocks during each class period throughout the school year, and select two other Lifetime Activity Modules to be taught sometime during the school year to the same students.
- Identify a physical education teacher as the Focus Area 1 contact responsible for implementation.

Focus Area 2: Component options

Focus Area 2:
Healthy Eating and
Nutrition Education

Healthy Smoothies

Smarter Lunchrooms

Healthy Parties and
Celebrations

Nutrition Education

Healthy Smoothies

(Can be selected for grades K-12, must participate in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs)

Statistics and sales show smoothies are a popular drink option outside of school with youth. Smoothies allow school food service departments to capitalize on this trend by providing students with a well-balanced, nutritious meal that can be adapted to meet a variety of taste preferences. Smoothies are also a great option for healthier classroom parties, after-school parent events and fundraising. The commercial blender also can be used to create healthy yogurt dips for fruits and vegetables, bean dip with whole grain chips, the healthy possibilities are endless.

Participating schools will:

- Receive reimbursement, upon receipt of invoice, for a 1 or 1.5 gallon capacity, commercial-grade blender to be used for smoothies with milk and yogurt as key ingredients. Ordering information and order form to be provided.
- Receive \$250 and reimbursable school meal recipe templates to carry out a minimum of two taste tests with students.
- Use the blender on-site during the school breakfast or lunch mealtimes to offer smoothies as part of a reimbursable meal a minimum of three days per week.
- Make the blender available for use at other school events to serve smoothies.
- Submit total number of bulk yogurt and milk gallon purchases at the end of the school year for the duration of the program.
- Submit pre- and post-program data on breakfast and lunch participation.
- Identify a school food service professional as the Focus Area 2 contact responsible for implementation.

Smarter Lunchrooms

(Can be selected for grades K-12, must participate in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs)

The concept of a smarter lunchroom was developed by the Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs, also known as the BEN Center. The BEN Center applies behavioral economics that target the behavioral triggers that lead to the selection and eating of healthier foods in healthier quantities. A few examples of best practices in behavioral economics include:

- Asking students to identify ways to promote healthier food selection.
- Moving salad bars and fruit closer to students' reach to increase both sales and consumption.
- Providing a choice among several vegetables rather than forcing one vegetable in order to increase consumption.
- Requiring high school students to pay cash only to purchase unhealthy foods and drinks.

The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement has a set of best practices for schools to use that are effective at creating an environment that nudges kids toward healthful choices. These best practices are solution-based principles that focus on specific aspects of the school meal, including fruits, vegetables, entrees, reimbursable meals and dairy.

Participating schools will:

- Receive \$250 to complete the following items from the Smarter Lunchrooms Scorecard:
 - All of the actions under: Focusing on Fruit **or** Promoting Vegetables and Salad
 - At least two actions under: Student Involvement
- Have their food service director or school kitchen staff commit to carry out Smarter Lunchrooms changes.
- Complete a 30-minute, online Production Records training.
- Consider participating in an optional evaluation that will randomly select schools to participate in a three-day plate waste study overseen by external Michigan Team Nutrition staff. Results will determine if Smarter Lunchrooms changes affect consumption of certain foods.
- Submit copies of production records for five days (before and after).
- Form a Smarter Lunchrooms student advisory team of at least two to eight students.
- Complete the *Smarter Lunchrooms Self-Assessment Scorecard* twice (before and after program implementation) with assistance from a coach. Click here to access the scorecard:
http://smarterlunchrooms.org/resource/lunchroom-self-assessment-score-card*.
- Have students take at least five pictures of their eating environment before the assessment and take another five pictures after the assessment.
- Identify a school food service professional as the Focus Area 2 contact responsible for implementation.

Healthy Parties and Celebrations

(Can be selected for elementary and middle school buildings)

Birthday and holiday parties are commonplace in schools throughout the year. While these celebrations are a great way for students to take a break from their daily learning structure and interact in a relaxed atmosphere, the foods offered can send conflicting health messages. Unhealthy food choices such as cupcakes, cookies, candy, chips and sugary beverages generally take center stage at these celebrations. While a healthy, well-balanced diet can include these low-nutrient foods and beverages, they should not be offered at school without a balance of healthy food choices that include fruit, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy and lean protein. Learning to effectively communicate the importance of healthy eating with parents can reinforce health education messages already being taught in the classroom and highlighted on posters in the hallways and cafeteria. The lessons learned should be integrated into school policy to encourage consistency and sustainability.

Participating schools will:

- Receive a school kit with resources to support Healthy Parties and Celebrations.
- Receive \$500 to carry out healthy taste tests with students and parents in a minimum of five classrooms.

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- Have their school administrator commit to support teachers as they carry out strategies from the Healthy Parties and Celebrations resources and school taste test outcomes, and encourage participation in 75 percent of classrooms.
- Educate parents and school staff on the benefits of healthy food choices in the classroom.
- Develop and fulfill a school policy around healthy parties and celebrations using program resources for ideas and guidance and results from healthy taste tests.
- Share policy and experiences with district leaders and explore ways to include their district's local school wellness policy.
- Identify a classroom teacher, administrator or parent leader as the Focus Area 2 contact responsible for implementation.

Nutrition Education

(Can be selected for grades K–12)

Michigan Model for Health™ is a nationally recognized, evidence-based health education curriculum that aims to teach K–12 students the knowledge and skills needed to practice and maintain healthy behaviors and lifestyles. The curriculum provides age-appropriate lessons that address issues commonly faced by students, including proper nutrition, physical activity, and other wellness and safety concerns. These 20- to 45-minute lessons are designed to be taught by the classroom teacher, and they include extension ideas for core subjects, such as language arts and social studies, as well as ways to extend the learning outside of the classroom. The curriculum also provides information for parents about the content that students are learning in the classroom and suggestions for related activities that can be done at home.

Participating schools will:

- Receive funding for training related expenses (namely registration fee, teacher substitute pay and travel).
- Have their classroom teachers commit to attend a required training for a minimum of three hours.
- Receive grade-specific Michigan Model for Health curriculum at training.
- Receive grade-specific student workbooks, posters and other support materials needed to teach Michigan Model for Health lessons.
- Have their classroom teachers commit to teach nutrition and physical activity lessons from the Michigan Model for Health in all of the classrooms at the grade levels selected.

Grade	Number of lessons
K	3 (20 minutes each)
1	3 (25 minutes each)
2	3 (25 minutes each)
3	5 (30 minutes each)
4	4 (40 minutes each)
5	4 (40 minutes each)
6	7 (45 minutes each)
7-8	11 (40 minutes each)
9-12	10 (40 minutes each)

- Identify a classroom teacher as the Focus Area 2 contact responsible for implementation.

Step 4

Evaluate and sustain your actions

Evaluation is crucial to understanding the success of any program and provides access to key information that links future programming to long-term sustainability. All data will be kept confidential, and project reports won't identify schools or individuals.

Participating schools will:

- Complete the HSAT Core Assessment and two HSAT topic area assessments (Healthy Eating and Physical Education - Physical Activity) by Dec. 31, 2016.
- Complete two HSAT topic area assessments again (Healthy Eating and Physical Education - Physical Activity) by May 31, 2017.
- Complete an online status report in January 2017 and May 2017 (15 minutes).



Step 5

Share your success

Schools put a substantial amount of time, effort and expertise into their school environment to establish policies and practices that support healthy behaviors and provide opportunities for students to learn about and practice those behaviors. These lessons learned should be shared so your school or school district's success can help other schools and districts make improvements by providing ideas as well as inspiration.

Participating schools will:

- Develop and submit a success story on the outcomes for each of the selected components.
- Submit photos highlighting program successes—two for each selected component and one additional photo that reflects a program outcome of your choice.



Program eligibility

- Any K-12 public, charter or private nonprofit school in Michigan is eligible.
- Building Healthy Communities is available to schools regardless of their:
 - Free and reduced-price school meal percentage
 - Geographic location
 - Participation in other school wellness grants, programs or initiatives
- Schools that have already participated in a Building Healthy Communities program are not eligible to apply at this time.

Key dates at a glance

Sept. 13, 2016	Informational webinar at 10 a.m.
Sept. 30, 2016	Applications due by 5 p.m.
Oct. 17, 2016	School awards announced
Oct. 17, 2016	Program implementation begins

Selection criteria

Selection will be based on a school's readiness. School readiness will be determined by the existence of a School Health Team that is committed to participate in the program, carry out the required components within the stated timeline and sustain the program for the future.

How to apply

1. If you are interested in learning more about the program or have questions about the application, you can participate in an informational webinar at 10 a.m. Sept. 13, 2016. Register for the webinar at <http://www2.actionforhealthykids.org/l/21152/2016-07-18/4rrmny>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.
2. Go to <http://buildinghealthycommunities.arewehealthy.com>* and click on Useful Links to review the Frequently Asked Questions if needed.
3. Go to <http://buildinghealthycommunities.arewehealthy.com>*, register and complete the required online application by 5 p.m. Sept. 30, 2016. The application doesn't have to be completed in one sitting.
4. If your school has questions about the program or application process, email Deb Grischke at dgrischke@actionforhealthykids.org.

We're committed to investing in the next generation of Michigan residents and creating a healthier future for our state.



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