

HEALTHY SCHOOLS PROGRAM

framework

of best practices





HEALTHY STUDENTS LEARN BETTER.

**STUDIES SHOW HEALTHY STUDENTS PERFORM
BETTER ON TESTS, ATTEND SCHOOL MORE OFTEN
AND BEHAVE BETTER IN CLASS.**

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation believes every child deserves a healthy future. For more than a decade, Healthier Generation has been empowering kids to develop lifelong healthy habits by ensuring the environments that surround them provide and promote good health. Our Healthy Schools Program helps to create and sustain healthier school environments where students, especially those in greatest need, can learn more and flourish. The Program is an evidence-based initiative that creates healthy change in schools and is proven to have a positive impact on student health.

The Healthy Schools Program Framework of Best Practices identifies specific criteria for a healthy school environment and serves as a guide for policy and practice change. It aligns with the 2017 School Health Index, created by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which reflects the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model (WSCC). The WSCC model recognizes the connection between health and academic achievement and promotes an inclusive, school-wide approach to student health. The CDC retains the full comprehensive School Health Index at [cdc.gov/healthyYouth](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyYouth), addressing seven health topics: physical activity and physical education, nutrition, tobacco use prevention, alcohol and other drug use prevention, chronic health conditions (e.g., asthma and food allergies), unintentional injury and violence prevention (safety), and sexual health.

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Schools.HealthierGeneration.org hosts an assessment tool, which is a version of the School Health Index that addresses the health topics in the Healthy Schools Program Framework of Best Practices:



Healthier Generation recommends that schools use the six-step process to implement the framework:

- 1.** Convene a school wellness committee
- 2.** Assess your school's health environment using Healthier Generation's Healthy Schools Program assessment
- 3.** Develop an action plan based on what's important and achievable at your school
- 4.** Explore resources and tools available to help your school
- 5.** Take action to implement your plan and achieve your goals
- 6.** Celebrate your success and monitor your progress

Visit **Schools.HealthierGeneration.org** to access the assessment.



HEALTHIER GENERATION IS WITH YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

Behind the framework's best practices and evidence-based recommendations is a team of people ready to help you create and sustain a healthier school environment. Healthier Generation provides technical assistance, in-person and virtual trainings. To further assist with implementation, we also help you access and use state-of-the-art tools and resources, such as the Healthier Generation Store with Amazon Business, the Smart Food Planner, Virtual Training Center and more!

This framework, implementation tools, and our team help your school work toward Healthier Generation's National Healthy Schools Award, and in turn, a spot on our annual national list of America's Healthiest Schools. Schools that receive this prestigious award have transformed their environments into healthier places by meeting the criteria in this framework.

BEST PRACTICES FOR **Policy and Environment**

P0-1 Representative school health committee or team:

School has a representative committee or team that meets at least four times a year and oversees school health and safety policies and programs.

P0-2 Written school health and safety policies:

School or district has written health and safety policies that include the following components:

- Rationale for developing and implementing the policies
- Population for which the policies apply (e.g., students, staff, visitors)
- Where the policies apply (e.g., on and/or off school property)
- When the policies apply
- Programs supported by the policies
- Designation of person(s) responsible (e.g., school administrator(s), teachers) for implementing the policies
- Designation of person(s) responsible (e.g., school administrator(s), teachers) for enforcing the policies
- Communication procedures (e.g., through staff meetings, professional development, website, staff handbook, parent handbook) of the policies
- Procedures for addressing policy infractions
- Definitions of terms

P0-3 Local school wellness policy: School has implemented all of the following components of the district's local wellness policy:

- Specific goals for nutrition education and promotion activities
- Specific goals for physical activity opportunities
- Specific goals for other school-based activities that promote student wellness
- Nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold on the school campus during the school day that are consistent with Federal regulations for school meals and Smart Snacks in School (See page 15 for more information.)

- Standards for all foods and beverages provided, but not sold, to students during the school day (e.g., in classroom parties or classroom snacks brought by parents).
- Policies for marketing and advertising of only those foods and beverages that meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards on the school campus during the school day.
- Permit parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public to participate in the development, implementation, and review and update of the local school wellness policy.
- Identified one or more school district and/or school official(s) who have the authority and responsibility to ensure each school complies with the policy.
- Informed and updated the public (including parents, students and others in the community) about the local school wellness policy on an annual basis.
- At least once every three years, measure:
 - the extent to which schools are in compliance with the local school wellness policy,
 - the extent to which the local education agency's local wellness policy compares to model local school wellness policies, and
 - the progress made in attaining the goals of the local wellness policy and made this assessment available to the public.

P0-4 School start times (middle and high schools only):

School day starts at 8:30 a.m. or later to promote sufficient sleep and improved health and academic performance.

P0-5 Health services provided by a full-time school nurse:

School has a full-time, registered school nurse responsible for health services all day, every day.

BEST PRACTICES FOR **Policy and Environment**

P0-6 Counseling, psychological and social services provided by a full-time counselor, social worker and psychologist: School has access to a full-time counselor, social worker, or psychologist for providing counseling, psychological and social services.

P0-7 Parenting strategies: School provides educational resources for families that address all of the following parenting strategies:

- Praising and rewarding desirable behavior
- Staying actively involved with children in fun activities
- Making time to listen and talk with their children
- Setting expectations for appropriate behavior and academic performance
- Sharing parental values
- Communicating with children about health-related risks and behaviors
- Making a small number of clear, understandable rules designed to increase level of self-management (e.g., routine household chores, homework, time spent using TV and computer)
- Consistently enforcing family rules with consequences (e.g., an additional chore, restricting TV/computer use for the evening)
- Monitoring children's daily activities (knowing child's whereabouts and friends)

- Modeling nonviolent responses to conflict
- Modeling healthy behaviors
- Emphasizing the importance of children getting enough sleep
- Providing a supportive learning environment in the home

P0-8 Family engagement in school decision making: Families have opportunities to be involved in school decision making for health and safety policies and programs.

P0-9 Community involvement in school health initiatives: School partners with local community organizations, businesses, or local hospitals to engage students and their families in health promotion activities.

P0-10 Out-of-school programs: School works with community-based, out-of-school programs (e.g., Boys & Girls Clubs, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Parks and Recreation) to develop and implement routine activities that promote health* for all participating students.

** Note: Routine activities that promote health refer to activities that are intended to improve student health status, such as health assessments, health education and physical activity/physical education.*



"We modeled our policy after the suggestions offered by Healthier Generation. As a result, our entire district has a true, meaningful, and purposeful wellness policy that addresses every topic from student mental health, nutrition, physical activity, medical practices, and staff wellness."

– **Hugh Brockway**, Physical Education Teacher,
Lovettsville Elementary School, Virginia

BEST PRACTICES FOR Nutrition Services

NS-1 Breakfast and lunch programs: School offers school meals* (both breakfast and lunch) programs that are fully accessible to all students.

NS-2 School breakfast: School uses strategies to maximize participation in school breakfast program.

NS-3 School lunch: School provides multiple alternative points of sale for reimbursable meals, such as outside lines, kiosks, grab-and-go-options, reimbursable vending options, to maximize participation in the National School Lunch Program.

NS-4 Variety of offerings in school meals: School meals* include a variety of offerings that meet six to eight of the following criteria:

Lunch

- Go beyond the National School Lunch Program requirements to offer one additional serving per week from any of the 3 vegetable subgroups (e.g., dark green, red and orange, dry beans and peas)
- Offer a different fruit every day of the week during lunch (100% fruit juice can be counted as a fruit only once per week)
- Offer fresh fruit at least 1 day per week
- Offer foods that address the cultural practices of the student population
- Offer an alternative entrée option at least 1 time per week that is legume-based, reduced-fat dairy or fish-based (including tuna)
- Offer at least 3 different types of whole grain-rich food items each week

Breakfast

- Offer at least 3 different fruits and vegetables each week (100% fruit juice can be counted as a fruit only once per week)
- Offer fresh fruit at least 1 day per week

**A school meal is a set of foods that meets school meal program regulations. This does not include à la carte offerings.*

NS-5 Promote healthy food and beverage choices and school meals using marketing and merchandising techniques: Healthy food and beverage choices are promoted through 10 or more of the following techniques:

- A variety of mixed whole fruits are displayed in nice bowls or baskets (instead of stainless steel pans)
- Fruit is offered in at least two locations on all service lines, one of which is right before each point of sale (POS)

- Vegetables are offered on all serving lines
- At least one vegetable is identified as the featured vegetable-of-the-day and is labeled with a creative, descriptive name at the point of selection
- Place pre-packed salads or salad bar, if available, in a high traffic area
- Label pre-packaged salads or salad bar choices with creative, descriptive names and display next to each choice

BEST PRACTICES FOR Nutrition Services

- Self-serve salad bar tongs, scoops and containers are larger for vegetables and smaller for croutons, dressing, and other non-produce items
- White milk is displayed in front of other beverages in all coolers
- 1% or non-fat white milk is identified as the featured milk and is labeled with a creative, descriptive name
- Cafeteria staff politely prompt students who do not have a full reimbursable meal to select a fruit or vegetable
- Signs show students how to make a reimbursable meal on any service line
- Alternative entrée options (salad bar, yogurt parfaits, etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas
- Cafeteria staff smile and greet students upon entering the service line and continually throughout meal service
- Students, teachers or administrators announce today's menu in daily announcements
- A monthly menu is posted in the main office
- Information about the benefits of school meals is provided to teachers and administration at least annually
- Brand, name and decorate the lunchroom in a way that reflects the student body
- Conduct a taste test of a new entrée at least once a year

NS-6 Annual continuing education and training requirements for school nutrition services staff: All school nutrition program directors, managers and staff meet or exceed the annual continuing education/training hours required by the USDA's Professional Standards requirements. (Topics covered may include, but are not limited to, food safety and HACCP, nutrition standards updates in school meals, food sensitivities and allergies, purchasing and procurement, meal counting and claiming, customer service or food production techniques.)

NS-7 Venues outside the cafeteria offer fruits and vegetables: Most or all venues outside the cafeteria (e.g., vending machines, school stores, canteens, snack bars or snack or food carts) where food is available offer fruits and non-fried vegetables.

NS-8 Collaboration between nutrition services staff members and teachers: School nutrition services staff members use three or more of the following methods to collaborate with teachers to reinforce nutrition education lessons taught in the classroom:

- Participate in design and implementation of nutrition education programs
- Display educational and informational materials that reinforce classroom lessons
- Provide food for use in classroom nutrition education lessons
- Provide ideas for classroom nutrition education lessons
- Teach lessons or give presentations to students
- Tasting party in collaboration with classroom teacher
- Presentation on nutrition and food services to PTA/PTSA/PTO
- Sports nutrition – collaboration with coaches
- Classroom tour of cafeteria or meet and greet with school nutrition staff

NS-9 Student and family involvement in the school meal programs and other foods and beverages sold, served, and offered on school campus: Students and family members have opportunities to provide both suggestions for school meals and other foods and beverages sold, served, and offered on school campus and feedback on the meal programs and other foods and beverages sold, served and offered on school campus.

BEST PRACTICES FOR Nutrition Services

NS-10 Prohibit using food as reward or punishment: School prohibits giving students food as a reward and withholding food as punishment. This prohibition is consistently followed.

NS-11 Adequate time to eat school meals: Students have at least 10 minutes to eat breakfast and at least 20 minutes to eat lunch, counting from the time they are seated.

NS-12 Farm to School activities: School is implementing four to five of the following Farm to School activities:

- Local and/or regional products are incorporated into the school meal program

- Messages about agriculture and nutrition are reinforced throughout the learning environment
- School hosts a school fruit or vegetable garden
- School hosts field trips to local farms
- School utilizes promotions or special events, such as tastings, that highlight the local/regional products
- School hosts a farmer's market (student and parent involvement)
- Menu states local product(s) being served
- Local farmers/producers participate in career day activities

"Students are not rewarded with candy and sweets, but rather with 'Bull Dog Bucks' that can be spent on toys, books and extra playing time."

—Doretha Pearson, Student Wellness Coordinator,
Normandy Schools Collaborative, Missouri



BEST PRACTICES FOR Smart Snacks

- SS-1 USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards* (foods sold during the school day):** All competitive foods sold to students during the school day meet or exceed the USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. This includes à la carte, vending, school stores, snack or food carts, and any food-based fundraising (school follows fundraising exemptions and guidance set by their state agency, which also must adhere to the federal Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards).
- SS-2 USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards* (beverages sold during the school day):** All competitive beverages sold to students during the school day meet or exceed the USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. This includes à la carte, vending, school stores, snack or food carts, and any food-based fundraising (school follows fundraising exemptions and guidance set by their state agency, which also must adhere to the federal Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards).
- SS-3 Food and beverage marketing:** School limits food and beverage marketing on school campus to foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA's Smart Snack in School nutrition standards. This may include, but is not limited to, marketing and branding in cafeterias, hallways, common spaces, classrooms, staff lounges or school stores; and on snack or food carts, vending machine exteriors, display racks, food or beverage cups or containers, coolers, athletic equipment and sports bags.
- SS-4 USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards* (served and offered during the school day):** All foods and beverages served and offered to students during the school day meet or exceed the USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. This includes snacks that are not part of a federally reimbursed child nutrition program, birthday parties, holiday parties and school-wide celebrations.
- SS-5 USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards* (sold during the extended school day):** All foods and beverages sold to students during the extended school day meet or exceed the USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. This includes vending machines, school stores and snack or food carts.
- SS-6 USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards* (served and offered during the extended school day):** All foods and beverages served and offered to students during the extended school day meet or exceed the USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. This includes snacks that are not part of a federally reimbursed child nutrition program, birthday parties, holiday parties, and school-wide celebrations.
- SS-7 USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards* (fundraising):** Fundraising efforts during and outside school hours sell only non-food items or only foods and beverages that meet or exceed the USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. This may include, but is not limited to, donation nights; cookie dough, candy, and pizza sales; and market days.

"Healthy food choices are promoted in the lunchroom and during special activities. A variety of fruits and vegetables are offered for breakfast and lunch and are accessible to all students and staff."

– Stephen Caropreso, Assistant Principal, Palmer Elementary School, Illinois

***Smart Snacks in School – Nutrition Standards for Food**

Any food sold in schools must:

- ✓ Be a grain product that contains 50% or more whole grains by weight or have whole grains as the first ingredient; or
- ✓ Have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food (e.g., beans, eggs, poultry, meat, nuts, seeds, etc.); or
- ✓ Be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable

Foods must also meet several nutrient requirements:

Calorie limits:

- Snack items: ≤ 200 calories
- Entrée items: ≤ 350 calories

Sodium limits:

- Snack items: ≤ 200 mg
- Entrée items: ≤ 480 mg

Fat limits:

- Total fat: ≤35% of calories
- Saturated fat: < 10% of calories
- Trans fat: zero grams

Sugar limit:

- ≤ 35% of weight from total sugars in foods

***Smart Snacks in School – Nutrition Standards for Beverages**

All schools may sell:

- Plain water (with or without carbonation)
- Unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat free milk and milk alternatives permitted by NSLP/SBP
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation), and no added sweeteners

There is no portion size limit for plain water. Middle schools and high schools may sell up to 12-ounce portions of milk and juice.

Additional options for high school:

- Calorie-free beverages that are labeled to contain <5 calories per 8 fluid ounces or <10 calories per 20 fluid ounces in up to 20 ounce portions
- Lower-calorie beverages with < 40 calories per 8 fluid ounces, or < 60 calories per 12 ounces in up to 12 ounce portions

Go to <https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator> to determine if your food or beverage is Smart Snacks in School compliant!

BEST PRACTICES FOR

Health and Physical Education

HPE-1 Minutes of physical education per week (elementary schools only): All students in each grade receive physical education for at least 150 minutes per week throughout the school year.

HPE-2 Years of physical education (middle and high schools only): Students are required to take the equivalent to all academic years of physical education.

HPE-3 Sequential physical education curriculum consistent with standards: All teachers of physical education use an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum that is consistent with national or state standards for physical education (see National Standards).

HPE-4 Students active at least 50% of class time: Teachers keep students moderately to vigorously active for at least 50% of the time during most or all physical education class sessions.

HPE-5 Professional development for physical education teachers: All teachers of physical education are required to participate at least once a year in professional development in physical education.

HPE-6 Information and materials for physical education teachers: All teachers of physical education are provided with the following information and materials to assist in delivering physical education:

- Goals, objectives, and expected outcomes for physical education
- A chart scope and sequence for instruction
- A written physical education curriculum
- A plan for assessing student performance
- Physical activity monitoring devices, such as pedometers, heart rate monitors
- Internet resources, such as SHAPE America online tools and resources or PE Central
- The Presidential Youth Fitness Program
- Protocols to assess or evaluate student performance in physical education
- Learning activities that increase the amount of class time students are engaged in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION

A physically literate individual:

1. Demonstrates competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.
2. Applies knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies and tactics related to movement and performance.
3. Demonstrates the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.
4. Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.
5. Recognizes the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction.

National Standards & Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education (SHAPE America & Human Kinetics, 2014)

- Learning activities that actively engage students with long-term physical, medical, or cognitive disabilities in physical education

HPE-7 Licensed physical education teachers: All physical education classes are taught by licensed teachers who are certified or endorsed to teach physical education.

HPE-8 Health education taught in all grades (elementary schools only): Students receive health education instruction in all grades.

HPE-9 Required health education course (middle and high schools only): School or district requires all students to take and pass at least one health education course. *If your school has more than four grade levels (e.g. 7-12) your school must require all students to take and pass at least two health education courses.*

BEST PRACTICES FOR Health and Physical Education

HPE-10 Essential topics on physical activity:

Health education curriculum addresses most of the following topics on physical activity:

- The physical, psychological or social benefits of physical activity
- How physical activity can contribute to a healthy weight
- How physical activity can contribute to the academic learning process
- How an inactive lifestyle contributes to chronic disease
- Health-related fitness, that is, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility and body composition
- Differences between physical activity, exercise and fitness
- Phases of an exercise session, that is, warm up, workout, and cool down
- Overcoming barriers to physical activity
- Decreasing sedentary activities, such as TV watching
- Opportunities for physical activity in the community
- Preventing injury during physical activity
- Weather-related safety, for example, avoiding heat stroke, hypothermia and sunburn while physically active
- Social influences on physical activity, including media, family, peers and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to physical activity and fitness
- How to influence, support or advocate for others to engage in physical activity
- How to resist peer pressure that discourages physical activity

HPE-11 Essential topics on healthy eating: Health education curriculum addresses most of these essential topics on healthy eating:

- The relationship between healthy eating and personal health and disease prevention
- Food guidance from MyPlate

- Reading and using USDA's food labels
- Eating a variety of foods every day
- Balancing food intake and physical activity
- Eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grain products
- Choosing foods that are low in fat, saturated fat and cholesterol do not contain trans fat
- Choosing foods and beverages with little added sugars
- Eating more calcium-rich foods
- Preparing healthy meals and snacks
- Risks of unhealthy weight control practices
- Accepting body size differences
- Food safety
- Importance of water consumption
- Importance of eating breakfast
- Making healthy choices when eating at restaurants
- Social influences on healthy eating, including media, family, peers, and culture
- How to find valid information or services related to nutrition and dietary behavior
- How to take steps to achieve the personal goal to eat healthfully
- Resisting peer pressure related to unhealthy dietary behavior
- Influencing, supporting, or advocating for others' healthy dietary behavior

HPE-12 Opportunities to practice skills: All teachers of health education provide opportunities for students to practice or rehearse the skills needed to maintain and improve their health.

BEST PRACTICES FOR Physical Activity

PA-1 Recess (elementary schools only): Students are provided at least 20 minutes of recess during each school day, and teachers or recess monitors encourage students to be active.

PA-2 Availability of physical activity breaks in classrooms: All students are provided opportunities to participate in physical activity breaks in classrooms—outside of physical education, recess, and class transition periods—on all or most days during a typical school week.

Physical activity breaks are actual breaks that occur in academic classrooms allowing students to take a mental and physical break from current academic tasks. These breaks can occur at any time during the school day, last for 5-30 minutes, and occur all at once or several times during school day.

PA-3 Promotion or support of walking and bicycling to and/or from school: School promotes or supports walking and bicycling to school in six or more of the following ways:

- Designation of safe or preferred routes to school
- Promotional activities such as participation in International Walk to School Week, National Walk and Bike to School Week
- Secure storage facilities for bicycles and helmets (e.g., shed, cage, fenced area)
- Instruction on walking/bicycling safety provided to students
- Promotion of safe routes program to students, staff and parents via newsletters, websites, local newspaper
- Crossing guards
- Crosswalks on streets leading to schools
- Walking school buses
- Documentation of number of children walking and or biking to and from school
- Creation and distribution of maps of school environment (sidewalks, crosswalks, roads, pathways, bike racks, etc.)

PA-4 Availability of before and/or after school physical activity opportunities: School offers opportunities for all students to participate in physical activity either before and/or after the school day, for example, through organized physical activities (such as physical activity clubs, intramural sports, before school physical activities).

PA-5 Professional development for classroom teachers: All classroom teachers are required to participate at least once a year in professional development on promoting and integrating physical activity in the classroom.

PA-6 Prohibit using physical activity as punishment: School prohibits using physical activity and withholding physical education class as punishment. This prohibition is consistently followed.

Please do not consider issues related to participation in interscholastic sports for this best practice.

PA-7 Prohibit withholding recess as punishment (elementary schools only): School prohibits withholding recess as punishment. This prohibition is consistently followed.

PA-8 Access to physical activity facilities outside school hours: Indoor and outdoor physical activity facilities are open to students, their families and the community outside school hours.

Making facilities open and available to students, their families, and the community outside of school hours can be conducted as a regular practice or through a formal, written joint or shared-use agreement. A joint-use or shared-use agreement is a formal agreement between a school or school district and another public or private entity to jointly use either school facilities or community facilities to share costs and responsibilities.

"Having our students meet in the gym before school to walk and dance has helped them get energized to begin the school day."

– Michael Morales, Physical Education Teacher, Christa McAuliffe Elementary School, Texas



BEST PRACTICES FOR **Employee Wellness**

EW-1 Health assessments for staff members:

School or district offers staff members accessible and free or low-cost health assessments at least once a year.

EW-2 Programs for staff members on physical activity/fitness: School or district offers staff members accessible and free or low-cost physical activity/fitness programs.

EW-3 Programs for staff members on healthy eating/weight management: School or district offers staff members healthy eating/weight management programs that are accessible and free or low-cost.

EW-4 Promote staff member participation:

School or districts use three or more methods to promote and encourage staff member participation in its health promotion programs.

EW-5 Stress management programs for staff:

School or district offers staff members accessible and free or low-cost stress management programs at least once a year.

EW-6 USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards (foods and beverages served and sold to staff): All foods and beverages served and sold at staff meetings, school-sponsored staff events, and in the staff lounge meet USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. (See page 15.)

"We've given them the tools they need, and they share ideas with each other. Now, everyone is on board! I walk down the hall and see teachers doing Zumba® with their students."

– **Susanne Carpenter**, Principal, Atherton Elementary School, Michigan



Glossary

The following terms appear in the Healthy Schools Program Framework of Best Practices. The definitions are intended to clarify terms and assist schools in effectively interpreting criteria.

À la carte: a set of foods offered for sale from which students can choose individual items that are not usually counted as part of a reimbursable meal

At least 50% of class time: at least half of the total time scheduled for a physical education class session

Competitive foods and beverages: are those outside the federal school meals programs. They include those offered in vending machines, à la carte, school stores, snack bars, canteens, classroom parties, classroom snacks, school celebrations, fundraisers, or school meetings. These foods and beverages are required to meet science-based nutrition standards, as published by the USDA and required by the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and are often referred to as “Smart Snacks.” (See also Smart Snacks in School.)

Culturally appropriate activities and examples may include:

- highlighting the contributions and skills of diverse groups of people (e.g., diversity in race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, appearance, other personal characteristics)
- acknowledging, respecting, and appreciating student diversity
- validating and building students’ self-esteem and sense of culture and national background
- strengthening students’ skills to engage in intercultural interactions
- not stigmatizing or stereotyping individuals or groups
- building on the cultural resources of families
- featuring diverse groups of people in materials and presentations

Environment: the physical and aesthetic surroundings and the psychosocial climate and culture of the school; factors that influence the physical environment include the school building and the area surrounding it, any biological or chemical agents that are detrimental to health, and physical conditions such as temperature, noise, and lighting; the psychological environment

includes the physical, emotional, and social conditions that affect the well-being of students and staff

Extended school day: time during before and after school activities that includes clubs, intramural sports, band and choir practice, drama rehearsals, etc.

Fully accessible: the school (1) offers free and reduced-price meals for students who meet income requirements in a way that ensures these students are not identified by other students as recipients of these programs and (2) coordinates class and bus transportation schedules so that all students can eat breakfast and lunch at school

Health assessments might include:

- height and weight
- blood pressure
- cholesterol level
- blood sugar level
- physical activity participation
- dietary habits
- tobacco use
- alcohol and substance use
- safety (e.g., seat belts, helmets, smoke alarms, drinking and driving, coercive or abusive relationships)
- mental health

Health education: a planned, sequential, K-12 curriculum that addresses the physical, mental, emotional, and social dimensions of health; designed to motivate and assist students to maintain and improve their health, prevent disease, and reduce health-related risk behaviors; allows students to develop and demonstrate increasingly sophisticated health-related knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices; comprehensive curriculum includes a variety of topics such as personal health, family health, community health, consumer health, environmental health, sexuality

Glossary

education, mental and emotional health, injury prevention and safety, nutrition, prevention and control of disease, and substance use and abuse; provided by qualified, trained teachers

Moderately to vigorously active: engaging in physical activity that is equal in intensity to or more strenuous than fast walking; activities that cause an increase in heart rate, breathing, and body temperature

National/state standards for physical education: content standards that define what a student should know and be able to do as result of a quality health education or physical education program and that provide a framework for developing realistic and achievable expectations for student performance at every grade level

Nutrition Services: involve access to a variety of nutritious and appealing meals that accommodate the health and nutrition needs of all students. School nutrition programs reflect the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and other criteria to achieve nutrition integrity. The school nutrition services offer students a learning laboratory for classroom nutrition and health education and serve as a resource for linkages with nutrition-related community services. School nutrition services also operate Federal Child Nutrition Programs, such as the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP).

Outside school hours: the time before and after school and during evenings, weekends and school vacations

Physical activity breaks: actual breaks that occur in the academic classroom, allowing students to take a mental and physical break from current academic tasks. These breaks can occur at any time during the school day, last from 5– 30 minutes, and occur all at one time or several times during the school day (e.g., brain breaks, energizers, classroom activity breaks, etc.).

Physical education: structured physical education classes or lessons, not physical activity breaks or recess and not substitution of participation in a sport team, Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), marching band, etc., for physical education course credit; is a planned, sequential, K-12 curriculum that provides cognitive content and learning experiences in a variety of activity areas, such as basic movement skills; physical fitness; rhythm and dance; games; team, dual,



and individual sports; tumbling and gymnastics; and aquatics; quality physical education should promote each student's optimum physical, mental, emotional, and social development, including sports and activities that all students enjoy and can pursue throughout their lives. Physical education is provided by qualified, trained teachers.

Policies: are legal codes, rules, standards, administrative orders, guidelines, mandates, resolutions, or protocols. Policies are usually developed at the school district or state level and implemented at the school level.

Professional development: is the systematic process used to strengthen the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes of those who serve youth to improve the health, education and well-being of youth. It is consciously designed to actively engage learners and includes the planning, design, marketing, delivery, evaluation and follow-up of professional development offerings (events, information sessions and technical assistance).

Representative: may include school administrators, health education teachers, physical education teachers, mental health or social services staff members, nutrition services staff members, health services staff members, maintenance and transportation staff members, students, parents, community members, local health departments or organizations, faith-based organizations, businesses and local government representatives

Glossary



Sequential curriculum: a curriculum that builds on concepts taught in preceding years and provides opportunities to reinforce skills across topics and grade levels

Skills needed to maintain and improve health include:

- developing critical thinking and problem solving skills
- decision-making and assessing consequences of decisions
- developing communication skills
- developing refusal skills
- expressing feelings in a healthy way
- articulating goals to be healthy
- accessing valid and reliable health information
- identifying and countering health-compromising marketing strategies (e.g., tobacco or coping with difficult personal situations such as negative peer pressure and family changes)

- managing anger
- building positive relationships
- reading food labels
- planning healthy snacks
- developing a safe, individualized physical activity plan
- wearing and correctly using protective equipment (e.g., bicycle helmet, seat belt, eye protection)

Smart Snacks in School: are a set of science-based nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold to students on the school campus during the school day, which is defined as the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day. These standards, published by the USDA and required by the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, went in to effect July 1, 2014 and are required for all foods and beverages sold outside the school meals programs, including vending machines, a la carte, school stores, snack or food carts and in-school fundraising. The School Health Index refers to Smart Snacks in School in questions regarding foods and beverages that may not fall under the scope or time frame of Smart Snacks in School; however, consistent use of these standards when and wherever foods and beverages are available to students helps ensure a consistent message about healthy eating and nutritious choices is being sent to students at all times in all places.

Whole grain-rich: foods that contain 100% whole grain or contain a blend of whole grain meal and/or flour and enriched meal and/or flour of which at least 50% is whole grain; products must contain at least 50% whole-grains and the remaining grain, if any, must be enriched. Whole grain-rich products are not easily identified because whole grain content is not required on product labels. In practice, the simplest way to determine if a product is whole grain-rich is to look at where whole grains appear on the ingredient list. For non-mixed dishes (e.g., breads, cereals), a whole grain must be the primary ingredient by weight (that is, it is the first ingredient in the list). For mixed dishes (e.g., pizza, corn dogs) a whole grain must be the first grain ingredient in the list.) Detailed instructions for determining if a product is whole grain rich appear in the Whole Grains Resource for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, available online.

**"Healthier Generation
has motivated us to
take our school to the
next level in our pursuit
of a healthier staff and
student body."**

– Erin Gustream, Guidance Instructional Advisor,
William Saroyan Elementary School, California



ALLIANCE FOR A
HEALTHIER
GENERATION

