



*Building Healthy Communities*

# **Building Healthy Communities:**

Engaging Elementary Schools Through Partnership

**2020-2021**

**Request for Applications**

Applications due: Friday, April 17, 2020

More information can be found  
at [bcbsm.com/buildhealth](http://bcbsm.com/buildhealth)



## Introduction

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Michigan Fitness Foundation, United Dairy Industry of Michigan and Center for Health and Community Impact at Wayne State University invite Michigan elementary schools to apply for the 2020-2021 Building Healthy Communities program.

Healthy habits start young. Building Healthy Communities helps establish the knowledge and behaviors needed for a healthy lifestyle by:

- Educating students through classroom lessons and physical education curriculum
- Creating a healthy, supportive environment that makes the healthy choice the easy choice
- Encouraging students to practice lessons learned in the classroom
- Increasing access to physical activity opportunities
- Increasing access to healthy, nutrient-rich food and beverages

## Join our mission

Schools can help improve the health and academic potential of students, as well as the health of students' families and communities, by creating a culture of wellness through physical activity and healthy eating opportunities and education.

Research shows a positive connection exists between health and academic performance. That's why Building Healthy Communities partners with schools to foster cultures and environments where healthy choices are supported, encouraged and expected. Healthy habits start young, and Building Healthy Communities helps establish the knowledge.

## Eligibility

- Public, charter or private nonprofit elementary schools in Michigan are eligible.
- Building Healthy Communities is available to all schools regardless of their:
  - Free and reduced-price school meals percentage
  - Geographic location
- Schools that applied in prior years but didn't receive an award are encouraged to apply again.
- Schools that are taking part in other healthy eating, nutrition education, physical activity or physical education programs are eligible.
- Schools that have received a previous award from Building Healthy Communities aren't eligible for the program.

# Criteria for program awards

Participating elementary schools will be selected based on these criteria:

- Demonstrated commitment to carry out all components of the program and sustain them in future years.
- Identification of staff members who will be responsible for leading each program component and participating in one of the program orientations.
- Administrative support for the application and full implementation of the program.
- Evaluation of current school environment and participation in programs focused on healthy eating, nutrition education, physical activity and physical education.
- Submission of a complete application.
- Inclusion of community-based support isn't required, but applications that demonstrate additional financial contributions from organizations such as a local foundation, hospital or business are encouraged.

## How to apply

1. If you're interested in learning more about the program or have questions about the application, participate in an informational conference call at 10 a.m. on Thursday, February 20, 2020. To join the call, dial **712-770-4844** and use access code: **517761#**.
2. Review the frequently asked questions on the Wayne State University Center for Health and Community Impact website at <http://coe.wayne.edu/centerforhealthandcommunityimpact/building-healthy-communities.php> \*.
3. Contact Meredith Bowbeer with program or application questions at **313-577-4265** or [mbowbeer@wayne.edu](mailto:mbowbeer@wayne.edu).
4. Go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2020-2021-BHCApplication> \* to complete the online application by Friday, April 17, 2020.

# Healthy school transformation

Building Healthy Communities is built on a comprehensive school health philosophy under which healthy eating and physical activity opportunities and education are embedded throughout the school environment. This healthy school transformation gives students, teachers and administrators tools to change the school environment through healthy living activities and education. Success in this program involves a variety of people at the school who provide education and information for students at different times and places during the day.

Research shows that during the duration of the program, students:

- Eat more fruits and vegetables
- Are more physically active
- Reduce chronic disease risk and obesity
- Increase academic achievement in reading and math

## Key dates at a glance

- Application opens Monday, February 3, 2020
- Informational conference calls at 10 a.m. on Thursday, February 20, 2020
- Applications due by 5 p.m., Friday, April 17, 2020
- School awards announced on Friday, June 12, 2020
- School staff to one of the following regional program orientations:
  - Tuesday, August 25, 2020
  - Thursday, August 27, 2020
  - Wednesday, September 2, 2020
- Program implementation begins on Monday, September 14, 2020

## Participating schools will receive

- A hands-on coordinator to help establish the program and work closely with your school to ensure that the program is successful and can be sustained over time
- All program materials, equipment and training necessary for success
- Access to expertise to assist with your healthy school transformation



# The program

There are six core components in Building Healthy Communities: Engaging Elementary Schools Through Partnership. Interested schools must provide assurances that they're able to carry out all six components to be selected.

## 1. Principal engagement

For school-based health initiatives to be successful, school principals must be fully engaged. Our research shows principal social support is one of the biggest factors in the success of this program with students.

### **Principals will:**

- Attend program orientation and support staff in doing so.
- Display the Building Healthy Communities banner and other promotional materials.
- Ensure the Healthy Announcements are read daily.
- Send healthy eating and physical activity messaging home for parents and caregivers, including newsletters and healthy living tips.
- Identify and support staff to attend a Healthy School Action Tools workshop, complete the assessments and develop an action plan.
- Support teachers, staff, students and the assigned healthy school coordinator to complete all program requirements.

## 2. Classroom education on healthy eating and physical activity

Academic classrooms provide an ideal location to promote healthy eating and physical activity. They also provide a way for families to receive educational materials about healthy living. Classroom teachers will receive healthy eating and physical activity materials and curriculum.

### **Classroom teachers will:**

- Teach brief healthy eating lessons, which provide students and families with strategies to follow the USDA *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. A healthy school coordinator will model a series of lessons and provide mentoring and guidance to support classroom teacher implementation.
- Conduct short physical activity breaks during school days to boost students' brain activity.
- Share healthy living resources, healthy homework and tip sheets with parents through email and take-home materials.
- Use the recess cart and recess equipment regularly.

### 3. Quality physical education

Quality physical education lays the foundation for a lifetime of physical activity. This program assists PE teachers in meeting all Society for Health and Physical Education America and Michigan Department of Education Physical Education Standards and Benchmarks. The program provides the Exemplary Physical Education Curriculum, an evidence-based curriculum aligned to both state and national PE standards.

#### **Physical educators will:**

- Participate in one in-person, virtual or on-site EPEC professional development.
- Receive the full EPEC curriculum and implement in all elementary grades.
- Receive a package of age-appropriate physical activity equipment needed to teach the entire curriculum.
- Receive physical education and physical activity take-home materials and electronic resources to integrate families into the education process.

### 4. Active recess

Physical activity equipment and play guidance at recess increases students' physical activity levels and learning readiness.

#### **Schools will:**

- Receive a mobile recess cart fully stocked with fun physical activity equipment.
- Use the mobile cart daily with access to all grade levels.
- Share physical activity materials and messaging through take-home materials and electronic resources.
- Receive mentoring to assist with teaching students high-activity indoor and outdoor recess.

### 5. Student leadership team

Getting students engaged in the school transformation process is an excellent way to help schools make and sustain change. This program component empowers students to build leadership skills and helps schools improve their environments and policies. The United Dairy Industry of Michigan will provide additional support for this component.

#### **Schools will:**

- Choose an adult team adviser to guide students.
- Recruit a team of 8-12 students to meet at least once monthly.
- Complete a pre- and post-school environment nutrition assessment.
- Implement a minimum of one student-led initiative focused on healthy eating habits that support school policy and environmental change. Schools will be provided a list of activities to choose from and implementation will receive support resources.
- Share success and program strategies with other schools.

## 6. Healthy kids club

After-school programs can significantly increase students' physical activity and healthy eating behaviors to help meet national activity and eating guidelines. Schools will either initiate a new, weekly after-school program or enhance existing programs.

### **Schools will:**

- Choose an adult adviser to promote and recruit students for the club.
- Recruit students to participate in a weekly session.
- Receive resources to integrate fun and active games to increase physical activity.
- Implement walking or running sessions that include record-keeping and goal-setting.
- Receive gift cards to purchase healthy snacks for each session.
- Reinforce the daily Healthy Announcements.
- Share physical activity and healthy snack ideas, materials and messaging through take-home materials and electronic resources.

## Evaluating the healthy school transformation

Evaluation is critical to understanding the success of this program. It measures changes to the school environment and the program's effect on students' physical activity and healthy eating.

Schools are required to participate in evaluation by:

- Completing short surveys and interviews by students and school staff.
- Completing program implementation reports.
- Completing the Healthy School Action Tools Core Assessment, completing two topic area assessments (Healthy Eating, and Physical Education and Physical Activity) and developing an action plan.

All data will be kept fully confidential, and project reports won't identify schools or individuals.

## Building Healthy Communities partnership

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Michigan Fitness Foundation, United Dairy Industry of Michigan and the Center for Health and Community Impact at Wayne State University have joined together to fight childhood obesity.

Childhood obesity exacts a high price across our state in terms of health, economic effect and academic performance. Without intervention, most overweight and obese children become overweight and obese adults with higher incidence of many chronic diseases including heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes and some cancers. We aim to address a vulnerable time in a young person's development by partnering with schools to foster environments where healthy choices are supported, encouraged and expected.

We're committed to leading Michigan to a healthier future —  
and investing in the next generation of Michigan citizens.



A partnership between



**Blue Cross  
Blue Shield  
Blue Care Network**  
of Michigan

**CENTER for HEALTH &  
COMMUNITY IMPACT**  
WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

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