Building Healthy Communities: Engaging Elementary Schools Through Partnership

2016 – 2017
Request for Applications

Applications due: March 30, 2016

More information can be found at bcbsm.com/buildhealth
Introduction
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Michigan Fitness Foundation, United Dairy Industry of Michigan and the Center for School Health at Wayne State University invite Michigan elementary schools to apply for the 2016 – 2017 Building Healthy Communities program.

Healthy habits start young, and 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

Research shows, through the duration of the program:

- Students are exposed to a variety of new, healthy foods.
- Students show an increased awareness of food ingredients and healthy foods.
- Food offerings improved in a variety of school settings, including school meals, meals brought from home, classroom celebrations, school vending and parent-teacher conferences.
- The amount of physical activity time and exertion during recess and physical education class increased for students.
- Schools integrated Building Healthy Communities resources into other areas of instruction. Teachers used materials for writing activities, research assignments, geography lessons and literacy opportunities.

Key dates at a glance
- Informational conference calls at 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Feb. 19, 2016
- Applications due by 5 p.m., March 30, 2016
- School awards announced on June 10, 2016
- Welcome conference call at 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., June 15, 2016
- Program orientation on Aug. 31, 2016 in Detroit
- Program implementation on September 12, 2016

Join our mission
Our mission is to address childhood obesity in Michigan and improve the health of young people, their families and communities by creating a comprehensive, school-wide network of physical activity and healthy eating opportunities and education.
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 are taking part in other healthy eating, nutrition education, physical activity or physical education programs are eligible.
• Schools that applied in prior years but did not receive an award are encouraged to apply again.
• Schools that have received a previous award from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan 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 a day-long training on Aug. 31, 2016 in Detroit.
• Administrative support for the application and full implementation of the program.
• Inclusion of community-based support is not required, but applications that demonstrate additional financial contributions are encouraged. Securing a contribution from a local foundation, hospital or business allows more students to be reached and leverages existing funds and partnerships.

How to apply

1. If you’re interested in learning more about the program or asking questions about the application, participate in an informational webinar at 10 a.m. or 4 p.m. on Feb. 19, 2016. To join either call, dial 605-475-4700 and use access code: 759821#.

2. Review the frequently asked questions on the Wayne State University Center for School Health website at http://coe.wayne.edu/centerforschoolhealth/programs.php*.

3. Contact Kristen Kaszeta with any program or application questions by phone at 313-577-6210 or email at kristen.kaszeta@wayne.edu.

4. Go to https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/buildinghealthycommunitiesapplication2016 to complete the online application before 5 p.m. on March 30, 2016.

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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 the tools they need to change the school environment through healthy living activities and education. Successful programs involve a variety of people at the school who provide education and information for students at different times and places during the day.

The Building Healthy Communities model unites programs and resources that are:

- Homegrown in Michigan
- Theoretically sound and evidence based
- Linked with state and national health and education standards
- School friendly

Participating schools will receive

- A hands-on coordinator to 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 willing to carry out all six components in order to be selected.

1. Principal engagement

For school-based health initiatives to be successful, school principals must be fully engaged.

Principals will:

- Receive a school year calendar containing the Healthy Tip of the Day
- Read the Healthy Tip of the Day during morning announcements
- Display the Building Healthy Communities banner and other promotional materials
- Support their teachers, staff and students, as well as the assigned healthy school coordinator
- Identify and support staff to attend a Healthy School Action Tools workshop

2. Classroom education on nutrition and physical activity

Academic classrooms provide an ideal location to promote healthy eating and physical activity, and they provide a way for families to receive educational materials about healthy living.

Classroom teachers will:

- Receive classroom nutrition education materials.
- Teach brief nutrition 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.
- Receive materials for classroom physical activity breaks.
- 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.
3. Quality physical education

Quality physical education lays the foundation for a lifetime of physical activity. The Exemplary Physical Education Curriculum, or EPEC, is an award-winning, evidence-based curriculum developed by the Michigan Fitness Foundation that reinforces healthy eating activities. The curriculum is used by teachers throughout Michigan and across the U.S.

Physical educators will:
- Receive a full set of age-appropriate physical education equipment
- Receive EPEC
- Participate in one EPEC professional development workshop in October
- Implement EPEC at all grade levels and incorporate physical education equipment into lessons
- Receive regular at-school mentoring

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
- Share recess game packs to provide students with quick and easy activities
- Receive mentoring to assist with teaching students high-activity recess games
- Identify strategies to increase physical activity during indoor recess

5. Student leadership team

Getting students engaged in the school transformation process is an excellent way to help schools make and sustain change. Students build leadership skills and schools improve their environments and policies through Fuel Up to Play 60 (fueluptoplay60.com*). The United Dairy Industry of Michigan will provide additional support for this component.

Schools will:
- Choose an adult team adviser to guide students through a six-step process (www.fueluptoplay60.com/get-involved/educators*)
- Recruit a team of students (grades three through five) to meet at least twice monthly
- Complete the online School Wellness Investigation and hold a kickoff event
- Implement fun activities focused on physical activity and healthy eating that help support school building policy and environmental change
- Apply for additional funds through Fuel Up to Play 60 to support the student leadership team
- Share success and program strategies with other schools

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6. Healthy kids club

After-school programs can significantly increase students’ physical activity and healthy eating behaviors to achieve national activity and eating guidelines. Schools will either initiate a new, weekly after-school program or enhance the activity offerings in existing programs.

Schools will:

- Receive a musical CD, activity and games books, and gift cards for purchasing healthy snacks
- Choose an adult adviser to promote and recruit students for the club
- Provide a healthy snack
- Reinforce the Healthy Tip of the Day
- Implement walking or running sessions that includes record keeping and goal setting
- Integrate fun and active games to increase physical activity

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 nutrition.

Schools are required to participate in evaluation by:

- Approving the evaluation plan
- Completing short surveys and interviews by students and school staff
- Completing program implementation reports
- Completing the Healthy School Action Tools (HSAT) Core Assessment and two topic area assessments: Healthy Eating, and Physical Education and Physical Activity

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

Building Healthy Communities partnership

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

Childhood obesity exacts too high a 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 to investing in the next generation of Michigan citizens.

A partnership between

Blue Cross Blue Shield Blue Care Network of Michigan

Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

MICHIGAN FITNESS FOUNDATION

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Means More

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