Building Healthy Communities:
Engaging Elementary Schools Through Partnership

2019 – 2020
Request for Applications

Applications due: April 27, 2019

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 Center for Health and Community Impact at Wayne State University invite Michigan elementary schools to apply for the 2019 – 2020 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

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 February 4, 2019
- Informational conference calls at 10 a.m. on February 22 and March 15, 2019
- Applications due by 5 p.m., April 27, 2019
- School awards announced on June 14, 2019
- Attend one of the following program orientations:
  - Grand Rapids area: August 19, 2019
  - Lansing area: August 22, 2019
  - Detroit area: August 27, 2019
- Program implementation begins on September 9, 2019

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 didn’t 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 one of the program orientations.
• Administrative support for the application and full implementation of the program.
• Inclusion of community-based support isn’t 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 have questions about the application, participate in an informational conference call at 10 a.m. on February 22 or March 15, 2019. To join either call, dial 641-715-0688 and use access code: 517761#.
3. Contact Meredith Bowbeer with program or application questions at 313-577-4265 or mbowbeer@wayne.edu.
4. Go to: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2019_2020_BHC * to complete the online application before 5 p.m. on April 27, 2019.

*Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan does not control this website or endorse its general content.
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.

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

Building Healthy Communities: Engaging Elementary Schools Through Partnership
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
• Receive supplies and equipment to support program and component
• Display the Building Healthy Communities banner and other promotional materials
• Ensure the Healthy Tip of the Day is read during morning announcements
• 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 education materials for the classroom
• 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
• 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
• Use the recess cart and recess equipment regularly
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 evidence based curriculum that is aligned with SHAPE America standards. EPEC’s reinforcing activities (games) include nutrition messages that support healthy behaviors in school, the community and at home. The development of EPEC was led by the Michigan Fitness Foundation and the curriculum is used by educators throughout Michigan and the U.S.

**Physical educators will:**
- Receive a full set of age-appropriate physical education equipment
- Receive EPEC
- Participate in one physical education professional development workshop in September
- Implement EPEC at all grade levels and incorporate physical education equipment into lessons
- Share physical education materials and messaging through take-home materials and electronic resources
- Receive regular at-school support

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 physical activity materials and messaging through take-home materials and electronic resources
- 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. 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 six to eight students to meet at least once monthly.
- Complete a pre- and post-school environment nutrition assessment.
- Implement a minimum of one student-led activity 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 support resources.
- Utilize the Fuel Up to Play 60 (*FuelUptoPlay60.com*) tools and resources, including grant application for funding.
- 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:**
- Receive activity and games resources and gift cards to purchase healthy snacks
- Choose an adult adviser to promote and recruit students for the club
- Recruit students to participate in a weekly session
- Provide healthy snacks
- Reinforce the Healthy Tip of the Day
- Implement walking or running sessions that include record-keeping and goal-setting
- Integrate fun and active games to increase physical activity
- 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:
- Approving the evaluation plan
- 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 Department of Health and Human Services, 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.

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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 of Michigan

Blue Care Network of Michigan

Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

Center for Health & Community Impact

Wayne State University

Milk Means More

Michigan Fitness Foundation

Supporters

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