

# Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan



## School District Policy Grants

### Project Overview

In 2007, Governor Granholm received a one-year grant award from the National Governor's Association through the *Healthy Kids, Healthy America* program. This program was designed to provide the nation's governors with the opportunity and means to make progress in addressing childhood obesity in schools and communities in their state. Governor Granholm's project, called *Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan*, included working with local school districts by awarding mini-grants of \$25,000 each to help establish nutrition and physical activity policies aimed at reducing childhood obesity.

### School District Policies:

#### Lansing School District

- Improving a la carte sales nutrition standards
- Regulating classroom snacks/rewards standards

#### Jackson School District

- Improving a la carte sales nutrition standards
- Regulating classroom snacks/rewards standards
- Mandating recess before lunch
- Setting standards for vending machine nutrition options

#### Taylor School District

- Improving a la carte sales nutrition standards
- Regulating quality physical education curriculum
- Setting standards for concessions/fundraising/school store nutrition options

### School District Policy Grants:

The three school districts awarded the mini-grants were Lansing, Taylor, and Jackson. These districts, with the assistance of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH), were asked to do the following:

1. Meet with their district Coordinated School Health Team (CSHT) which consists of the superintendent, food service director, teachers (physical education and health education), health services representative, school counseling representative, students, parents, and community partners. An active CSHT is needed to engage school staff, implement district policies, assess programs/policies, create a plan, establish goals, and evaluate efforts.
2. Assess their current school health policies and evaluate their schools' health environment by utilizing the *Michigan School District Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy Assessment Tool*. Assessment is important as it helps CSHT's evaluate current environments as well as direct them to know where to make improvements.
3. Choose at least two policies from the HKHM policy recommendations to plan, implement, and evaluate within their school district

With support and technical assistance provided by MDCH and MDE, school districts follow the *Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan Guidance on the Implementation and Evaluation of School District Policies to Improve Access to Healthy Foods and Physical Activity Guide* to meet their goals. This guide follows the Institute of Medicine Nutrition Standards and was created specifically for these school districts to assist them with designing their implementation strategies and evaluation plans.

## Project Outcomes:

All three districts are currently in the process of implementing and evaluating their policies, however, there have already been some notable successes within their schools. For instance, all districts now have revised school wellness policies that follow the Institute of Medicine Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools. We anticipate that the lessons learned from this project will be used to help guide other districts who hope to make similar improvements in their school health environment. Here are some other accomplishments, thus far:



### Jackson School District

- Removed vending machines from all campuses with exception of one machine at their high school that is only accessible after school and all contents of the machine meet Institute of Medicine Nutrition Standards.
- Replaced a la carte offerings with fruit and vegetable stands. School lunch menus have also been improved by including healthy options such as fruit/yogurt parfaits, wraps, and baked food items. Classroom rewards such as candy and treats have been replaced with healthy snacks or non-food items such as stickers.
- Implemented recess before lunch for all elementary schools. There have been reports of students eating better and wasting less food.

### Taylor School District

- Improved food offerings within their school stores and a la carte menus. Excitement among students about new food options has caused healthy food sales to increase each week.
- Implemented Exemplary Physical Education Curriculum (EPEC) in all schools. This curriculum meets the Physical Education grade level content expectations approved by the State Board of Education.
- Created posters to market healthy food options. Posters will be displayed on campus and within the community, a testament to their community-wide effort to improve health.

### Lansing School District

- Displayed informational booths and disseminated brochures at sporting events and parent/teacher conferences to promote physical activity and healthy eating in their community.



- Improved a la carte food items and used taste-testing events to educate students about nutritious food items and expose them to new foods.
- Planned family outreach events to teach students and their families about new classroom snack guidelines.

