



Building Healthy Communities: Engaging Middle Schools through Project Healthy Schools

2020-2021

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What qualifications should we look for when selecting a wellness champion?

A successful wellness champion is usually a certified staff person at the school who has strong leadership potential, can effectively utilize data to inform decisions, is organized, responsive, has good follow through and has the capacity to build support for the program within the school and community. It is also important that your wellness champion(s) be passionate about health and have a strong commitment to improving the wellness of staff and students within the school. It is also helpful if this person will be teaching the Project Healthy Schools curriculum or can effectively delegate and oversee the implementation of the curriculum.

2. Why can't schools that already received a Building Healthy Communities program apply again?

It is our goal to involve as many schools as possible. Therefore, schools that were awarded another Building Healthy Communities program, or previously implemented Project Healthy Schools, are not eligible to receive this award. We do, however, encourage middle schools in the same district as a school that already has Project Healthy Schools to apply.

3. Our school hasn't become involved in wellness programs or grants yet. Are we less likely to be selected?

No. Our goal is to include schools with a variety of experience related to wellness programs and grants. Schools that already have a wellness team and/or participate in other programs, such as Fuel Up to Play 60, are encouraged to apply, as well as those that have not been involved in wellness programs or grants.

4. What are the criteria for award selection?

School selection is based on several components, including: 1) level of commitment from school administration and staff to fully implement and sustain the Project Healthy Schools program beyond year one (including completion of the Healthy School Action Tools -- Core Assessment and the Healthy Eating and Physical Activity topic area assessments); 2) placement of the Project Healthy Schools lessons into the students' school day (preference is for schools where the lessons will be taught in physical education, health, or a core class of at least 45 minutes); 3) establishment of a school wellness team (functioning or identified) that is comprised of a variety of school/community members; 4) commitment to implementing policy, systems and/or changes to the physical school environment to support health and wellness; and 5) a complete application and participation in a follow-up interview.

5. How will we know if our school is selected or not?

Schools will be informed during the week of June 1st, 2020 of their selection status via an email message to the principal, wellness champion(s), and to the person that completed the application.

6. If our school is selected, do we need to do anything to get ready?

Three program requirements must be completed prior to program implementation: 1) the principal/administer overseeing the program and the staff member(s) selected to be the Wellness Champion(s) must participate in a school site visit by a Project Healthy Schools wellness coordinator for a two-hour, on-site orientation prior to September 30, 2020; 2) begin recruiting members from the school community to form a school wellness team, if you don't already have one; and 3) complete the Core Assessment from the Healthy School Action Tools (HSAT: www.mihealthtools.org) prior to the orientation. Mandatory attendance is required from the Principal/Administrator overseeing the program and the staff member(s) selected to be the Wellness Champion(s) during the two-hour orientation. Please also visit our website at www.projecthealthyschools.org/BHC to find more information, including a sample lesson.

7. Will our school receive a check if awarded this program?

No. You will be assigned a Project Healthy Schools wellness coordinator who will work with school staff by providing on-site support to implement the program in your school. This coordinator and other Project Healthy Schools staff will be responsible for purchasing items that are needed for the program and other school wellness activities, as agreed upon by the school and approved by the wellness coordinator.

8. Will our school be responsible for any reporting requirements related to this award?

Yes, the wellness champion(s) will be trained on reporting requirements for the Building Healthy Communities: Engaging Middle Schools through Project Healthy Schools program. These items may include program updates, photos, quotes and success stories that will be recorded and submitted via the online Project Healthy Schools Portal. Also submit stories to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services supported success story tool at: <https://schoolsucces.mihealthtools.org>.

9. How long does the program run?

Upon being awarded the program, the expectation is that the program continue year after year within the school by continuing to provide the Project Healthy Schools curriculum, annual assessment of the wellness environment, and using the assessment data to identify wellness goals and an action plan which drive environmental changes related to student and staff health/wellness. The program is run with regular, on-site staff support at your school from a Project Healthy Schools coordinator for the first school year. Beyond the first year of programming, the Project Healthy Schools coordinator will continue to be available as a resource, by phone, email and occasional on-site visits. Your school will remain an integral part of the Project Healthy School's network. Your Project Healthy Schools coordinator will work with your school on a long-term plan for sustainability. Project Healthy Schools strives to create sustainable programming that leads to meaningful change over time.

10. How do we submit our application?

The application may be hand-written or typed. Choose an option to submit:

- Complete a fillable pdf application and email it to Project Healthy Schools (projecthealthyschools@umich.edu)
- Scan and email the completed application to Project Healthy Schools (projecthealthyschools@umich.edu)

Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. on April 17, 2020.

11. Who can I contact if I have additional questions?

For questions, contact Jean DuRussel-Weston at (734) 764-0290 or jdurusse@umich.edu.

Before filling out the Application:

- Provide your team with copies of the *Request for Applications* with enough time to review it so all team members will understand their program responsibilities. This is a comprehensive program that requires the engagement of the principal, teachers, wellness champion(s), food service director and wellness team members.

Tips for creating a competitive application:

- Write brief, clear responses.
- Do not leave any items blank; use “N/A” if the question does not apply to you. Do not provide information that is not requested.
- After you finish your application, review it to make sure that all items are answered. Have someone else read your responses to make sure they are understandable to someone that is not familiar with your school, programs or staff.
- Identify a health, physical education or core curricular class (minimum of 45 minutes) to deliver the 10 Project Healthy Schools lessons to all fifth-, sixth, or seventh-grade students. Other classes such as an advisory or a homeroom period are not encouraged.
- Identify wellness team members on the application to show that your school has the support it needs to be successful. Wellness teams can vary by school and can include representation from staff, administrators, food service, students, parents and other community members. This is a comprehensive program that requires the collaboration of the entire school community.
- Demonstrate the principal’s/administrator’s level of support and commitment to successfully implementing and sustaining the program and highlight the wellness champion’s enthusiasm and ability to engage others in the health and wellness mission during your interview.

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