



## **New Jersey Healthy Communities Network 2020-2021 Grant Cycle Application Overview and Instructions**

***Applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. on November 1, 2019.***

### **Overview**

**The New Jersey Healthy Communities Network.** Since 2011, the New Jersey Healthy Communities Network (NJHCN) has brought together local, regional, and statewide stakeholders to support communities in developing healthy environments where people live, learn, work, and play. During this time, the NJHCN funding collaborative<sup>1</sup> has awarded more than \$3 million to community-based nonprofit organizations, local health agencies, school districts, and others to implement changes to *policy, systems and the built environment* to promote healthy eating and active living and help prevent obesity and chronic disease.

**Policy, systems and environmental change.** People cannot make healthy decisions if they do not have access to or cannot afford healthy options. Policy, systems and environmental initiatives change the rules and conditions that impact people's behavior and make healthier choices easier for everyone.

Changes at the level of policy, systems and the built environment usually require strong local partnerships and the engagement of decision-makers, making such changes more likely to last. This grant program is not intended to address health education or program strategies. Read [more](#) about the distinction between policy, systems and environmental change strategies *versus* programming.

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<sup>1</sup> The 2018-2019 grant cycle was funded by the New Jersey Department of Health, Atlantic Health System, Partners for Health Foundation, New Jersey Partnership for Healthy Kids, New Jersey Health Initiatives and Salem Health and Wellness Foundation. Two funders will join the 2020-2021 grant cycle: New Jersey Department of Human Services-Division of Disabilities and the Russell Berrie Foundation.

**The healthy eating and active living strategies.** The program aims to increase access to healthy foods and beverages and promote opportunities for daily physical activity for all New Jersey residents through policy, systems and environmental change. NJHCN selected the healthy eating and active living strategies to be implemented under this program from [What Works for Health](#), a database of scientifically-rated policies and programs from County Health Rankings and Roadmaps. Other sources include [Sustainable Jersey](#), a statewide organization that develops strategy implementation guidelines based on best practice, and federal agencies including the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

**Social Determinants of Health.** There is a growing body of research showing how [social determinants of health](#)—such as housing, transportation, public safety, social connectedness—make a strong impact on our health. In view of this emerging knowledge, NJHCN is expanding its focus this round to offer communities the option to address social determinants of health through policy, systems and environmental change. Applicants proposing to address social determinants of health will identify an evidence-based strategy through their research, as well as the policy, systems or environmental change they aim to accomplish through its implementation.

Please refer to [What Works for Health](#) and [Healthy People 2020](#) for evidence-based recommendations to address the social determinants of health. ([HealthyPeople.gov](#), where Healthy People 2020 is housed, is an initiative that provides science-based, 10-year national objectives for improving the health of all Americans.) [Sustainable Jersey](#) also has many best practice guidelines that address social determinants of health.

Please see the **Addendum** at the end of this document for descriptions of strategies to be selected for the grant proposals.

## **Application Process**

NJHCN encourages potential applicants to participate in the following events to prepare for applying for the grants.

- **Informational Webinar:** An informational webinar to review the application process, eligibility requirements and tips for successful projects will be held Wednesday, October 2, 2019 from 2:00-3:00pm. Registration links for the webinar will be made available to all organizations that register an Intent to Apply. Following the webinar, the recording

and presentations will be posted on the Webinar Recordings and Presentations page of the NJHCN Website at [njhcn.org](http://njhcn.org)

- Policy, Systems and Environmental Change Trainings: A three-hour, interactive training program, presented twice, on policy, systems and environmental change and its importance to building healthy communities, especially in socio-economically under-represented communities.
  - Monday, September 30, 2019, 9:30am-12:30pm at DCF Training Academy, 30 Van Dyke Ave, New Brunswick, NJ.
  - Friday, October 11, 2019, 12:30am-3:30 at Stockton University, 101 Vera King Farris Dr, Galloway, NJ.

Registration links for the training will be made available to all organizations that register an Intent to Apply. Training will be first come, first served.

ONLINE applications are due by Friday, November 1, 2019. Applications must be submitted through WiseHive, a Grant Management System. Eligible applicants who submitted a Registration for Intent to Apply will receive a link to the application form via email by 9/20/2019. Email submissions of grant proposals will NOT be accepted.

Please email [njhcn16@gmail.com](mailto:njhcn16@gmail.com) with any questions or troubleshooting issues. Before hitting submit, you can preview your responses and should save a copy of them as a PDF on your local computer for your records.

Notification of grant awards will be made by the end of December 2019 and the program funders will send Memoranda of Agreement to their grant recipients during the month of January 2020 unless otherwise specified by a funder.

A day-long introductory meeting for all grant recipients will be held at the end of January 2020.

**Eligibility.** Applicants must be 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations, tax-exempt educational institutions, school districts or municipalities in good fiscal standing. Both new and previously-funded communities that fit these requirements may apply.

**Priority applicants.** To increase its public health impact and promote social justice, NJHCN encourages applications from organizations that work with economically/socially disadvantaged

populations or communities. This includes organizations working to create inclusive communities for individuals with physical disabilities. Such applicants may include:

- Low-income communities (i.e., in a census tract where 50 percent or more of residents are at 185 percent of the federal poverty line or below).
- Schools where 50 percent or more of the students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals.
- Sites/Sponsors participating in the Summer Food Service Program.
- Food pantries.
- Federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and/or their satellites.
- Early childhood education centers serving low-income children (e.g., a Head Start or Early Head Start center, a center where 50 percent or more of the students are receiving child care subsidies, or a center where 50 percent or more of the students are receiving Medicaid).
- Affordable housing developments.
- Organizations working to create inclusive communities for individuals with physical disabilities.

Please note that despite these special considerations, *all* applicants meeting basic eligibility requirements are encouraged to apply.

## **About the Grants**

For the two-year grant cycle (2020-2021), NJHCN will grant \$10,000 per year. *Year two funding will be contingent upon compliance in year one and availability of funding.*

In addition to receiving grant funding, grantee organizations will receive

- Membership in a statewide cohort.
- Capacity-building webinars and meetings.
- Social media coaching.
- Peer-to-peer learning.
- Connection to resources and best practices.
- Technical assistance and “as-needed” support.

Every grantee organization is assigned a coach for project support. Grantee organizations are also grouped into geographic “cohorts” of approximately eight members, facilitated by the coaches.

Each grantee organization will be given a set of performance measures that will be tracked to assess this work.

**Program and reporting requirements for grant recipients:**

- Implement the strategies selected in the grant application.
- Attend two in-person statewide meetings for peer-to-peer strategy-related learning.
- Participate in one-on-one sessions with your coach at least four times per year.
- Attend in-person regional cohort meetings once per year.
- Host a site visit from your coach at least once during the grant.
- Publish six blog posts with photos per year, bimonthly.
- Participate in evaluation activities.
- Meet any funder-specific requirements.

**Use of Grant Funding.** Funds are to be used to support direct expenses essential to the implementation of selected strategies.

## **The Project Proposal**

The purpose of these grants is to change policies, systems and the built environment to support health through the implementation of evidence-based strategies. Implementing these strategies generally requires local partners who can engage the community in implementation and connect with local leaders to promote the changes. Applicants must select strategies and identify partners for the application as described below.

**Strategy Selection.** Strategy options are grouped around four categories:

- **Healthy eating strategies**

Please see **Addendum** for a description of eligible healthy eating strategies and implementation requirements.

- **Active living strategies**

Please see **Addendum** for a description of eligible active living strategies and implementation requirements.

- **Social determinants of health**

**NJHCN has not pre-selected strategies for social determinants of health.** Applicants who propose to address social determinants of health will select their own strategy, and describe the anticipated policy, system or environmental change and implementation plan. For guidance, please refer to [What Works for Health](#) and [Healthy People 2020](#), among other research-based resources. [Sustainable Jersey](#) also has many “actions” accompanied by best practice guidelines that address social determinants.

- **Strategies by setting (options: early care and education centers, K-12 schools and worksites)**

Healthy eating and active living strategies are specified for these three settings. Please see **Addendum** for a description of each setting’s healthy eating and active living strategies and implementation requirements.

**Applicants must select strategies for their projects depending on the type of organization they represent.** Use the chart below to determine which options are available to you. Choose *one* option marked “X” from the chart.

		Strategy Choices						
		One HE AND One AL Strategy	One HE Strategy	One AL Strategy	One SD Strategy	Early Care and Education Option	K-12 Schools Option	Worksite Option
Applicant Type	Local Non-Profits	X			X	X	X	X
	Municipalities/ County Agencies	X			X	X	X	X
	Regional/Statewide/ Organizations with Special Focus		X*	X*	X*			
	Early Care and Education Centers					X		X
	K-12 Schools						X	X
	Health Care Organizations	X			X	X	X	X
	College/Universities	X			X	X	X	X

*\*Applicants working at the regional/state level will be asked to describe how they plan on implementing this strategy in multiple locations (i.e. different counties, municipalities, schools, etc.)*

**HE = Healthy Eating AL = Active Living SD = Social Determinant**

For example:

**Applicants who are local nonprofit organizations (working in community or county-based settings) may:**

- Choose one healthy eating **and** one active living strategy, **OR**
- Identify one social determinant of health and describe the evidence-based strategy you will implement based on your research, **OR**
- Choose one of the options by setting, which include both healthy eating and active living strategies: early care and education centers, **or** K-12 schools **or** worksites.

**Applicants who are nonprofit organizations working at a regional or state level and who have a *special focus* may, according to their focus:**

- Choose one healthy eating **or** one active living strategy from the list of Community Strategies, **OR**
- Identify one social determinant of health and describe the evidence-based strategy you will implement based on your research, **AND**
- Describe your plan for implementing the strategy in multiple locations *per* the asterisked statement at the bottom of the chart.

**Identifying project partners.** Applicants must identify two partners, with an optional third, that will play a specific, active role in the project. Partners can be from any sector necessary to help the project succeed—local business, municipal departments, the parent-teachers’ association, a county Freeholder, advocacy groups, faith-based organizations, and others.

**Possible approaches to project planning and budgeting for applicants *who must implement both healthy eating and active living strategies*.** Applicants that must choose both healthy eating and active living strategies may propose to implement the strategies

- simultaneously over the course of the two-year project, **OR**
- focus on one strategy during the first project year and the second during the second year.

NJHCN acknowledges that certain strategies may require more funding than others to implement so applicants are not required to spend equal amounts of grant funding on the two strategies. Applicants must make it clear in their proposal that both strategies will be implemented as required regardless of how they distribute the funds.

*As noted previously, grants are \$10,000 per year, and year two funding will be contingent upon compliance in year one and availability of funding.*

**Proposal Review.** The review committee will rate applications on the following areas:

- **Project summary.** The summary provides a clear and coherent overview of what the applicant hopes to accomplish with NJHCN grant funding with both project partners and community members.
- **Partners.** Partners identified will play a needed and specific role in the project.
- **Strategies.** The strategy(ies) the applicant has proposed to implement are based on its organizational type described in the chart. For each strategy identified:
  - The policy, systems or environmental change that the applicant wants to accomplish matches the strategy the applicant proposes to implement.
  - The applicant identifies community members at disproportionate risk of poor health outcomes who will benefit from the project and has a plan to engage them in project planning and other roles.
  - The applicant describes a practical plan to implement the strategy, including the strategy requirements, as well as any of the suggested options.
  - Applicants with a special focus who propose to work regionally or statewide have described their plan to work with multiple sites.
- **Budget.** The budget matches the needs of the project.

## **Completing the Grant Application**

To complete your application, you will need the following content and materials:

- 1. Complete contact information.**
- 2. Information about the populations you plan to work with, including geographic location, socio-economic status and whether you plan to work toward creating inclusive communities for people with physical disabilities.**
- 3. Your program strategy(ies) chosen correctly according to the chart.**



- 4. Answers to the application questions within the word limits. Answers should be clear and well thought through.**
- 5. Initiative Budget Form. This document should be filled out offline and uploaded on the last page of this application. A copy of the form can be downloaded [HERE](#).**
- 6. Letters from two partner organizations, with the option for a third, stating their commitment to the project and specifying how they will assist in the project. These letters should be on the organization's letterhead and uploaded on the last page of this online application in PDF format.**

Please email [njhc16@gmail.com](mailto:njhc16@gmail.com) with any questions or troubleshooting issues. Before hitting submit, you can preview your responses and should save a copy of them as a PDF on your local computer for your records.

## ADDENDUM

### Strategies for the NJHCN 2020-2021 Grant Application

For suggested audit tools and implementation resources, please refer to [NJHCN Strategy Resources](#).

#### **HEALTHY EATING: Strategies to Increase Access to Healthy Foods & Beverages**

##### **HE #1 Conduct a healthy eating audit and build a plan and partnership to increase access to healthy foods (year one audit followed by year two implementation)**

Audits for healthy eating engage community members, decision-makers, and other key stakeholders in gathering information that can be useful for improving access to healthy eating at the policy, systems, and environmental change levels. Municipality or county Community Health Assessments can serve as useful sources of information where they exist. Ways to audit healthy eating environments include neighborhood food environment audits and audits of school nutrition environments.

For this strategy, grantees are *required* to:

- Use an audit tool produced by an authoritative organization and include the citation in this application. (Suggestions are also provided in the [NJHCN Strategy Resources](#).)
- Engage community residents in a leading role in conducting the audit and decision-making around community changes.
- Engage the partners (municipal governments, farmers, schools and/or school districts, local councils, etc.) who will be necessary for implementation.

Grantees will complete the audit during year one and develop an action plan to implement priority recommendations from the audit. At the end of year one, grantees will submit audit reports, action plans, and updated year two budgets reflecting audit results.

Implementation of the action plan must start no later than year two.

If grantees select audits for both Healthy Eating and Active Living, both audits must be completed in year one with action plans to begin implementation in year two.

##### **HE #2 Expand access to affordable produce through fruit and vegetable incentive programs**

Fruit and vegetable incentive programs (called “market bucks”, “double bucks”, “bonus dollars”, etc.) offer matching funds to SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), WIC FMNP (Women, Infant, and Children Farmers Market Nutrition Program) or Senior FMNP shoppers to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. Programs are typically funded and managed by non-profit organizations, private foundations, or local governments. Incentive amounts vary from dollar-to-dollar matches to matched spending increments (i.e., \$1 for \$5 spent); most programs set a daily benefit limit, often \$10 or \$20. Incentives are frequently redeemed at farmers’ markets, but can also be used at grocery stores, mobile markets, corner stores, direct-marketing farmers, or non-profit food buying cooperatives.

Fruit and vegetable incentive programs can match funds to (SNAP) benefit spending amounts, or to WIC FMNP or Senior FMNP vouchers used with authorized New Jersey farmers. SNAP-based incentive programs must be registered and comply with the US Department of Agriculture’s Food and Nutrition Service rules and regulations.

For this strategy, grantees are *required* to:

- Implement a fruit and vegetable matching funds incentive program in partnership with an existing SNAP- or FMNP-authorized farmers’ market, direct-marketing farmer, mobile market, grocery store, corner store, non-profit food-buying cooperative or other produce retail outlet.

In addition to the requirements above, grantees have the option to enhance the incentive program with outreach efforts targeted to SNAP and FMNP customers, nutrition education, wellness programming, or by providing transportation to and from the incentive program site.

### **HE #3 Increase the number of convenient outlets for affordable produce through farmers’ markets, farm stands and/or mobile markets.**

A farmers’ market is a multiple vendor market, where producers sell goods—primarily fruits and vegetables -- directly to consumers at a specific location. This strategy also includes farm stands (smaller versions of farmers’ markets) and mobile markets (movable, non-permanent versions). Making sure that customers can afford the produce and that they can easily reach the outlet are key aspects to this strategy.

This strategy also allows grantees (local hospitals, youth-serving agencies, etc.) to partner with their local food systems (local farmers, food pantries or grocery stores) to bring produce for sale to their sites at scheduled intervals.

Grantees may become authorized to serve as the outlet's SNAP fruit and vegetable retailer or may partner with an existing SNAP- or FMNP-authorized fruit and vegetable retailer.

For this strategy, grantees are *required* to:

- Create or make more affordable and accessible a farmers' market/farm stand/mobile market, which must accept SNAP, and WIC and senior farmers' market nutrition vouchers (FMNP).
- Engage those who are likely to be customers in the planning and implementation processes.

In addition to the requirements above, grantees have the option to offer matching fruit and vegetable incentives, nutrition education, wellness programming, outreach efforts targeted to SNAP and FMNP customers, or by providing transportation to and from the produce outlet site.

Grantees have the option to use year one for planning (HE Strategy #1): that is, working with local residents to determine needs and preferences for a produce retail outlet, scouting locations that residents can access, identifying vendors and establishing the logistics necessary to accept WIC, SNAP, and senior nutrition vouchers through electronic benefits transfers (EBT).

Implementation must start no later than the beginning of year two.

**HE #4 Increase participation in federal child nutrition programs among low-income children, including *school breakfast (in particular, Breakfast after the Bell), summer food (SFSP) and/or after-school meals (CACFP).***

This strategy encourages local organizations such as health departments, parks and recreation departments, community and faith-based organizations, to serve as the lead agencies in their community working with schools to improve access to federal child nutrition programs (school breakfast—especially Breakfast after the Bell, summer food, after school meals and snacks). Grantees could choose one area of focus (e.g., summer food) or could work on expanding access to all three child nutrition programs, depending upon capacity.

For this strategy grantees are *required* to:

- Engage in outreach to local stakeholders (school district, schools, municipal government and community and faith-based organizations) and develop collaborative partnerships with the intention of increasing low-income children's participation in child federal nutrition programs.

- Educate local stakeholders and the general community about the benefits of federal child nutrition programs.
- Advocate for implementation of service models that maximize participation in the federal child nutrition programs.
- Develop effective strategies to improve access to programs and increase participation
- Follow up to ensure that programs are implemented effectively.

In addition to the requirements above, grantees may choose to work with program sponsors to improve the quality and nutritional value of the meals through changes in organizational policy and food procurement.

### **ACTIVE LIVING: Strategies to Increase Opportunities to be Physically Active**

#### **AL #1 Conduct an active living audit and build a plan and partnership to increase opportunities for physical activity (year one audit followed by year two implementation)**

Audits for active living are used to provide key stakeholders, decision-makers and community members with information that can be useful for planning and improving access to active living at the policy, systems, and environmental change levels. Municipality or county Community Health Assessments can serve as useful sources of information where they exist. Grantees can conduct audits on, for example, neighborhood conditions for walking, biking, and accessibility for people with mobility barriers, parks audits for safety and accessibility, and audits of schools and surrounding neighborhoods for walking and biking to school.

For this strategy, grantees are *required* to:

- Use an audit tool produced by an authoritative organization and include the citation in this application. (Suggestions are also provided in the [NJHCN Strategy Resources](#).)
- Engage community residents in a leading role in conducting the audit and decision-making around community changes.
- Identify and engage partners (municipal governments, schools and/or school districts, local councils, etc.) necessary for implementation.

Grantees will complete the audit during year one and develop an action plan to implement priority recommendations. At the end of year one, grantees will submit audit reports, action plans, and updated year two budgets reflecting audit results.

Implementation of the action plan must start no later than year two.

If grantees select audits for both Healthy Eating and Active Living, both audits must be completed in year one with action plans to be implemented in year two.

## **AL #2 Enhancing access to places for physical activity**

Enhancing access to places for physical activity involves changes to local environments—indoors or outdoors -- that create new opportunities for physical activity or reduce the cost of existing opportunities. In every case where feasible, grantees should make sure these spaces are accessible to people with disabilities and/or lack of transportation.

Research also indicates that urban green space — gardens, greened vacant lots, pocket parks, etc. — has additional benefits to health. A [recent review](#) found consistent negative association between urban green space exposure and mortality, heart rate, and violence, and positive association with attention, mood, and physical activity.

For this strategy, grantees are *required* to:

- Create or improve a place where people can be physically active, which can include parks, walking trails, playgrounds, community gardens or exercise facilities; or develop shared use agreements for new access to indoor or outdoor recreational space when it is otherwise not being used.
- Engage community residents who are likely to use the space in planning and programming.
- Develop a plan to maintain the quality, cleanliness, safety and security of the space.

In addition to the requirements above, grantees have the option to work with local leaders to

- Create or improve community master plans for parks, trails and/or green space.
- Support promotion and programming—informed by users--to encourage use of the space.

Grantees have the option to use year one for planning, community engagement, and capacity building (See strategy AL #1). Implementation must start no later than the beginning of year two.

## **AL #3 Design streets to encourage walking, biking and rolling (“Complete Streets”)**

Communities can increase the opportunities for active living by making physical changes to street design to improve safety and convenience for walking and biking, including people with limited mobility. Improvements to streetscape design can include increased street lighting, enhanced street landscaping and street furniture (benches, trash containers, flower boxes), increased sidewalk coverage and connectivity of pedestrian walkways, bicycling infrastructure, street crossing safety features, and measures to slow traffic.

For this strategy, grantees are *required* to:

- Implement physical changes to the environment, which might include bike lanes, street crossing safety features, improved sidewalk coverage and connectivity, measures to slow or “calm” traffic where people walk or bike, enhanced street lighting and landscaping, and better access for people with disabilities.
- Engage community members in the design and planning of the environmental change.

In addition to the requirements above, grantees have the option to work with municipal leaders to pass a Complete Streets Policy. Funding might also be used for small demonstration project to test a proposed permanent change (a “pop-up” bike lane, for example).

Grantees have the option to use year one for planning, community engagement, and capacity building (See AL #1.) Implementation must start no later than the beginning of year two.

### **SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH: Strategies to Create Social and Physical Environments that Promote Good Health for All**

**NJHCN has not pre-selected strategies for social determinants of health.** For guidance, please refer to [What Works for Health](#) and [Healthy People 2020](#). [Sustainable Jersey](#) also offers “actions”, or best practice guidelines for many social determinants strategies. We note that community assessments including partnership development and planning are critical to implementing policy, systems and environmental change; and as such can serve as a strategy in year one.

Please see [NJHCN Strategy Resources for](#) a suggested assessment tool.

### **STRATEGIES BY SETTING: Paired Nutrition & Physical Activity Strategies**

## EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Nutrition and physical activity interventions in early childhood education settings offer young children opportunities to eat healthier foods and engage in physical activity throughout the day.

Grantee organizations working in this setting are *required* to assess the center’s nutrition and physical activity practices using “[Go NAP SACC](#)” or other evidence-based assessment tool to be cited in the application. Interventions must address areas of need as determined from the results of this assessment.

### ECE HE #1 Healthy Eating

For this strategy, early care and education centers are *required* to improve access to healthy foods through changes in organizational policy, menu planning, food procurement, and/or staff training.

In addition to the requirements above, grantees may choose to supplement these with a nutrition curriculum, healthy food activities with the children, and parent education.

### ECE AL #2 Active Living

Grantees are *required* to improve access to physical activity through changes in organizational policy, increased time for physical activity, changes to play environment or equipment, and/or staff training.

In addition to the requirements above, grantees may choose to supplement these with a physical education curriculum, special activities with the children, and parent education.

## K-12 SCHOOLS

Grantees are *required* to complete the nutrition and physical activity components of the “[Healthy Schools Program Assessment](#)” from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation during year one. This adaption has been developed by the New Jersey SNAP-Ed program and versions for elementary schools and middle and high school are linked below:



Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child  
Modified School Health Index Instrument and Guide  
For Elementary Schools



Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child  
Modified School Health Index Instrument and Guide  
For Middle or High Schools

### Healthy Eating Strategies (must choose one)



**SCH HE #1 Increase participation in federal child nutrition programs, including *school breakfast (especially Breakfast after the Bell), summer food (SFSP) and/or after-school meals (CACFP)*.**

This strategy encourages schools to partner with local organizations such as municipal government, health departments, community and faith-based organizations to improve access to federal child nutrition programs (school breakfast, in particular Breakfast after the Bell, summer food, and/or after-school meals).

For this strategy grantees are *required* to:

- Develop collaborative partnerships with local organizations such as municipal government, health department, community non-profit, or faith-based organization to increase low-income children's participation in federal nutrition programs.
- Include representation from school decision-makers, food services staff, families, and non-school local stakeholders.
- Educate school leadership, local stakeholders, and the general community about the benefits of federal child nutrition programs
- Advocate for and implement strategies that maximize participation in the federal child nutrition programs
- Follow up to ensure effective implementation and sustainability

**SCH HE #2 School Gardens**

School gardens allow students to garden during school or non-school hours with school staff guidance, generally on school grounds. School gardens are typically accompanied by nutrition education, food preparation lessons, and fruit and vegetable tasting opportunities. School gardens can also provide students with hands-on learning opportunities in subjects such as science, math, health, and environmental studies.

For this strategy, grantees are *required* to:

- Create a school garden, with at least some space accessible to children with disabilities, ensuring a location with adequate sun, water and safe soil.
- Appoint a teacher or staff member to oversee and champion the garden.
- Integrate skills learned in the garden into the school curriculum.
- Develop a plan for maintenance and harvesting and/or gleaning of the garden over the summer, by bringing on partners such as summer camps, the local recreation department, or neighborhood or parent groups.

## Active Living Strategies (must choose one)

### SCH AL #1 Support Physical Activity Outside of Physical Education (PE)

Beyond state-required physical education, evidence-based opportunities exist to enable students to move toward the 60 minutes of physical activity per day recommended by health authorities, that state requirements still may not meet.

This suite of strategies supports a school district's adoption of evidence-based policies that promote a comprehensive, school-based physical activity program.

For this strategy, grantees are *required* to:

- Update their district and/or school wellness policy to include evidence-based policies to increase students' opportunities for physical activity. This includes active recess, physical activity breaks during class, and/or allowing for the use of school facilities outside school hours by community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs ("shared use agreements").
- Implement at least one of the following interventions to offer more opportunities to students to be physically active on school days:
  - Physically active recess.
  - Physically active classrooms.
  - Shared use agreement with school and local community agency offering youth physical activity programs.

### SCH AL #2 Walking and Biking to School

Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) is a federally-supported program that promotes walking and biking to school through education and incentives. The program also supports city planning and legislative efforts to make walking and biking safer and provides resources and activities to help communities build sidewalks, bicycle paths, and other pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. By proactively adopting policies that encourage safe walking and biking to school where appropriate, districts can support daily physical activity for students and staff.

For this strategy, grantees are *required* to:

- Implement a school district-wide SRTS policy (if one is not already in place).
- Choose one of the following: (see more details below)
  - Develop a School Travel Plan; **OR**
  - Implement a Pedestrian and Bike Safety program.

## **Once a policy is in place, choose A or B for Safe Routes to School:**

### **A. School Travel Plans**

A Safe Routes to School Travel Plan maps out how to improve pedestrian and bicycle travel to and from school to increase the number of students who walk and bike to school and to improve safety. The plan will enable the community to identify some short-term improvements in neighborhood accessibility as well as establish long-term goals.

Grantees implementing this strategy are *required* to:

- Engage a cross-cutting group including students, parents, school staff and municipal partners (police, public works staff, etc.) to develop the travel plan.
- Develop a plan that includes a school description, a map of the school neighborhood, a walk and bike assessment, identification of the barriers and opportunities associated with walking or biking to the school.
- Develop a list of goals, actions and priorities to increase walking and biking to school, and a strategy for evaluating progress.

It is highly recommended that schools engage their regional [Safe Routes to School Regional Coordinators](#) at Transportation Management Associations (TMA) throughout the state to assist in developing the plan.

### **B. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Programs**

Through education and promotion, bicycle and pedestrian programs (safety education and walk/bike to school events) not only reinforce critical safety skills for students, but also provide fun ways to get students and parents excited about walking and bicycling. Similarly, implementing best practices to facilitate walking and biking to school or undertaking infrastructure improvements to make the school grounds or adjacent area safer are critical to fostering a culture that reinforces the important role of active transportation in everyday life.

For this strategy grantees are *required* to:

- Implement walk/bike safety education and walk/bike to school events that engage students, parents and school staff.
- Engage students, parents and school staff in recommending and then implementing steps to facilitate walking and biking to school (adding bike racks for parking, organizing drop-offs and pick-ups to prioritize students who walk or bike to school, etc.).

## **WORKSITE**

Worksite nutrition and physical activity interventions can help to create a culture of health at work and increase employees' access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active during the workday.

Grantees are *required* to convene a worksite wellness committee to guide the project that must include both employers and employees. Grantees are *required* to address both access to healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity during the workday.

### **WRK HE #1 Healthy Eating in the Workplace**

Grantees are *required* to improve access to healthy foods through changes in organizational policy, product selection and pricing in cafeterias and vending machines, access to fresh produce, and/or kitchen equipment.

In addition to the requirements above, grantees may choose to supplement these with nutrition classes, wellness challenges, healthy snack programs, lunchtime "salad clubs" or other components.

### **WRK AL #2 Active Living in the Workplace**

Grantees are *required* to change organizational policies to accommodate flexible time and dress code for physical activity, implement environmental changes such as stairwell improvements and prompts to promote stair use, and/or incentives for active commuting.

In addition to the requirements above, grantees may choose to supplement these with mapping of local walking routes and encouraging walking meetings and lunch break walks.