

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Action/Discussion Item:

Adoption of a Physical Activity Assessment Tool

Commissioner's Recommendation:

The Commissioner recommends that the Healthy Schools Program (HSP) assessment be approved as the tool that each school district may use to evaluate its nutrition and physical activity environment.

Rationale:

To adopt a physical activity assessment tool that each school district may use. This request has been recommended by the Office of Education Accountability (OEA) as part of the *Recess and Physical Education (K-5) Report*, published in November 2015, as it is required by KRS 158.856.

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 158.856, KRS 160.345

Action Question:

Should the Kentucky Board of Education approve the adoption of the HSP physical activity assessment tool?

History/Background:

Existing Policy: KRS 158.856 provides the following directives related to physical activity:

- (2) The Kentucky Board of Education shall develop an assessment tool that each school district may use to evaluate its physical activity environment.
- (3) The evaluation shall be completed annually and released to the public at the time of the release of the nutrition report under subsection (1) of this section.
- (4) Each school board shall discuss the findings of the nutrition report and physical activity report and seek public comments during a publicly advertised special board meeting or at the next regularly scheduled board meeting following the release of the nutrition and physical activity reports.
- (5) By January 31 of each year, the local board of education shall hold an advertised public forum to present a plan to improve school nutrition and physical activities in

the school district.

(6) Each school district shall compile a summary of findings and recommendations and submit the summary to the Kentucky Board of Education.

Since 2006, KDE has collected annual nutrition and physical activity reports. However, KDE has never presented a tool for districts to use for reporting purposes. The lack of consistent reporting across schools and districts has made annual reporting to the Legislative Research Commission (LRC) and data analysis across a district or the state difficult.

In 2014, the Division of Program Standards began to pilot a new process utilizing the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Healthy Schools Program with districts. This unified assessment tool, the School Health Index (SHI), is an online self-assessment and planning tool that schools can use to improve health and safety policies and programs.

The SHI was developed by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in partnership with school administrators and staff, school health experts, parents, and national nongovernmental health and education agencies to:

- enable schools to identify strengths and weaknesses of health and safety policies and programs
- enable schools to develop an action plan for improving student health, which can be incorporated into the School Improvement Plan and/or school wellness policy
- engage teachers, parents, students and the community in promoting health-enhancing behaviors and better health

Further, in an effort to improve opportunities related to improved data analysis and collaboration in the state, KDE issued guidance in October 2016, recommending districts begin utilizing this process.

Summary: Through Kentucky's groundwork of field-testing with the Healthy Schools Program, schools and districts have demonstrated great success with implementing the HSP process.

More than 1,000 schools serving nearly 550,000 students across the state have joined the Alliance's Healthy Schools Program, creating healthier school environments for children to thrive. Since 2007, Kentucky schools have been recognized with 57 National Healthy Schools Awards for their outstanding efforts. The Alliance also enlists the help of regional and local partners to create healthier school and out-of-school time environments. These partners, such as the Department of Public Health, the Department of Education, and Baptist Health of Madisonville, gain access to the Alliance's customized professional development training, tools, resources and data that empower them to guide schools to improve physical activity and nutrition policies and practices.

https://www.healthiergeneration.org/about_childhood_obesity/in_your_state/kentucky/

The numerous benefits including generating data for better-informed policy-making at the state and local level make the adoption of the Healthy Schools Program the best option for helping to improve the annual nutrition and physical activity requirements of KRS 158.856 and KRS 160.345. Adoption of this tool also will eliminate confusion about which assessment tool a school or district should use and enable better coordination of training and technical assistance across the state.

Budget Impact: No impact occurs to state funds due to the adoption of this assessment tool.

Groups Consulted and Brief Summary of Responses:

Staff has consulted the following groups:

- the Kentucky Department for Public Health as part of the state work plan for State Public Health Actions to Prevent and Control Diabetes, Heart Disease, Obesity and Associated Risk Factors and Promote School Health
- local school district wellness teams and regional education cooperatives via the Shaping Our Appalachian Region initiative
- Baptist Health Madisonville via a federal grant with the federal Office of Rural Health Policy
- the Local Superintendents Advisory Council

All parties listed above are in support of the adoption of this assessment tool. Comments from the Local Superintendents Advisory Council should be received by the December KBE meeting.

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Commissioner of Education

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