

ADD IT UP!

Fact Sheet 2 | What can school board members do?

What can school board members do to improve physical activity and healthy eating opportunities in schools?

School board members are in a position to impact academic performance through policies and opportunities to support physical activity and healthy eating.

FACTS

- Eating well and being active can improve the academic performance of students. School board members must understand this connection and create policies and environments that give kids the advantages they deserve²
- School board members play a central role in establishing high-level policies, programs and services that support healthy eating and increased physical activity levels in the school community⁴
- School board members create policies that outline expectations of board administration, teachers, and students⁴
- School board members make decisions that determine the direction and quality of public education⁴
- Strong public policy is the foundation of all health promotion strategies¹
- Schools are an ideal setting to establish and promote healthy eating among children and youth.

EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

- Examples of policies that support improved physical activity among school aged children include mandatory physical education, policies that support walking and cycling to and from school, providing infrastructure like bike racks and system-wide support for walking and cycling to school²⁶
- Schools are a prime daily destination for children and youth, and the location of a school within a community can either encourage or discourage walking, biking, and other forms of active transportation. School location can also support community use of school facilities for a variety of programs and services¹
- Food policies create environments that help people eat well. A supportive environment makes healthy food the easiest or “default” option and decreases the pressure on people to resist less healthy foods¹
- Encouraging play is one way to build physical literacy while also developing creativity and problem-solving skills in young children. It can improve social skills and self-esteem and opens the door to a world of possibilities¹

REFERENCES

