



DEVELOPING OUR Healthy School Communities

What is ASCD's Healthy School Communities?

Healthy School Communities (HSC) is an ASCD Whole Child Initiative that focuses on making schools healthier and more efficient places for teaching and learning. It provides opportunities for school communities in all parts of the world to network and share best practices.

What is a coordinated approach to school health?

Initially based on a Coordinated School Health (CSH)* model, Healthy School Communities expands the scope and influence of the initiative and places it directly into the school improvement arena. It is a systemic approach that effectively addresses the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social well-being of students and staff via a health and well-being lens. It is governed by an organized set of policies, procedures, and activities designed to protect and promote their health, safety, and well-being.



Diagram: Healthy School Improvement Plan

*Coordinated School Health is promoted by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Adolescent and School Health.

What are HSC Associated Sites?

HSC Associated Sites are committed to using the Healthy School Report Card (HSRC) as a needs-assessment tool to determine the status of health and wellness policies, programs, and practices. Healthy School Communities provides technical assistance and resources to assist Associated Sites in this process.



What is the Healthy School Report Card?

The HSRC is a portion of *Creating A Healthy School Using the Healthy School Report Card: An ASCD Action Tool*. This research-based tool was developed to help schools engage stakeholders from the school and community in the assessment of their school environment for inclusion in the school improvement process. The strategies contained in this tool are taken from evidence and best practices. The HSRC provides each site with prioritized short- and long-term goals that establish a school improvement plan via a focus on health and well-being.

How can I get the HSRC?

The online scoring tool is available with the purchase of every *Creating a Healthy School Using the Healthy School Report Card* action tool and enables you to enter report card responses into a database and generate real-time reports for further analysis. The reporting features allow you to

- Generate data to assist with your school improvement planning.
- Compare your school to schools with similar demographics.
- View a trend analysis after completing the report card for two or more consecutive years.
- Obtain a resource listing that offers helpful design strategies for your school's plan.

For questions or comments about Healthy School Communities, contact us at **703-575-5614** or healthyschoolcommunities@ascd.org.

Grounded in Research

There is a wealth of research that shows the link between physical, mental, emotional, and social health and student growth and academic achievement. Multiple studies over the past decade and beyond have shown that students who are healthy, safe, engaged, challenged, and supported at school consequently perform better there.

Healthy School Communities seeks to increase a student's health, well-being, and connection to their school and community. It increases both the resources and services available to the school, its students, and its staff and increases both the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching and learning.

Pilot Study

In the spring of 2006, ASCD launched Healthy School Communities and commenced a pilot study of school-community partnerships in the United States and Canada that focused on effective school improvement efforts. The evaluation identified nine levers that catalyzed significant change in the culture of the participating school communities. The most effective sites demonstrated all of these levers to a great extent, with the levers working in concert to support sustainable change.

The Nine Levers of School Change

1. Planning teams should be principal-led.
2. Plans should address systemic issues at the school.
3. Collaboration should commence from the start of the planning process.
4. HSC planning should align with and be the basis of the overall school improvement process.
5. Planning should focus on those aspects revealed by assessment to have the most need.
6. Team leadership should aim to build a team to facilitate the process.
7. Team leadership should ensure all stakeholders understand the value of their involvement.
8. Ongoing purposeful professional development should be integrated to support the process.
9. School administration should actively seek out and access community resources.

¹Arthur et al., 2006; Castelli et al., 2007; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006; Chomitz et al., 2009; Coe et al., 2006; Daly and Ryan, 2000; Dilley, 2009; Dwyer et al., 1996; Dwyer et al., 1983; Dwyer et al., 2001; Field et al., 2001; Fiscella and Kitzman, 2008; Getting Results, 2008; Hillman and Castelli, 2009; Kim et al., 2003; Lee et al., 2003; Moran, 2008; Murray et al., 2007; Pelligrini & Smith, 1998; Pye et al., 2006; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2007; Sallis et al., 1999; Shephard, 1997; Shephard, 1996; Sibley & Eitner, 2003; Tomporowski, 2003; Tremblay et al., 2000; Trudeau & Shephard, 2008; Vail, 2006(a); Vail, 2006(b); Viadero, 2008)

