



Building Healthy Communities:

Engaging Elementary Schools and Community Partners



**Blue Cross
Blue Shield**
of Michigan

2010 request for proposals

Notice of Intent to Apply deadline: Feb. 12, 2010

Proposal submission deadline: March 14, 2010

Grant program Web site: [**bcbsm.com/buildhealth**](http://bcbsm.com/buildhealth)



Reversing the obesity epidemic requires a long-term, well-coordinated approach to reach young people where they live, learn, and play. Schools have a big part to play.

—Make a Difference at Your School, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, January 2008

Core program information

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan is currently soliciting grant proposals from Michigan elementary schools to address the root causes of childhood obesity through prevention and collaboration. The **Building Healthy Communities: Engaging Elementary Schools and Community Partners** grant program will provide funding for healthy physical activity and nutrition programs during the 2010-2011 school year.

The grant program's comprehensive, integrated approach is designed to improve nutritional status and physical fitness levels for students, staff and parents — and to build community partnerships to support continued improvement beyond the grant period. The centerpiece of this program is a “toolbox” of proven resources and activities given to schools to help elementary students achieve better nutrition and increased activity. **Funding under this grant program is limited to the purchase and implementation of the assessments and activities in this toolbox during the 2010-2011 school year.**

Award amounts will vary based on the number of students and classrooms at applicant schools and which toolbox elements are proposed. A list of toolbox elements begins on Page 4.

Elementary schools that apply for funding must agree to implement four school-based elements of the toolbox. Blue Cross intends for these toolbox elements to complement, not replace or crowd out, successful school programs already in place (for example, the Michigan Model for Health®) or instruction in other academic or nonacademic areas.

Blue Cross will grant awards intended to be sufficient to implement proposed elements. No school or partner match is required, though proposals demonstrating additional financial or in-kind support may receive preference.

Applicant schools and their community partners may request additional funds in their grant application for toolbox elements to engage parents and the broader community. Preference will be given to comprehensive proposals that incorporate the most toolbox elements.

In recognition of the disparate impact of obesity on low-income children, strong preference also will be given to applications from schools where more than 40 percent of the 2009-2010 student body is eligible for the federal free and reduced lunch program.

To be eligible for consideration, an electronic copy of your proposal must be received by midnight on Sunday, March 14, 2010. A hard copy of the proposal with original signatures must be postmarked no later than March 15, 2010.

This document and the BHC grant Web site at **bcbsm.com/buildhealth** are valuable resources for learning about the grant program. Visit the Web site to:

- Learn more about this opportunity
- Find a community partner in your area
- Register for recommended informational preapplication conference calls
- Submit the required *Notice of Intent to Apply* and prepare a proposal

If you have questions about the grant elements or the application process, you can e-mail the Blue Cross Social Mission staff at **buildhealth2010@bcbsm.com**.

Why Blue Cross invests in this program

Blue Cross' rich heritage of commitment to the people in Michigan is different from every other insurance company doing business in our state. As a nonprofit health insurance company, we are uniquely committed to enhancing the communities where we live and work. We support community-based initiatives that advance our mission to promote access to high quality, affordable health care coverage and improve the health of Michigan residents, particularly seniors and children.

In keeping with Blue Cross' unique mission, our grantmaking and collaborative initiatives for 2010 focus on two key areas: stabilizing and expanding access to health care services for the uninsured and combating childhood obesity. To address the latter, our Building Healthy Communities program capitalizes on the unique opportunity to have schools participate in reversing the childhood obesity trend.

In a recent national poll, more than one-third of adults ranked childhood obesity as the top health concern for children — ahead of drug abuse, smoking, teen pregnancy, bullying and a host of other health threats. Adults are right to worry. Health experts warn that the current generation of children may be the first in American history to have a shorter life expectancy than their parents.

Over the past 30 years, the percentage of obese children ages 6 to 18 has more than tripled. According to the *2007 Michigan Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, more than 15 percent of Michigan high school students and 12 percent of Michigan middle school students are obese. These children face a higher risk of heart disease, stroke, asthma and certain forms of cancer later in life.

Although rates of childhood obesity among the general population are alarmingly high, they are higher still in low-income communities. Research has shown that the prevalence of childhood obesity increases as family income decreases. In a neighboring state, for example, children in the poorest families were nearly three times more likely to be overweight than children in the highest income families.

The Building Healthy Communities grant program confronts this issue in partnership with schools. Funded schools build their capacity to provide environments where nutrition information and physical education encourage healthy eating and exercise among students. Many of the schools partner with local government and private organizations to expand these environments into the community.

By designing and supporting these kinds of comprehensive, collaborative approaches to targeting critical public health issues such as childhood obesity, we are fulfilling our commitment to creating healthier futures for Michigan and its residents.



Toolbox elements

Funding under this program is limited to purchase and implementation of elements from the toolbox described in this document. School proposals **must** include implementation of all the school-based components (Elements 1 through 4). School budget requests also may include the parent engagement component (Element 5). A lead community partner application submitted jointly with a school application may include community engagement components (Elements 6 and 7). Preference will be given to comprehensive proposals incorporating the most toolbox elements.

1: Healthy School Action Tools (required)

The modules of the Healthy School Action Tools are designed to help Michigan schools assess the overall state of their environment and develop meaningful action plans to build a healthier school. During the 2010-2011 school year, funded schools must:

- Form a Coordinated School Health Team
- Complete at least two sections of the HSAT (Healthy Eating & Nutrition and Physical Activity & Physical Education)
- Implement one SMART goal (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely) identified during the assessment.

Funded schools also may choose to complete other topics of the assessment and implement other goals. Schools that have completed the HSAT since June 2009 may request a waiver of this requirement or request funding to repeat the HSAT during the 2010-2011 school year. Maximum funding for this element is \$1,000.

Learn more at the HSAT Web site at mihealthtools.org/hsat.*

*Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan maintains bcbsm.com, MiBCN.com and theunadvertisedbrand.com. The Blues do not control any other Web sites referenced in this publication or endorse their general content.

2: Feelin' Good Mileage Club (required)

Since 1986, the Feelin' Good Mileage Club has motivated elementary school students to get fit by walking on the playground several times each week. Mile markers are checked every time a student completes a lap on the course, and students are rewarded for distance intervals. In addition to discovering that physical activity is fun and rewarding, students learn responsibility, mathematics and record-keeping skills. Teachers, school administrators and parents are encouraged to participate as well. Funded schools must run the program for a minimum of six weeks during the 2010-2011 school year. Schools may choose to begin the program in the fall, wait until spring or even provide the walking club throughout the winter. Maximum funding for this element will depend on the number of classrooms and students.

Learn more at the Fitness Finders Web site at fitnessfinders.net/. Click on *Mileage Club*.

3: Celebratory run or walk (required)

The most popular road-racing distance in America is 5K (3.1 miles). This beginners-length race is included in the toolbox to bring students, parents, teachers, staff and other community members together for an opportunity to be physically active in a fun, festive atmosphere. Funded schools must hold a celebratory run or walk of 5K or other appropriate distance. Planning for and hosting this event may involve students and parents, school staff, Blue Cross staff, volunteers and community organizations. Maximum funding for this element will depend on the number of students.

4: Nutrition and physical activity programs (required; choose one of the listed programs)

Applicant schools must select one of the following two options for coordinated nutrition and physical activity programs. Blue Cross has worked with program vendors to map out specific steps for successful introduction of these programs. See application materials at the BHC grant Web site for details. Maximum funding for this element will depend on the number of classrooms and students.

4A: OrganWise Guys and HOPSports

The OrganWise Guys program is a cost-effective, science-based elementary school nutrition and physical activity program. The program features the OrganWise Guys, an engaging cast of characters proven to motivate children to make healthy lifestyle behavior changes. Through dynamic, evaluated and curriculum-linked materials — stories, DVDs, dolls and more — the OrganWise Guys empower kids with the knowledge and motivation to help prevent obesity, cardiovascular disease, adult-onset diabetes and other chronic diseases. The program fulfills academic requirements with easy-to-use resources for teachers.

Learn more at the OrganWise Guys Web site at organwiseguys.com.

HOPSports uses 21st century technology to educate, train and entertain youth of all ages with more than 130 lessons on topics such as: aerobics, baseball, basketball, cardio kickboxing, circuit training, dance, football, golf, hockey, martial arts, soccer, swimming, sword fighting, tennis, volleyball and yoga. HOPSports expands physical education instructors' repertoire of fun, effective fitness and sports activities by integrating nutritional, anti-smoking, character education and other relevant social messaging. HOPSports can be used in schools to enhance existing PE instruction or to increase physical activity among staff, parents, home schoolers, seniors and others in the community.

Learn more at the HOPSports Web site at hopsports.com.

4B: PE-Nut (including EPEC)

This element utilizes a program called PE-Nut: Physical Education and Nutrition Education Working Together to Reach Students and Parents. PE-Nut encourages physical educators, classroom teachers and principals to work together to improve nutrition and physical education in elementary schools. PE-Nut combines standards-based physical education (the award-winning Exemplary Physical Education Curriculum known as EPEC) with simple, developmentally appropriate nutrition messages, both in physical education and in the core curriculum.

That includes:

- Classroom activity breaks centered around health messages
- Daily announcements by the school principal
- Take-home materials to connect with parents

Schools with an older version of the EPEC curriculum may apply for funds to get the new version of this program. PE-Nut was developed by the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health & Sports and the Michigan Fitness Foundation.

Call 1-877-464-3732 to request a CD with product samples from EPEC and PE-Nut, or visit the EPEC Web site at epec4kids.com/.

5: Parental engagement (optional; you may choose one program)

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Applicant schools may select one of the following options for parental engagement.

5A: Take Charge of Your Health

Because the Take Charge of Your Health program for adults reinforces messages from the OrganWise Guys program for children, only schools that select Element 4A may also select Element 5A. The speaker's kit includes materials for 10 sessions: complete presentations, interactive activities and master handouts and brochures to be copied for participants. Topics include *Take Down the Fat*, *Take More Fruits and Vegetables*, *Fiber and Water for Better Health* and *Dental Health*. Maximum funding for this element is \$1,325 to complete two 10-session series.

Learn more at the OrganWise Guys Web site at organwiseguys.com.

5B: BodyWorks

BodyWorks is a 10-session obesity prevention program designed to help parents and caregivers of children and adolescents improve family eating and activity habits. The program focuses on parents as role models and provides them with hands-on tools to make small, specific behavioral changes to help maintain healthy weight and prevent obesity. It is available in English and Spanish and must be led by a trained facilitator. Maximum funding for this element is \$3,300 to complete two 10-session series.

Learn more at the BodyWorks Web site at womenshealth.gov/bodyworks/.



6: Safe Routes to School (optional)

Many communities choose to increase children's physical activity levels by encouraging children to walk or bike to school. Safe Routes to School is a structured planning process where local stakeholders work together to identify barriers to safe walking and bicycling to school. They then develop an action plan to address those barriers using a combination of infrastructural and other types of treatments.

Under this grant program, eligible lead community partners in communities that have not already completed a Safe Routes to School action plan may apply for a maximum award of \$1,000 for this element. After the assessment is complete, schools may qualify to apply for federal funding to address items identified in the action plan.

Learn more at the Safe Routes to School Web site at saferoutesmichigan.org/.

7: Promoting Active Communities (optional; you may choose one program)

7A: PAC assessment

If your community has not completed the Promoting Active Communities assessment, consider doing so. The PAC program provides a free online self-assessment tool designed for use by a multidisciplinary coalition of community members to evaluate the environments, policies and programs that promote and support physical activity in the community.

The PAC assessment serves both as a community-building and planning tool and as an application for PAC awards that recognize Michigan communities for taking steps to make it easier for residents to lead physically active lifestyles.

To be eligible for 2010 awards, communities must complete the assessment by July 15, 2010. Communities with assessments that are completed after this date will be eligible for 2011 awards.

For this grant program, eligible lead community partners in communities that have not completed the PAC assessment (or completed it before January 2007) may apply for a maximum award of \$1,000 for this element. After the assessment is complete, communities are well-positioned to apply for a variety of funding sources that could help implement projects that increase active, healthy living because they have used the PAC assessment to better understand community needs and prioritize feasible next steps.

Learn more at the Promoting Healthy Communities Web site at mihealthtools.org/Communities.

7B. PAC implementation

If your community completed the PAC assessment in the last few years, consider applying for funds to take the next step. Eligible lead community partners that participated in their community's PAC assessment between January 2007 and February 2010 may apply for a maximum award of \$20,000 to implement one action step identified during the PAC assessment.

Proposed projects may include advocacy or implementation of policies, programs or infrastructure improvements to promote and support physical activity in the community, particularly in areas surrounding the school. Applications must include a copy of the original PAC assessment. Preference will be given to proposals that anticipate financial or in-kind contributions from other sources.

Eligibility and funding

Elementary schools

All public and private nonprofit Michigan elementary schools (grades K through 5 or K through 6) are eligible to request funding for required school-based toolbox Elements 1 through 4 and optional Element 5 (parent engagement). Schools also may choose to team up with a lead community partner (see below) to propose plans for toolbox Elements 6 and 7.

Lead community partners

Two toolbox components (Elements 6 and 7) require the active participation of a community coalition. Blue Cross encourages schools and lead community partners to invite local businesses, parks and recreation departments, YMCAs, YWCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs, community hospitals and other organizations to participate as part of the community team.

However, only the following entities are eligible to apply for funding as a lead community partner for toolbox Elements 6 and 7:

- Municipalities (village, township or city)
- County governments
- Local or county health departments
- Nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organizations

To be eligible to apply for funding for Element 7B (implementation of one action step from the community's completed Promoting Active Communities assessment), the lead community partner must have been involved in conducting the community's PAC assessment between January 2007 and February 2010.

If Element 6 or 7 is proposed, the lead community partner must collaborate with an applicant elementary school to submit a single, comprehensive joint proposal reflecting all school-based, parent and community elements.

Separate proposals from community partners will not be accepted.

2009 grantees

The 2009 BHC grantees are not eligible to apply for funding in 2010.

Connect through Blue Cross

Blue Cross is committed to simplifying the process of finding potential grant partners. If you complete a *Notice of Intent to Apply* form, we will provide you with a list of potential partners.



If you choose to apply

Informational preapplication conference calls

Blue Cross **highly recommends** that potential applicants join one of two informational preapplication telephone conference calls. Blue Cross staff and representatives of the programs described in this RFP will share information and take questions about toolbox components and the grant submission process.

Both calls are scheduled for Feb. 5, 2010, and will cover the same information. The first call will take place from 10 a.m. to noon with a repeat call from 2 to 4 p.m.

To participate, you must register at the **BHC grant Web site** by 3 p.m. on Feb. 1, 2010. We will send the dial in number, access code and materials to all who register on time. As follow-up, we will post a compilation of questions and answers on the Web site at **bcbsm.com/buildhealth**.

Notice of Intent to Apply form: Due Feb. 12, 2010

Elementary schools interested in responding to this RFP **must** complete the online *Notice of Intent to Apply* form by midnight on Feb. 12, 2010. The form is available at the **BHC grant Web site**.

Submitting the form by the deadline is a condition of funding eligibility, but does not obligate your organization to apply for a grant.

Full grant proposal: Due March 14, 2010

Detailed instructions and application forms are also available at the **grant Web site**. We recommend planning ahead. Schools and community partners must collaborate to submit a single comprehensive proposal.

1. All completed forms and attachments must be sent in a single e-mail to our Social Mission staff at **buildhealth2010@bcbsm.com** by midnight on March 14, 2010.
2. Applicants also must submit one complete hard copy with original signatures. It must be postmarked no later than March 15, 2010, and sent to:

Building Healthy Communities Grant Program — MC B718
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
600 E. Lafayette Blvd.
Detroit, MI 48226-2998

Late or incomplete proposals will not be considered for funding.

Confirmation of receipt

Upon successful submission, Blue Cross will send an e-mail confirmation to the school contact identified in the proposal. If you do not receive confirmation by March 19, 2010, Blue Cross may not have received your proposal.

E-mail our Social Mission staff to follow up. Be sure to include your name, the name of the school or community partner you represent and your phone number. Failure to confirm receipt of your proposal may affect your eligibility for funding.

Proposal review

All proposals received on time will undergo an initial review to verify eligibility and determine if required elements are present. Proposals that meet the requirements of this initial review will receive a comprehensive review of the proposal's merits.

2010 application and review timeline

January 19	Blue Cross issues RFP.
February 1	Interested elementary schools must register for recommended preapplication conference call by 3 p.m.
February 3	Blue Cross e-mails preapplication conference call materials to registered schools.
February 5	Schools, community partners, Blue Cross and vendors participate in preapplication conference call to introduce program elements and answer questions.
February 12	Schools (with community partners, if applicable) submit required online <i>Notice of Intent to Apply</i> form by midnight .
March 14	Schools submit a single e-mail with complete proposal, including supporting documents, no later than midnight .
March 15	A hard copy must be postmarked.
March 19	Blue Cross confirms receipt of proposals by e-mailing school contacts.
May 3	Blue Cross notifies grant recipients of awards.
May 18	Blue Cross begins disbursing grant funds.

If your proposal is funded

Award disbursement

Funds awarded to schools for Elements 1 through 5 will be distributed beginning May 18, 2010. A check will be delivered via certified mail to the address provided on the school application form. Applicant schools agree to use awarded funds to purchase approved toolbox programs and materials from selected vendors.

Funds awarded to lead community partners for Elements 6 and 7 also will be distributed beginning May 18. A check will be delivered via certified mail to the address provided on the lead community partner application form.

Funds for Element 7B projects involving infrastructure improvements will be distributed in two equal parts. Release of the second half will be contingent on the applicant receiving any required approvals for infrastructure improvements by May 13, 2011. Failure to obtain required approvals by this date will result in forfeiture of the outstanding grant amount.

Commitment

Blue Cross acknowledges that making an impact on childhood obesity takes time and coordinated effort. While grantee funding under this program is limited to the 2010-2011 school year, Blue Cross expects this investment to make a lasting impact. Several toolbox elements pave the way for additional funding or require only a nominal expense each year (\$3 to \$5 per student) to replace workbooks or other consumables.

In some areas of the state, assistance and federal funds may be available through Michigan State University Extension. In the grant application, schools are expected to:

- Describe plans for ongoing support of toolbox programs in future school years
- Indicate a willingness to participate in program evaluation beyond the initial grant period and provide guidance to the following year's grantees

Getting started

Using feedback from our 2009 grantees, Blue Cross is designing additional support structures for those who receive awards in 2010. Because successful implementation of toolbox elements requires that activity begin before the current school year ends, grantees will be contacted by Blue Cross staff soon after award announcements are made.

Blue Cross staff will continue to provide support as schools participate in training before or very early in the school year; collect baseline surveys in September 2010; begin to use program materials soon after collecting baseline data; and use classroom programs regularly throughout the school year.

Grantees agree to participate in quarterly conference calls with Blue Cross staff to report on progress and ask questions. Grantees also agree to submit timely, structured interim status reports and a final report to include detailed implementation plans, actual progress against those plans, financial reports and copies of communications related to funded activities (newspaper articles, PTA newsletter, school Web site, etc.).

The status report requirements will provide Blue Cross with the data necessary to monitor progress and assess program effectiveness. We intentionally structured the requirements so that they would not cause an excessive burden to our grantees.

Dates for conference calls as well as requirements and deadlines for status reports will be provided to grantees early in the grant cycle.

Program evaluation

Blue Cross and its designees will oversee evaluation of this grant program for ongoing improvement. Grantee participation in these efforts during and beyond the initial grant period is essential. Grantees agree to cooperate with program evaluation efforts and share data with Blue Cross and its designated representatives for this purpose.

Evaluation will include assessment of children's knowledge, attitudes and behaviors prior to initiating toolbox components and at specified post-program intervals. We will gather information from teachers about which nutrition and physical education modules were taught and how often. Evaluation also likely will include assessment of grantees' satisfaction with the grant application and administration process; specific data collections contained within implemented toolbox component programs; and other data collections regarding program implementation and operation.

Acknowledgement of funding

Grantees will be provided with and agree to adhere to Blue Cross' guidelines for media releases and other communications about this grant. The guidelines focus on the use of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan name and logo, availability of assistance from Blue Cross in writing media releases, and how or when to contact Blue Cross about grant announcements.

Conditions of grant

In addition to these requirements, all grantees agree to comply with the Blue Cross conditions of grant. The document is available at the **BHC grant Web site**.



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