



## THE ACTIVE SCHOOLS/ACTIVE MINDS INITIATIVE

### WHAT IS THE ACTIVE SCHOOLS/ACTIVE MINDS INITIATIVE?

The Active Schools/Active Minds Initiative (the Initiative) will work with 100 schools across California to increase children's physical activity before, during, and after the school day. Schools participating in the Initiative will receive guidance and technical assistance, including an online assessment and action plan; access to physical activity experts; and model policies, practices, and programs. The Initiative will help schools meet and exceed federal and state guidelines, while achieving schools' health and wellness goals.

The Initiative will share school successes with district superintendents, statewide and national policymakers, and stakeholders to help these leaders better understand how increased daily physical activity affects students and schools.

### WHO IS ORGANIZING THE INITIATIVE?

The Initiative is a program of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation with funding from The California Endowment, a statewide and national leader in physical activity promotion. The Endowment is committed to making health happen in schools, and the Alliance has and will continue to play a major role in those efforts. In 2006, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation developed the Healthy Schools Program, which provides guidance, tools, and support for more than 25,000 schools across the country, reaching nearly 15 million students. In California, the Healthy Schools Program reaches more than 1.3 million students in nearly 1,900 schools.

## WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE INITIATIVE AND HOW WILL IT BE ACHIEVED?

The Initiative aims for children to have 60 minutes of physical activity per day, including before, during, and after school. When each school joins the Initiative, a school representative will complete an online assessment to evaluate the school's physical activity offerings. After completing the assessment, each school will create a customized action plan with steps to improve its students' physical activity levels. Administrators will have access to a range of Alliance technical assistance tools for implementing the action plan including online resources, information on available grants, and advice from leading experts.



## WHY SHOULD EDUCATORS BE CONCERNED ABOUT STUDENTS' PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

Physical activity helps kids become better learners and lead healthier lives. Research shows that when kids are more active, their classroom behavior and focus on schoolwork improves. They are also less likely to be absent from school, and when kids are in school and focused, they will learn more.

The benefits of activity extend far beyond the school day. Research also shows that when children learn healthy habits early in life, they are more likely to live healthier, longer lives.

## HOW IS THIS INITIATIVE DIFFERENT FROM OTHER PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROMOTION PROGRAMS?

There are three primary differences between this Initiative and other physical activity promotion programs:

- **Technical support:** The Initiative offers a superior level of technical support to participating schools. School administrators have access to a variety of online resources and a customer support center for on-demand support at any time. Participating schools also have access to national experts on physical activity who can offer advice and ideas to address the unique challenges school leaders face.
- **Customizable & sustainable:** The Alliance's online assessment and action plan tools provide a customized roadmap to address each school's needs. The assessment and action plan are flexible enough to adapt to schools' changing needs throughout the school year.
- **Policy change:** The Alliance works with schools and school districts to change school policies for the long term. Changing policies around physical activity and wellness is a critical part of giving schools the support they need to make increased physical activity a reality.

