

Leander ISD School Health Advisory Council's School Board Report and Recommendations 2014

SCHOOL HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL OVERVIEW

Texas Education Code 28.004 states that each school district will establish a school health advisory council (SHAC) and that it will meet on a regular basis. The duties of the SHAC are to provide advice on the district's coordinated school health program and its impact on student health and learning and to provide recommendations to specific changes to school's health education curriculum and instruction. SHAC is also required to submit to the board of trustees, annually, a written report. This current SHAC is composed of 50 members, in which 36 are parent or community members. The SHAC has met five times this year.

Throughout this year, the LISD SHAC has worked to support the district's coordinated school health program and district health services. The SHAC is committed to improving the opportunities for student health and school health programs which should influence a student's academic achievement. The focus was on developing the whole child particularly the areas of physical activity, nutrition, social-emotional wellness and health advocacy.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Background:

As of 2013, the Texas Education Code requires a school district's SHAC to establish a physical activity and fitness subcommittee "to consider issues relating to student physical activity and fitness and make policy recommendations to increase physical activity and improve fitness among students" (TEC: Sec. 28.004, I-1). The Leander ISD SHAC established the Physical Activity subcommittee, in the fall of 2013.

The TEC also requires a SHAC to "consider and make policy recommendations to the district concerning the importance of daily recess for elementary school students" (TEC: Sec. 28.004, I). As a result of this requirement, recess became an elementary focus area for the subcommittee.

The subcommittee on physical activity reviewed the recommendations from a recently published document, “Educating the Student Body” from the Institute of Medicine (2013), advising the nation on the best practices of improving individual student health through physical activity. The subcommittee then completed a needs assessment of the district’s physical activity using the following topics:

- Taking a “Whole-of-School” approach
- Considering physical activity in all school-related policy decisions
- Designating Physical Education as a Core Subject
- Monitoring Physical Education and opportunities for physical activity in school
- Providing pre-service training and professional development for teachers
- Ensuring Equity in access to physical activity and physical education

After reviewing the results of the needs assessment, the group narrowed its focus to “doable” opportunities for the district. The decision was made to concentrate on recess at the elementary level and sports clubs or intramurals at the secondary level. These areas were considered because it could increase the opportunities and accessibility for students to participate in physical activity.

Recommendations:

ELEMENTARY - RECESS

<p><u>Proposed objective:</u> Develop a district-wide recess policy recommendation that requires implementation of best practice for quality recess that includes all children participating on a daily basis.</p>	<p><u>Why target physical activity and recess?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LISD campuses have differing levels of student fitness and numbers of opportunities for physical activity • Children are less active today because some students only have access to physical activity opportunities during the school day • Only ~50% of the LISD students passed 5 out of 6 FITNESSGRAM assessments • Recess may be the only physical activity some students receive
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Proposed Action:

1. Establish a campus Physical Activity Committee (PAC; parents and school personnel) to identify a campus physical activity champion.
2. Collect campus data on policies (e.g. guidelines for weather), practices (e.g., teacher, parent, and student surveys about recess), and levels of engagement of teachers and students (e.g., step count or accelerometer data, student Quest project to collect observational recess data).
3. Educate administrators and teachers about recess, physical activity clubs, and intramurals.
4. Develop district-wide recess policy recommendations.
5. Implement an evaluation of effectiveness by recognizing gold, silver, or bronze status by campus.

Rationale	Evaluation of Effectiveness: Gold, Silver, and Bronze Status
<p>Offering quality recess as one opportunity to be physically active during the school day will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide all children a chance to be physically active during the day, beyond physical education class (i.e., two recesses or one brain break and one recess) • Reduce discipline issues • Minimize disparities and inequities related to access to physical activity opportunities • Ensure that children are attentive and ready to learn • Enact standards of best practice across all LISD elementary schools 	<p>Gold</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a campus physical activity champion • All students in grades K-5 are offered daily recess • Eliminate loss of recess for discipline, academic work, or other reasons • Recess is offered before lunch in grades K-5 • Each grade level has an active indoor recess plan that involves physical activity engagement • Provide structured options for physical activity at recess (e.g., painted playgrounds, activity zones, equipment, or recess curriculum) • Active supervision of all students participating in physical activity (e.g., signage identifying the rules for safe play on the playground, supervisors who encourage fair play and participation by all) • Schedule recess and physical education at difference times of the day • Establish district-wide weather specific guidelines for recess
	<p>Silver</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have at least 75% of these criteria
	<p>Bronze</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have at least 50% of these criteria

SECONDARY – PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CLUBS AND INTRAMURALS

<p>Proposed objective: At the middle and high schools, develop a policy recommendation that requires implementation of best practices. Provide opportunities for all students to participate in physical activity, beyond structured classes such as physical education, marching band, and athletics.</p>	<p>Why target physical activity clubs and intramurals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By grade, there is a steady decline in physical activity engagement • Decline of physical fitness after the age of 14 • To comply with House Bill 5 regarding the promotion of Healthy Lifestyles
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Proposed Action:

1. Establish a campus Physical Activity Committee (PAC; teachers, parents, and students) and identify a campus physical activity champion.
2. Collect campus data on policies (e.g. strategies for addressing House Bill 5), practices (e.g. student surveys about physical activity clubs), and levels of engagement of students (e.g., step count or accelerometer data, student projects to collect participation and engagement data).
3. Educate administrators and teachers about recess, physical activity clubs, and intramurals.
4. Develop district-wide policy recommendations surrounding non-competitive and no cut physical activity programs and to implement an evaluation of effectiveness by recognizing gold, silver, or bronze status by campus.

Rationale	Evaluation of Effectiveness: Gold, Silver, and Bronze status
<p>Offering physical activity before and after school will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide non-competitive or minimally competitive opportunities for secondary students to be physically active • Promote affiliation and team membership • Allow students to choose physical activities that are interesting and motivating • Build support systems for making healthy choices • Minimize disparities and inequities related to access of physical activity opportunities • Enact standards of best practice across all LISD schools 	<p>Gold</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a free physical activity program before or after school at least three times per week. <p>The following are examples of what would be considered some quality options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer 6th grade outdoor recess • Physical activity clubs/intramurals with no tryouts or cuts for participation • Offer a variety of physical activities that include both individual and group play • Have clubs supported by the community (e.g., hip-hop dance, martial arts, a bus to the skate park, disc golf, etc.) • Offer before and after school physical activity
	<p>Silver</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a free physical activity program before or after school at least once a week
	<p>Bronze</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a free physical activity program before or after school at least once every other week

NUTRITION

Background:

In the past, LISD has always had a Nutritional Advisory Committee (NAC) which advised and made recommendation on how the district implemented the wellness policy based on the nutritional needs of students. This year the committee focused on all foods sold in school as part of the greater food landscape for nutritional health. In 2010, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Act has established nutritional standards for all foods and beverages sold in schools. This law goes beyond the Federal child nutrition programs and applies nutrition standards to all foods sold:

- Outside of the school meal program;
- On the school campus; and
- At any time during the school day.

Although the act has been in place since 2010, the “competitive” foods portion of the law goes into effect July 1, 2014. This has far reaching implications which will create changes on campuses that will hopefully result in a healthier school environment and students making good choices.

Definitions:

Competitive foods are defined as all food and beverages sold to students on a **school campus** during a **school day**, other than those meals reimbursable under the school meal program. These standards would apply to all areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day. The school day would be the period from midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

Fundraisers:

Foods sold as fundraisers on a school campus during the school day would be subjected to these standards. This would not apply to items sold during non-school hours, weekends, or off-campus events (concession stand items at games). The state can still establish a number of infrequent exempt fundraisers that may be held during the school year.

Nutritional Standards:

The standards for competitive foods will apply to all grade levels. It must reach General Standards established for food:

- Whole grain; or
- First ingredient as a fruit, vegetable, dairy product or protein; or

- Combination food with 25% being fruit or vegetable; or
- Contain 10% Daily Value of a nutrient (such as calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber) and Specific Nutrient Standards:
- Total fat
- Sodium
- Calories
- Total sugars

There is an exemption for fruits and vegetables in how they are packaged and are not to exceed the exemption limits.

Beverages:

The standards established for beverages are different because they can:

- Vary by grade level;
- Identify specific types of beverages (water, milk and juice); and
- Address container size.

Recommendations:

Healthy, Hunger-Free Act: Nutritional Standards for Competitive Foods

Based on the general changes of how competitive foods can be sold on campus, there will be a need for educating the campus administrators, club and organizational sponsors, parents and students on the implementation of the law. This will more than likely need to be a systemic approach of developing resources that can be placed at the campuses, distributed and be on the web. The USDA has already created a venue of resources through [Smart Snacks in Schools](#) which gives the user tools such as nutritional standards [handouts](#) and [infographics](#).

Additional Areas Affected in the Food Landscape

Other considerations for the district should include creating and supporting healthy cultural norms in the areas of the broader landscape of foods that is either offered or sold to students during or outside the school day. This could establish the importance of clear and consistent healthy messaging given by the district when it comes to student health. Schools and school organizations could partner with the district in modeling examples of good nutritional habits and assist in students making more healthy decisions. Potential areas to be affected would be concession stands, parent and booster club snacks, vending machines and school rewards and celebration foods. The recommendation would be that the district establish the following:

- Have the potentially affected areas (concession stands, parent and booster club snacks, vending machines and school rewards and celebrations) use the nutritional guidelines set by the USDA for competitive foods; and/or
- Create alternate nutritionally healthy selections to be available so that students have the option of selecting or purchasing these items.

Nutrition Education

Another recommendation that the district should consider is annual training updating teachers, coaches, principals, PTA parents, and booster clubs on the importance of nutritional health and the district standards related to student nutritional wellness.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

Background:

Social-Emotional Wellness is at the root of educating and developing the whole child. The tenets of the whole child initiative, identified as schools that create an environment that is healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged, are valuable in maintaining student success. The whole child approach to education will assist young people in being prepared for college, career and citizenship in the 21st century. For schools to create this environment, related to healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged students, they will have to address social and emotional wellness.

Social-Emotional Wellness can be achieved if schools create intentional opportunities for students to develop as individuals, classmates, community members, and citizens. Those opportunities are related to teaching skills in the areas of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationships and responsible decision making. In order to understand those skill areas more fully, social-emotional learning (SEL) can be defined using the Chicago-based Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) competencies (2013):

- Self-awareness – the ability to recognize one’s emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes being aware of how one’s body space, words and emotion can affect other people.
- Self-management – the ability to regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes self-motivation and self-control.
- Social awareness – the ability to take perspective of and empathize with others. This includes embracing diversity.
- Relationship skills – The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups.
- Responsible decision making – The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interaction. This includes understanding the consequences of one’s actions and caring for one’s self and others.

(Definitions excerpted from NASBE, “From Practice to Policy, Vol. 1 No. 1, Oct. 2013)

How Children Succeed – Grit, Curiosity and the Hidden Power of Character – Paul Tough

In addition to reviewing the characteristics of Social-Emotional Learning, this year our school district completed a book study on the aspects of incorporating character education, as described by Paul Tough in his book, How Children Succeed. Mr. Tough explains how he assisted schools to improve their academic achievement by infusing opportunities to provide character education. He found for students

to be successful in school and life, they will have to possess competencies that are often referred to as “non-cognitive”, “social/emotional”, or “soft” skills.

Those “non-cognitive”, “social/emotional”, or “soft” skills would include:

- Interpersonal Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Emotional Literacy
- Empathy
- Life Skills
- People Skills
- Social Intelligence
- Social Skills
- Resilience
- Sense of Humor
- Acceptance and Tolerance
- Motivation
- Effort

Leander ISD’s Current Social – Emotional Initiatives

In Leander ISD, there have been many initiatives related to building capacity in students to develop character, social skills and resiliency. These initiatives have been inspired by the goals of the district, Graduate Profile and the Ten Ethical Principles. Many of those principles can be found in the following programs:

C- Squared	No Place For Hate	Capturing Kids Hearts
Drug Free Clubs	SAFE	Watch Dogs
Leader In Me	Mentor Program	AVID
PTA	Booster Clubs	Ethical Behavior Packets
Bucket Fillers	Life Coaching	Parent Support/ Education Groups
40 Developmental Assets	Principle-based clubs and organizations	Extra-curricular activities

Recommendations:

Problem statement: LISD needs to improve its approach to social-emotional learning (SEL) for students.

A systemic approach would include:

1. Using a comprehensive decision-making process including:
 - a. Identification of best available research;
 - b. Consideration of population characteristics, needs, values, and preferences; and
 - c. Resource analysis coupled with;
2. Key elements of how to choose an effective intervention such as:
 - a. Engaging the community in needs assessment and decision making;
 - b. Collecting and analyzing data;
 - c. Applying sound health theory;
 - d. Conducting evaluations; and
 - e. Disseminating lessons learned

(excerpted from “Tools for Implementing an Evidence-Based Approach in Public Health Practice, Centers for Disease Control, 2012)

The Evidence-Based Approach would need to be inclusive of all areas of coordinated school health in the school district and reflect the goals of a district-wide strategic health plan.

Upon completing a research of the literature on social-emotional learning and prevention theory, the SEL subcommittee has identified the following priority areas as it relates to social-emotional learning:

- Student Engagement/Culture (Bullying Prevention)
- Environmental Strategies/Cultural Competency
- Personal and School Transition Times for Students/Community Resources Available
- Physical Activity
- PALS/Mentors/Volunteer Opportunities

The SEL subcommittee recommends that LISD incorporate social emotional learning into the school setting by using a systemic approach towards health promotion and prevention of risky behaviors. This approach could begin with students, parents, faculty and staff, and community members completing a campus needs assessment to identify specific priorities for their campus (within the scope of the five

priorities identified by SHAC above). One aspect that the subcommittee would particularly like to see created is student-led opportunities, similar to C-Squared, for social emotional learning activities (such as healthy relationships, boundaries, and skill building activities) on each campus. Collection of formal and informal data from attendance, student support services, CAPP, completion rates, satisfaction surveys, could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of these opportunities. In summary, the subcommittee wants to identify:

- What is working?
- What is not working?
- How will we know?

Action Summary:

1. Survey principals related to the SEL priorities and what are current campus activities.
2. Create a school-based SEL committee on each campus with student involvement.
3. Complete a campus needs assessment related to SEL.
4. Collect and analyze data.
5. Evaluate what is working and what is not and modify as needed.
6. Create a SHAC sub-committee to address environmental issues related to products, behaviors, and illnesses.