The Healthy School Report Card

You are now ready to begin scoring your school with the Healthy School Report Card. If you don’t already have one in place, the steering committee could become your school’s health or wellness team. Your district’s school health council and school’s health team should assume special responsibility for setting and accomplishing objectives for characteristics 1 and 2.

Characteristics 1 and 2 provide the umbrella for all other school health activities. They address implementation and institutionalization of essential structures (i.e., policy, health coordinator, school health team, and school health council) as well as policy compliance, data collection, and strategic planning, which are critical for a health-promoting school. Most schools have some programs that fit under characteristics 3–11; however, these programs are seldom coordinated, resulting in gaps and overlaps that hinder the best use of limited resources.

**If you have an established school health team** and a fully functioning, coordinated approach to school health, assessing characteristics 1 and 2 will give you the opportunity to showcase the important work the team is doing to institutionalize the indicators across your school.

**If you are establishing a school health team or improving an existing team**, characteristics 1 and 2 provide the basis for using best practices and guidelines at the outset. Scoring the indicators will help you prioritize your strategic planning, policy, and coordinating activities.
Characteristic 1: School Health Program Policy and Strategic Planning

A school health system should ultimately be judged by results—improved student behavior and staff and student health status that lead to the reduction or elimination of barriers to learning and teaching. A high-quality approach cannot produce results unless it is well established, coordinated, supported, and institutionalized over time. Schools are governed by formal policies, usually adopted by a board of education, which establish priorities and specify actions school staff must take to comply.

For a school to institutionalize a coordinated approach, it must have a portfolio of policies that covers multiple aspects of each characteristic of a healthy school, as well as overall coordination. Policy examples are available at www.ascd.org/healthyschoolcommunities. Note that the wellness policy mandated under the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act, though important to many aspects of coordinated school health, is only one of many health-related policies that school districts must or are well-advised to adopt. The policy indicators listed under Characteristic 1 refer to the broad collection of health-related policies and not solely to the mandated wellness policy.

To be in a position to comply with these policies, school staff members, including administrators and supervisors, must be aware of policies and have the requisite preparation and resources to implement them. In addition, you must monitor and, if inadequate, improve policy compliance. At established intervals, you should prepare and renew plans based on student health status data and health and safety program data.

Your state or provincial departments of education and health may have staff designated to assisting localities in establishing a coordinated approach to school health. These experts can also provide technical assistance and guidance on meeting the requirements your governing body has developed.

SCORING TIPS

→ You may choose to assign this characteristic to the steering committee, particularly if your school is just beginning coordination efforts.

→ This work group should include a school administrator.
CHARACTERISTIC 1: SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM POLICY AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

**Description:** My school maintains a culture that supports health through compliance with comprehensive policies that address all aspects of a coordinated approach to school health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Question 3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the standard set by this indicator appear in your school?</strong></td>
<td><strong>How much will a change in this indicator improve the health and safety of students and staff?</strong></td>
<td><strong>How much effort will it take to significantly change the current status of this indicator?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - Does not exist</td>
<td>1 - Very little</td>
<td>1 - Very little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - Partially met</td>
<td>2 - Some</td>
<td>2 - Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - Fully met</td>
<td>3 - Quite a bit</td>
<td>3 - A lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - Exceeds</td>
<td>4 - A lot</td>
<td>4 - Overwhelming</td>
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1. **Policy, Professional Development, Monitoring, and Compliance**

   a. The health program is governed by an extensive set of school board-approved policies that are consistent with best practice recommendations of state and federal agencies or professional education and health organizations.

   b. All health program staff members, including health education and physical education teachers, are properly credentialed and well qualified.

   c. All staff members responsible for health program policy implementation participate in regularly scheduled professional development activities.

   d. All staff members are provided the time and resources required to comply with health program policies.

   e. Administrators and supervisors attend professional development that prepares them to authoritatively monitor health policy compliance.

   f. Administrators and supervisors routinely monitor health policy compliance and take action to remedy deficiencies.

2. **Strategic Planning and Evaluation**

   a. Strategic plans are periodically developed for all aspects of the health program, including coordination.

   b. The Healthy School Improvement Plan is the basis for the annual school improvement plan.
CHARACTERISTIC 1: SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM POLICY AND STRATEGIC PLANNING (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description: My school maintains a culture that supports health through compliance with comprehensive policies that address all aspects of a coordinated approach to school health.</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Question 1</strong> To what extent does the standard set by this indicator appear in your school?</td>
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<td><strong>Question 2</strong> How much will a change in this indicator improve the health and safety of students and staff?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - Very little</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. Strategic Planning and Evaluation (continued)

- **c.** Confidential student health indicator data are collected at least once every two years and are carefully considered when determining strategic plan objectives and activities.
- **d.** Results of periodic health program needs and status assessments are carefully considered in the strategic planning process.
- **e.** Progress toward fully implementing the health program strategic plan is monitored on a regular basis.
- **f.** Benefits of the school health program to participants (e.g., better health), the school (e.g., improved attendance), and the school district (e.g., reduced costs) are identified and reported.

RESOURCES

The following resources will help you maintain a supportive culture through comprehensive policies that address all aspects of a coordinated school health program.


**RECOMMENDED ASCD RESOURCES**


