

CREATING A HEALTHY SCHOOL

USING THE

# Healthy School Report Card

2nd Edition

→ an ASCD **ActionTOOL**

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# Healthy School Report Card

2nd Edition

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**ASCD**

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Enter this unique key code to unlock the files:

G188E 07385 DBE1F

If you have difficulty accessing the files, e-mail [webhelp@ascd.org](mailto:webhelp@ascd.org)  
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# Electronic Tools and Resources

## DOWNLOADABLE TOOLS

The tools and Healthy School Report Card are available for download. To access these documents, visit [www.ascd.org/downloads](http://www.ascd.org/downloads) and enter the key code found on page viii. All files are saved in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). The PDF is compatible with both personal computers (PCs) and Macintosh computers. The main menu will let you navigate through the various sections, and you can print individual tools or sections in their entirety. If you are having difficulties downloading or viewing the files, contact [webhelp@ascd.org](mailto:webhelp@ascd.org) for assistance, or call 1-800-933-ASCD.

## Minimum System Requirements

**Program:** The most current version of the Adobe Reader software is available for free download at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com).

**PC:** Intel Pentium Processor; Microsoft Windows XP Professional or Home Edition (Service Pack 1 or 2), Windows 2000 (Service Pack 2), Windows XP Tablet PC Edition, Windows Server 2003, or Windows NT (Service Pack 6 or 6a); 128 MB of RAM (256 MB recommended); up to 90 MB of available hard-disk space; Internet Explorer 5.5 (or higher), Netscape 7.1 (or higher), Firefox 1.0, or Mozilla 1.7.

**Macintosh:** PowerPC G3, G4, or G5 processor, Mac OS X v.10.2.8–10.3; 128 MB of RAM (256 MB recommended); up to 110 MB of available hard-disk space; Safari 1.2.2 browser supported for MAC OS X 10.3 or higher.

### **Getting Started**

Select “Download files.” Designate a location on your computer to save the file. Choose to open the PDF file with your existing version of Adobe Acrobat Reader, or install the newest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader from [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com). From the Main Menu, select a section by clicking on its title. To view a specific tool, open the Bookmarks tab in the left navigation pane and then click on the title of the tool.

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### **HEALTHY SCHOOL REPORT CARD ONLINE ANALYSIS TOOL**

The purchase of this manual entitles your school to unlimited access to the online analysis tool found on ASCD’s Healthy School Report Card website at [www.healthyschoolcommunities.org/reportcard](http://www.healthyschoolcommunities.org/reportcard).

To access the online analysis tool, you must create a user ID and password. Go to [www.healthyschoolcommunities.org/reportcard](http://www.healthyschoolcommunities.org/reportcard) and complete the fields in the area for new users. You’ll then receive an e-mail confirming your user ID and password. If you have any problems accessing the online analysis tool, please contact us at [healthyschoolcommunities@ascd.org](mailto:healthyschoolcommunities@ascd.org).

### **DISCUSSION AND COLLABORATION WEBSITE**

The Healthy School Report Card has its own discussion and collaboration website dedicated to creating a healthy school community: [www.ascd.org/healthyschoolcommunities](http://www.ascd.org/healthyschoolcommunities). On this site, teams can search the database, review case studies, analyze research, and ask questions.

USING THE

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Acknowledgments . . . . .	vii
Downloads . . . . .	viii
Electronic Tools and Resources . . . . .	ix

## INTRODUCTION

What Is Healthy School Communities? . . . . .	3
The Purpose of the Healthy School Report Card . . . . .	7
Key Understandings About the Healthy School Report Card . . . . .	15
Healthy School Communities and the Whole Child . . . . .	19

## STEP 1: ORGANIZING

Organizing for the Healthy School Report Card Process . . . . .	23
Tools for Organizing . . . . .	31

## STEP 2: SCORING

Scoring Your School . . . . .	61
Tools for Scoring . . . . .	69
The Healthy School Report Card . . . . .	81

**STEP 3: REPORTING**

Reporting the Data ..... 135

Tools for Reporting ..... 139

**STEP 4: USING THE RESULTS**

Using the Results of the Healthy School Report Card ..... 157

Tools for Using the Results ..... 161

**APPENDIX**

Methodology ..... 175

References ..... 179

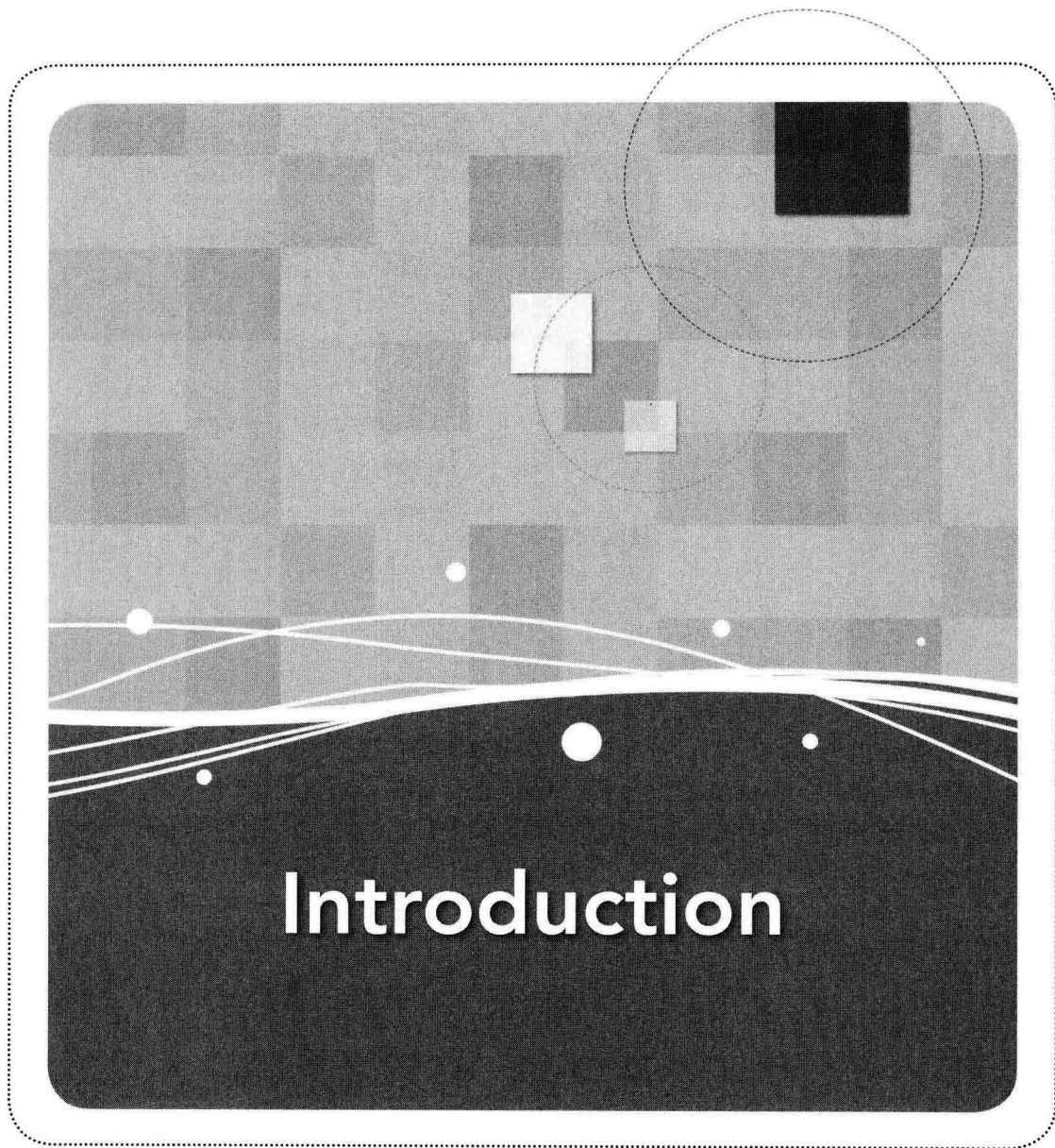
Resources ..... 183

Healthy School Report Card Expert Panel ..... 193

Field Test Sites ..... 195

Healthy School Community Pilot Sites ..... 197

About the Author ..... 199



# Introduction



# What Is Healthy School Communities?

Healthy school communities are settings in which students, staff, parents, and community members work collaboratively to ensure that each student is emotionally and physically healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged. They are settings in which the school and community engage each other to effectively support the school improvement process.

Healthy School Communities (HSC) is part of multiyear plan to shift public dialogue about education from a focus on merely academics to a whole child approach that encompasses all factors required for successful student outcomes. HSC is built around

- **A belief in the whole child:** The belief that successful learners are emotionally and physically healthy, knowledgeable, motivated, and engaged.
- **Best practice leadership:** Best practices in leadership and instruction across the school.
- **Strong collaborations:** Creating and sustaining strong collaborations between the school and community stakeholders and institutions.
- **A systems approach:** Using evidence-based systems and policies to support the physical and emotional well-being of students and staff.
- **Environment:** Providing an environment and developing a school culture in which students can practice what they learn about making healthy decisions and staff can practice and model healthy behaviors.
- **Data:** Using appropriate data to continuously improve.
- **Networking:** Networking with other school communities to share best practices.

Every school has students who miss class because of physical health–related issues or students who cannot concentrate because of pain, discomfort, or physical injuries. Schools may have students who are preoccupied with conflicts at home; feel unsafe at school; or, for a variety of reasons, may not feel supported at school. Each and every one of these situations or

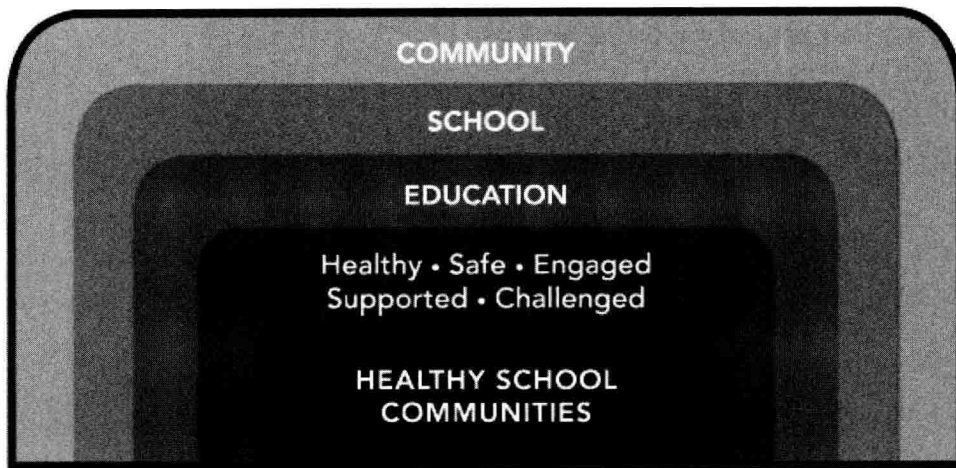
## What Is Healthy School Communities?

conditions impedes students' abilities to perform at their best and educators' abilities to teach most effectively.

Students who do not feel safe, supported, or connected to their schools and communities, for example, are more likely to be disengaged from activities in the classroom. Disengagement from class and school increases the likelihood that students will participate in a range of risk-taking behavior, be absent from school, and experience increasing levels of harassment, all of which lessen students' ability to excel at school. (Arthur, Brown, & Briney, 2006; California Department of Education, 1999; Castelli, Hillman, Buck, & Erwin, 2007; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006; Chomitz et al., 2009; Dwyer, Sallis, Blizzard, Lazarus, & Dean, 2001; Fiscella & Kitzman, 2009; Hanson, Austin, & Lee-Bayha, 2004; Hillman & Castelli, 2009; Murray, Low, Hollis, Cross, & Davis, 2007; Pyle et al., 2006; Sallis et al., 1999; Tomporowski, 2003; Tremblay, Inman, & Willms, 2000; Trost, 2007)

Preventable physical and mental health, safety, and well-being issues compromise the ability of a substantial number of students to master even the best-designed curriculum. Unless the school is a healthy, safe, engaging, supportive, and challenging place to be, many of the best school improvement initiatives will fall short. HSC addresses these issues by targeting a systemic and foundational approach to school health and school improvement.

HSC places health and well-being directly into the school and education arena. This is a departure from the traditional coordinated school health program, which allows health to be separate from many of the policies, practices, and processes of the school at large. The Healthy School Report Card is a school improvement tool that provides the means for schools to address both the needs of the whole child—to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged—and the overall efficiency and coordination of the school site, policies, and processes.

**Figure 1 | Healthy School Communities and School Improvement**

### THE NEED FOR HEALTHY SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

According to the World Health Organization, a health-promoting school is a place where all members of the school community work together to provide students with integrated and positive experiences and structures that promote and protect their health. This includes both the formal and informal curricula in health, the creation of a safe and healthy school environment, the provision of appropriate health services, and the involvement of the family and wider community in efforts to promote health (World Health Organization, n.d.).

The World Health Organization's description incorporates the many structural factors that are part of each component of a coordinated approach to school health. Also known as a coordinated school health (CSH) program, this approach led to the development of the definition of a health-promoting school culture as one that enables, motivates, supports, and reinforces student and staff adoption of healthy behaviors. The keys to successfully implementing a high-quality approach are the common, crosscutting factors of policy compliance, strategic planning, and program coordination.

Historically, schools have dealt with student health and well-being issues through standard hygiene classes, with in-school counseling, or by requiring immunizations prior to students entering school. Within schools, administrators handle—personally or through delegation—a range of issues related to health, safety, and well-being. Besides the links among health,

## What Is Healthy School Communities?

well-being, and student outcomes mentioned earlier, many schools are also obligated to comply with legal health requirements. Frequently these include the following:

- Mandatory health instruction.
- Mandatory physical education classes.
- School well-being policies.
- School crisis response policies.
- School policy as it relates to student safety (including alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse; bullying and harassment; and violence and victimization).
- Safe and healthy physical environment standards.
- School maintenance of confidential student medical information.

Through the Healthy School Report Card process, HSC offers a practical strategy for structuring your school environment and creating a school culture that addresses the health and well-being of students and staff in evidence-based ways that support learning and teaching. Specifically, this action tool will help you

- Meet the guidelines and standards established by your state or provincial government.
- Meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture Local Wellness Policy requirements.
- Establish a school environment consistent with the World Health Organization's concept of health-promoting schools.
- Integrate best practices and methods of providing school health programming for a high-quality school.

The strategies in this tool are the result of data collected through school-community public health partners that participated in the Health in Education Initiative and from school and district research sites that used the Healthy School Report Card (see page 197 in the Appendix.). Consistently, schools stated that undertaking the processes outlined in the tool was as important as filling out the Healthy School Report Card itself. In contrast, schools that shortcut the processes reported that they did not have success in gaining staff and community support for their work once it was completed (Valois, 2009).

# The Purpose of the Healthy School Report Card

The Healthy School Report Card was developed from a traditional CSH framework, but it was expanded to suit and address the whole school improvement process. The Healthy School Report Card aims to improve schools across the classroom, staff room, cafeteria, and playground and into systemic policy levels. The primary functions of this tool are to assess your needs and create a school improvement path for your school. You can use the results from the Healthy School Report Card as the basis of a Healthy School Improvement Plan, which provides a path for making your school more efficient, effective, and healthy.

The Healthy School Report Card is the mechanism by which you can assess your schools' practices, identify and prioritize the changes that you can make, and incorporate the changes into your school improvement plan. The data you collect through the Healthy School Report Card will help you prioritize your school's needs and then address them through your school improvement plan, school wellness plan, or other systematic strategies. The many benefits of a planned, embedded healthy school culture will deepen the support for your school from policymakers, stakeholders, and the community.

The Healthy School Report Card process will help you

- Provide your school and the community it serves with tangible criteria for assessing factors linked to both student health and behavioral barriers to academic achievement.
- Make decisions that support the health and well-being of all students and staff and better enable students to achieve current academic goals and future life goals.
- Increase support among school administrators and decision makers for implementing an organizing framework to support student and staff wellness, student achievement, and family and community involvement.
- Report your school's support for student and staff wellness, positive student behavior, and academic achievement in conjunction with required academic reporting.

## The Purpose of the Healthy School Report Card

- Identify areas for improvement that you can integrate into your school improvement plan.

A major premise behind the tool is that school improvement hinges on broad-based assessment and planning across a variety of traditional and nontraditional measures within each setting, which is a unique school-community context.

To effectively address the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social problems of students and staff that can impede teaching and learning, HSC uses a coordinated approach that involves personnel, agencies, and programs—both in and out of the school. HSC seeks to effectively utilize, coordinate, and provide resources and processes to schools. This includes services for and resources from all participants: the students, the staff, and families and the local community.

The Healthy School Report Card process is designed to help you develop a healthy school culture, one that is broadly understood to encompass the safety, security, and quality of school facilities; the social and emotional climate within the school; the physical school environment; and multiple structural factors within each component of a CSH program. The combination and coordination of all characteristics is what maximizes the efficiency and effectiveness of the school and provides the optimal environment for successfully adopting additional curricula and programs. Schools cannot afford—in time, effort, or money—to continue to implement new programs and curricula without first addressing the school environment. That is, its structure, its climate, and its systems.

Through the Healthy School Report Card school and community, stakeholders can address fundamental school improvement issues that are barriers to learning, such as school climate and child and adolescent health, safety, and well-being. Research indicates that, by actively engaging and empowering schools and communities in the improvement process and by addressing health and well-being issues, schools have students who are healthier, more engaged, and more productive; attend class more frequently; and, when present, have clearer focus and perform better. (Aberg et al., 2009; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010a, 2010b; Coe, Pivarnik, Womack, Reeves, & Malina, 2006; Daley & Ryan, 2000; Dilley, 2009; Dwyer, Blizzard, & Dean, 1996; Dwyer, Coonan, Leitch, Hetzel, & Baghurst, 1983; Field, Diego, & Sanders, 2001; Haas & Fosse, 2008; Kim et al., 2003; Moran, 2008; Nelson & Gordon-Larson, 2006; Pelligrini & Smith, 1998; Shephard, 1996, 1997; Sibley & Etnier, 2003; Trost, 2009; Trudeau & Shephard, 2008; Vail, 2006a, 2006b; Viadero, 2008)