

# Indiana Healthy Schools Grant Success Story

Huntington County Community School Corp. (HCCSC)



Division of  
**Nutrition &  
Physical Activity**

## Overview

The three-year Indiana Healthy Schools Grant provided by the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH), [Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity \(DNPA\)](#) in collaboration with Maternal and Child Health Title V Funding, aims to help schools implement creative nutrition and physical activity programs to advance the school health environment. The [Huntington County Community School Corp. \(HCCSC\)](#) excelled at this task by providing a number of physical activity programs to students to ensure that everyone has an enjoyable option to get moving throughout the day.



November 2022

## Challenge

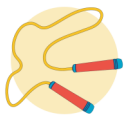
Indiana youth do not receive an adequate amount of physical activity. In the 2021 Indiana's Youth Risk Behavior Survey, fewer than 20% of students who responded reported being physically active for the recommended 60 minutes per day for all 7 days leading up to the survey. Regular participation in physical activity provides benefits to physical health, cognitive functioning, academics, and social/emotional health. Knowing this, school health leaders at HCCSC decided to implement new physical activity options that would appeal to a wider range of students, particularly those who are not already participants in traditional after school sports.

"As a nurse coming to the school environment, it was a challenge learning how to balance health needs with academic needs. This grant gave me the chance to have the funds to support my agenda for greater health for staff and students. Improved health leads to better academics, behavior, and attendance, which are priorities for school leaders. It was a win-win for all of us!"

- Meg Friesen, corporation nurse, HCCSC

## Solution

To reach as many students as possible, HCCSC targeted nearly all areas of the school physical activity environment: physical education, recess, and physical activity during and after school.



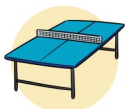
**Physical Education:** HCCSC purchased additional equipment for PE classes, including adaptive equipment for students with special needs.



**Recess:** HCCSC provided Playworks training for recess aids to improve the quality of recess time and create an inclusive environment for all students.



**Physical activity during school:** HCCSC provided professional development to teachers to help them incorporate movement in lesson plans, created sensory walls in hallways, and purchased yoga items for student regulation breaks.



**Physical activity after school:** HCCSC created table tennis and skateboard clubs, and also held community events. HCCSC also prioritized staff wellness by providing professional development on breathwork and other body regulation skills to manage stress.



## Results

By the end of the three-year grant, approximately 4,000 HCCSC students had greater access to a wide range of physical activity opportunities throughout the school day and after-school. With renewed energy and focus on physical activity, HCCSC staff are more aware of their students' needs, and the importance of movement throughout the day for their students and themselves.

### Indirect Benefits

While this grant program accomplished what it set out to do by increasing student physical activity minutes, there were also indirect benefits like increased community involvement.

**Table tennis club:** HCCSC established a partnership with a local table tennis champion to lead the HCCSC middle school table tennis club.

**Blender bike:** HCCSC partnered with Purdue Extension to build a blender bike for community events. Blender bikes are an interactive teaching tool used to communicate healthy living messages by incorporating physical activity and a healthy diet. Participants can crank out smoothies by pedaling the bike.

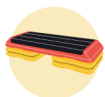
**Staff physical activity:** With the new adaptive PE equipment, a few HCCSC teachers took it upon themselves to create a cardio drumming program for staff after school.

**Skate park renovations:** The school's skateboard club created an opportunity for HCCSC to partner with the local Parks and Recreation Department and the mayor's office to make plans for redesigning the community skate park. HCCSC hosted community events at the park and created a promotional video (with the help of a local university) to raise funds for the skate park renovations.



## Sustaining Success

While HCCSC's Indiana Healthy Schools Grant term has ended, many of the district's programs are either self-sustaining and/or have community support to continue.



**Physical activity equipment:** The equipment that was purchased with grant funding will remain available for staff and student use.



**After school activities:** HCCSC continues to expand their skateboard and table tennis clubs in the middle and high schools with support from school athletic directors.



**Staff development:** HCCSC administration recognizes the lasting impact of the professional development trainings for staff and will continue to support new trainings and workshops.

## For additional information:

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