

South Carolina Public Health Association Resolution

PROMOTING CONTINUED FUNDING FOR THE STUDENTS HEALTH AND FITNESS ACT 2005

WHEREAS, the children of South Carolina are recognized as the State's most valuable resource and schools have more influence on the lives of young people than any other social institution except the family; and

WHEREAS, education and health are inextricably woven together and schools are critical venues to promote healthy lifestyles at an early age and there is mounting evidence that link healthy, active children and school environments to improved learning and academic performance; and

WHEREAS, the obesity epidemic is reaching and exceeding expectations given the fact that South Carolina ranks 5th in adult obesity and that 33.7 percent of children ages 10-17 years are overweight or obese (2007 National Survey of Children's Health); and

WHEREAS, preventable health risk behaviors like physical inactivity and poor nutrition that are often formed in childhood, persist into adulthood, and can lead to heart disease, type 2 diabetes, asthma, high blood pressure and other life threatening ailments that increase health care costs; and

WHEREAS, the Students Health and Fitness Act 2005 is a important piece of legislation that addresses the health of South Carolina's children by mandating that students in kindergarten through grade 5 engage in some form of regular physical education and/or activity at school and receive instruction in nutrition at least once a week; and

WHEREAS, the Students Health and Fitness Act requires licensed school nurses, physical education teachers, coordinated school health advisory councils, and nutritional standards for school lunches, breakfasts, and snacks; and

WHEREAS, the Students Health and Fitness Act also requires program evaluation and assessment of Comprehensive Health Education and Physical Education which ensures accountability for student school health and physical education programs but is contingent upon adequate funding; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the South Carolina Public Health Association supports recommendations put forward by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and leading school health organizations such as the American School Health Association and the National Association of State Boards of Education to maintain funding for licensed school nurses, state mandated assessments, accountability reports, minimum standards for physical education and nutrition, student-teacher ratios for physical education, and to provide continued support of this critical public policy to assure academic performance, healthier students and healthier school environments.

Approved this 26th day of May, 2010

Dennis Thompson

Dennis Thompson, President
South Carolina Public Health Association

