



# Mississippi Healthy Students Act

## HEALTHY MISSISSIPPI INITIATIVE

### Purpose

To require all public schools throughout Mississippi to provide increased amounts of physical activity and health education instruction for elementary, junior high, and high school students

### Target Population

Mississippi students in grades K–12

### Goals

- Reduce the rate of obesity in children and adolescents
- Reduce physical inactivity in children and adolescents

### Structure and Operations

The *Healthy Students Act* requires schools to provide at least 150 minutes of physical activity-based instruction as well as 45 minutes of health education instruction per week for students in kindergarten through eighth grade. In addition, the legislation requires students in grades 9 through 12 to complete a ½ Carnegie unit of physical education or physical activity before qualifying for graduation.

Every school in Mississippi is required to produce and adopt a school wellness plan for health promotion activities. Each school will hire a physical activity coordinator to monitor that the school abides by the legislation and is implementing health promotion activities.

Each school board will also form a local school health council, which will recommend appropriate practices for:

- Health and physical education
- Nutrition services
- Parental involvement
- Tobacco prevention
- Staff wellness

The *Healthy Students Act* also requires that the State Board of Education review each school district's compliance with the Child Nutrition School Breakfast and Lunch Programs.

### Funding

The state funds the programs pursuant to the Mississippi *Healthy Students Act*. The state Department of Education also employs a physical activity coordinator to assist districts with current and effective practices and with implementation of physical education and physical activity programs.<sup>35</sup>

### For More Information

Additional information is available online:

<http://www.governorbarbour.com/news/2007/apr/pr.HealthyStudentsAct.htm>