



## First 5 Years: Health Happens in SCUSD Schools

The California Endowment selected South Sacramento as one of 14 communities in the state to participate in the Building Healthy Communities (BHC) initiative. *The BHC is a ten-year comprehensive place-based initiative working towards transforming communities devastated by health inequities into places where all people have an opportunity to thrive.* Moving beyond a simple medical model of health, the BHC addresses the socio-ecological factors in the places where people live through engaging youth and residents, supporting enhanced collaboration and policy innovation, leveraging partnerships and resources, as well as changing the narrative about what contributes to individual and community health.

The South Sacramento BHC (Sac BHC) has worked with Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) since 2010, as a key partner in creating neighborhoods and schools where children are healthy, safe, and ready to learn. Through direct funding to the district and to community-based organizations working in their schools, the BHC represents a six-million-dollar investment to SCUSD students over the last five years.

This report is a five-year summary of BHC supported efforts within SCUSD and highlights the key achievements resulting from the initiative. Findings and recommendations from a district-wide evaluation are also included.

Direct Grants to SCUSD  
**\$3,153,750**

21 grants, including:  
\$780,000 for Health Career Pathways  
\$932,085 for the Connect Center

Grants to Community Based Organizations  
**\$3,470,810**

\$1,390,880 for CBOs working only in SCUSD  
\$2,079,930 for CBOs working in SCUSD and the larger BHC target area\*

Total During Five-Years  
**\$6,624,560**

\*This does not include grants to CBOs working outside of schools.

# Description of SCUSD Needs— Health Happens in SCUSD

About a quarter of SCUSD’s schools are near, or draw their students from, the neighborhoods within the BHC boundaries. These neighborhoods are some of the most disadvantaged communities in Sacramento County, presenting both challenges and opportunities for SCUSD to contribute to the health and well-being of their students. The overall demographics of SCUSD illustrate the diversity of the district, for example:

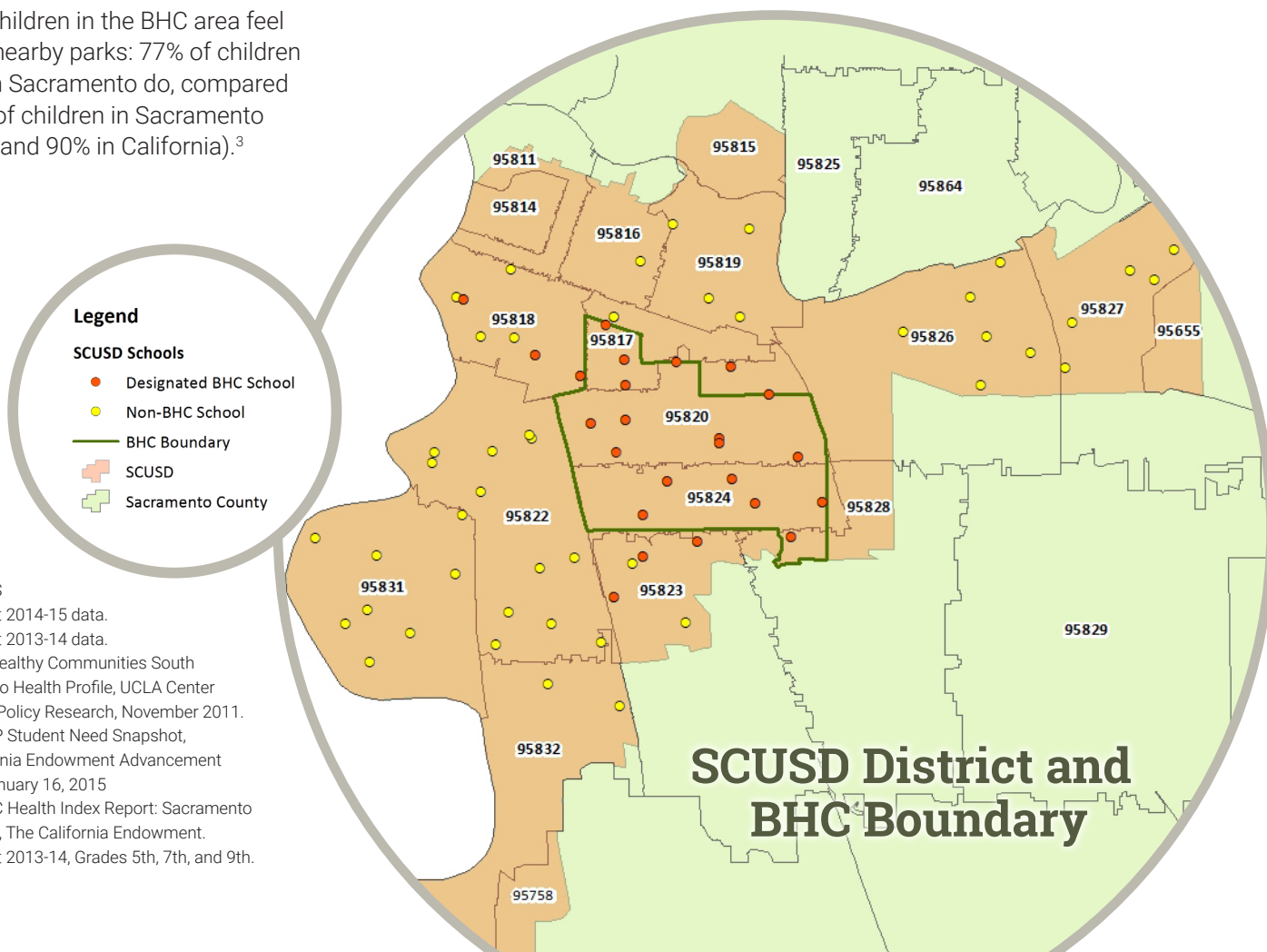
- Residents within SCUSD speak more than 40 languages and English Language Learners account for one in five students.<sup>1</sup>
- More children served by BHC schools qualify for free and reduced meals: 84% of the BHC students do, compared to 73% of SCUSD students and 60% of all students in the County.<sup>2</sup>
- Fewer children in the BHC area feel safe in nearby parks: 77% of children in South Sacramento do, compared to 95% of children in Sacramento County, and 90% in California).<sup>3</sup>

The Local Control Funding Formula – Local Control Accountability Plan Student Equity Need Index ranks SCUSD schools by their level of need and found that the BHC area houses the neediest schools in the district, and that students in these schools are:

- More than twice as likely to have multiple unexcused absences from school;
- One and half times as likely to be exposed to gun violence;
- Almost nine times more likely to be suspended or expelled;
- Two and a half times more likely to be hospitalized for asthma.<sup>4</sup>

High school students surveyed in the BHC reported conditions that illustrate the need to address the health and well-being of SCUSD students.<sup>5</sup> For example:

- Only 27% of the students said that their school has a process to confidentially and safely resolve conflicts (like restorative justice).
- Over one-third of the students reported that they had been made fun of because of their looks or the way they talk in the last year.
- Almost a third of the students reported that they had not eaten any vegetables in the previous day.
- Two in five students taking the state physical fitness test had a body composition (BMI) that was assessed as a health risk or needing improvement.<sup>6</sup>



## FOOTNOTES

- 1 Data Quest 2014-15 data.
- 2 Data Quest 2013-14 data.
- 3 Building Healthy Communities South Sacramento Health Profile, UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, November 2011.
- 4 LCFF-LCAP Student Need Snapshot, The California Endowment Advancement Project, January 16, 2015
- 5 CHKS/BHC Health Index Report: Sacramento 2012-2013, The California Endowment.
- 6 Data Quest 2013-14, Grades 5th, 7th, and 9th.

# BHC has concentrated on three areas of support for school-based programs.



## School Climate

SCUSD and community-based partners are working towards the development and implementation of policies and strategies to ensure a positive climate in schools, and all students to feel safe and supported. For example, BHC supported the process to develop policies on positive school climate and restorative practices. The SCUSD district bullying prevention staff position is funded through the BHC to support school sites, to provide bullying prevention training, and convene the School Climate Collaborative. BHC funding has also supported Social Emotional Learning (SEL) staff at the district level and a few afterschool programs within BHC schools that incorporate SEL into their curricula. The after-school program, Men's Leadership Academy (MLA) is taught by middle and high school teachers, with a community-based partner facilitating healing circles. BHC funding has also focused on issues of chronic absenteeism in the district and created district-wide prevention intervention tools, including a template for schools and the district to identify students who are chronically absent.

ABOVE: MEN'S LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

## School Wellness

The focus on School Wellness aims to increase students' overall health by promoting the availability of healthy food, promoting physical activity, engaging parents in school wellness committees, as well as aligning district and school wellness practices to state mandates and best practices. BHC has supported the staffing of a district-level Physical Education Coordinator to train staff on physical education requirements and a district adopted curriculum. SCUSD's Healthy Food Task Force has also been supported by the BHC to address food and nutrition, including implementing salad bars in every school. Other programs include Growing Together, which incorporates school gardens into schools as well as the Food Literacy program, which are both working to a focus on healthy eating and the development of academic curricula that incorporates experiential learning through hands on gardening. BHC also funded Healthcorps coordinators at a few high schools for several years where they provided education around healthy eating, physical activity, and mental resiliency.

ABOVE: STUDENTS TESTIFYING AGAINST MCDONALDS DOUBLE DRIVE-THRU

## Comprehensive Supports

SCUSD and the BHC have worked together to integrate physical and behavioral support with academic programs, and promote students' and their families' access to preventive care. The major initiative under this focus is the SCUSD Connect Center, a districtwide centrally located student support center that serves as a "gateway" to coordinate critical services by providing a single, easily identifiable point of access and assistance to address the social, emotional, and health needs of all students and their families. To help the district address health prevention, BHC recently funded a series of convenings. District staff worked with leaders from health care institutions and health prevention agencies to develop strategic recommendations for the district to build school/community partnerships to serve the health prevention needs of SCUSD students. Additionally, BHC just funded a grant to improve the Health Career Pathways infrastructure at SCUSD and is providing the funding for the coordinator of the first school-based health center in the region at Hiram Johnson High School.

ABOVE: HEALTH CAREER PATHWAYS

# Building Healthy Community Grants Supporting Student Health: 2010-2015



BULLYING PREVENTION



HEALTH CAREER PATHWAYS



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

■ School Climate  
■ Wellness  
■ Comprehensive Supports  
**Project | Grantee**



LGBTQ SUPPORTS

**Major District Outcomes**

- Evidence-based standardized PE curriculum adopted (2010)
- Anti-Bullying Board Policy adopted (2011)
- Connect Center opened (2011)
- Salad bars in every school (2012/13 school year)
- Policy revised to outline physical education requirements (2013, 2015)
- Transgender and Gender Variant Student Policy adopted (2013)
- Policy revised to include restorative practices and reduction in suspension and expulsions (2014)

**Connect Center | SCUSD**

**2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015**

**Healthy Foods Task Force | Valley Vision**

**Youth Leadership Team** | People Reaching Out (with UC Davis School of Education)  
**LGBTQ Supports** | Mental Health America of Northern California  
**Understanding the Teen Brain** | Strategies for Youth  
**Sacramento Youth Leadership Program** | Nehemiah Community Reinvestment Fund and WayUp  
**HealthCorps** | HealthCorps



MEN'S LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



GROWING TOGETHER

**Zero Tolerance Youth Team/Restorative Justice** | Black Parallel School Board and Sacramento Independent Learning Center  
**Boys & Men of Color (BMoC) Summits** | The HUB  
**Healing Circles** | Always Knocking Incorporated  
**Walkability** | WalkSacramento  
**Food Literacy** | Food Literacy Center  
**Growing Together/School Gardens** | Soil Born Farms  
**Youth Health Advocacy/Breakfast Program** | Health Education Council



FOOD LITERACY

**Girls on the Rise** | CCHWB  
**LCAP Coalition/Sacramento Community Priority Commission** | Black Parallel School Board

**SEL | The Center (SCSC)**

SCUSD: \$3,153,750

CBOs: \$3,470,810

## Connect Center, a Centralized Student Support Center

The BHC helped launch the Connect Center, a centralized student support center that opened in 2011. This center serves as a gateway to critical support services for students and families throughout the district. Schools refer families to the center for help accessing social, emotional, and health supports in the community. It is staffed by social workers, and health and mental health advocates that work with families to link them with community resources, including health insurance enrollment. In addition, the center employs an advocate to support the needs of LGBTQ youth and their families, and serve as a resource for schools. The Center also hosts an annual No Time to Lose conference on the needs of LGBTQ youth. Financial support for the Center is transitioning from BHC grant funds to district funds, making this a sustainable, district-wide support for students and their families.

As a result of BHC funding, Connect Center helped over 3,000 families receive needed services, assisted 1,777 families with health insurance enrollment, and facilitated the adoption of the Transgender and Gender Variant Student Policy which was approved by the board in December 2013.

## Implementation of a District-Wide Holistic Approach to Bullying Prevention

The BHC initially helped support the district-employed Bullying Prevention Specialist position to address bullying behavior within SCUSD, which is an important component of the SCUSD's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Strategic Plan and the Bully Prevention Advisory Committee. The Specialist provides leadership and support in making the district compliant with California Education Code and identifying methods for addressing bullying behavior. To date, SCUSD has developed and adopted the Anti-Bullying Policy (June 2011, revised June 2014) and the associated administrative regulations (May 2012). The Specialist provides professional development and training throughout the district on bullying behavior and prevention and conducts outreach and education for students and community members on what constitutes bullying behavior and techniques and resources to counter this behavior. In addition, BHC and other funding has allowed the district to implement an evidence-based violence prevention and school climate curriculum.

As a result of this work, SCUSD now has a bullying prevention policy and is compliant with California's Education Code to address bullying behavior. The California Department of Education considers SCUSD a leader in addressing bullying strategically through a district-wide approach. As of June 2015, all school staff are trained in the bullying behavior reporting procedure and 18 schools are implementing the bullying prevention curriculum.

## Systems Change and Curriculum Adoption for Physical Education

The BHC supported a Physical Education (PE) Coordinator position which is dedicated to the standardization of physical education programming. This expanded position provided advocacy for professional development standards among PE faculty, the identification, adoption, and implementation of an evidence-based physical education curriculum, policy improvement, and enhancing PE teacher effectiveness through ongoing training. These efforts to elevate the importance of student health in the district are apparent in the updated Report Card, which now measures students on the five overarching CA standards for PE. In addition, funding supported improvements to the PE policy which more clearly outlines requirements for the number of minutes students participate in PE, types of PE exemptions, and expectations regarding modifications for students with special needs, and an evaluation of student achievement.

As a result of BHC funding, district support, and a strong PE Coordinator, schools are now implementing an approved physical education curriculum with more trained PE teachers, administering the FITNESSGRAM assessment for physical fitness, are updating equipment and hardscape on selected campuses, and working towards achievement of higher standards for PE activity for elementary, middle, and high schools. After one year, the district reported that the rate of SCUSD schools in compliance with the new PE standards increased from 3 to 41 percent.

## Men's Leadership Academy

Since 2012, hundreds of young men have participated in SCUSD Men's Leadership Academy (MLA). MLA is a program to empower young men to become lifelong learners and globally competitive leaders – to be resilient, responsible and respectful. Some of these men became involved in a task force around closing the achievement gap by attending meetings and speaking to the School Board concerning the design of a new Restorative Justice policy. The district and a diverse group of stakeholders drafted new board policies and administrative regulations and practices related to school discipline and restorative justice.

As a result of BHC funding, community grantees, and district staff, this work led to the passage of two district policies on student discipline and positive school climate. BHC grantees external to SCUSD were part of the task force on closing the achievement gap as well as a Restorative Justice Committee. They also worked with youth from MLA on zero tolerance policies, some of who met with legislators during the Boys and Men of Color legislative hearings.

## Key Findings

**1 BHC support has made a significant impact in SCUSD:** Over the past five years, BHC funding and support has been critical for grantees in terms of their ability to promote health, wellness, and safety among SCUSD students. Many of these programs have brought systems change to the district, such as the Connect Center providing student support, and district staff positions to support bullying prevention, physical education, and LGBTQ. Each year the district increases financial support to these programs and positions to ensure these efforts will be sustained.

**2 Collaboration looks different across BHC grantees:** Grantees approach collaboration differently depending upon whether they are within SCUSD or Community Based Organization (CBO) grantees. While district staff discuss BHC relationships primarily as intra-district collaboration, CBO grantees' overall focus is collaborating with other CBOs at specific school sites.

**3 Leadership and ownership are vital to sustainability:** The importance of leadership was repeatedly brought up in the context of successfully advancing and building upon BHC policy and program work. For any initiative to succeed in SCUSD, it needs to be 'owned' by a high-level administrator who can ensure the successful implementation and long-term sustainability of policy and programmatic changes.

**4 Grantees want more oversight, communication, and coordination:** Very few of the individuals interviewed, outside of those individuals who were directly involved in the funding process, knew much about the BHC or how their program activities were supported as a part of the larger community-wide initiative. Overall, grantees wanted more oversight and coordination from SCUSD to ensure that BHC funding was used effectively and strategically.

## Recommendations

Over the last five years, the the BHC brought unparalleled funding and energy into the South Sacramento Community and the SCUSD. The following recommendations focus on ensuring impacts on student health and well-being will be sustained through the remaining 5 years of the BHC initiative and long after.

**Designate a high-level district leader to oversee BHC funded initiatives within the SCUSD.** Given the long-term funding commitment that TCE is making, there should be a visible and active leader committed to the strategic use of BHC funding within the district. This leader should be at the level of the Superintendent's Cabinet, such as the Chief of Strategic Planning. This leader could address existing structural barriers that prevent fully integrated programming, manage a 'backbone' administrative structure for collaboration among departments and across school sites and services, and facilitate communication and convenings among grantees.

**Establish a SCUSD partnership office to serve as a central point-of-contact between the district, school sites, and community partners.** SCUSD should set up a district-wide partnership office to connect potential partners with sites, in order to fully leverage the community resources that are available. This office could also establish a uniform process for community organizations to engage school sites and track involvement throughout the district.

# BHC Grantees Focusing on Health in Sacramento Schools

## Grants to SCUSD

### High School Redesign Initiatives Department

- Health Career Pathways

### Nutrition Services Department

- Healthy School Meals

### Strategy and Innovation Office

- Restorative Justice Collaborative
- Men's Leadership Academy
- Social and Emotional Learning

### Physical Education Department

- Policy and Curriculum Adoption

### Strategic Partnerships Office

- Earl Warren Elementary School Garden

### Student Support and Health Services

- Bullying Prevention and School Climate Collaborative
- Chronic Absence
- Connect Center
- LGBTQ Supports
- School Community Partnerships for Student Health

## CBOs funded for work only in SCUSD

### Black Parallel School Board

- Zero Tolerance Youth Team and Restorative Justice
- LCAP Coalition/Sacramento Community Priority Commission

### Community Link

- Chronic Absence

### Soil Born Farms

- Growing Together and School Gardens

### The Center

- Social and Emotional Learning Afterschool Program

## Grants to CBOs funded for work in SCUSD and the larger BHC target area\*

### Always Knocking Inc.

- Healing Circles

### California Food Literacy Center

- Food Literacy

### Center for Community Health and Well-being

- Girls on the Rise

### HealthCorps

- HealthCorps

### Health Education Council

- Youth Health Advocacy and Breakfast Program

### Mental health America of Northern California

- LGBTQ Supports

### Nehemiah Community Reinvestment Fund and WayUp

- Sacramento Youth Leadership Program

### People Reaching Out and UC Davis School of Education

- Youth Leadership Team

### The HUB

- Boys and Men of Color Summits

### Strategies for Youth

- Understanding the Teen Brain

### Valley Vision

- Healthy Food Task Force

### WalkSacramento

- Walkability

\*This does not include grants to CBOs working outside of schools



This graphic summary is based on findings from the Building Healthy Communities and Sacramento City Unified School District Five Year Meta Evaluation. For more information, please contact:

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