# Recommendations for the Improvement of the

# Coordinated School Health Program

Approved - March 30, 2009

## Background:

In 2007, the 80th Texas Legislature amended Chapter 38 of the Education Code with Senate Bill 530, requiring school districts to annually assess the physical fitness of students, grades 3 through 12. It also required the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to adopt an assessment instrument to be used by all schools to measure student physical fitness in these grades. The adopted tool, FITNESSGRAM®, developed by the Cooper Institute, assesses student fitness using criterion-referenced standards called Healthy Fitness Zones. TEA was charged with implementing the assessment instrument, collecting and analyzing results from school districts, and reporting the results to the Texas School Health Advisory Committee (TSHAC). Chapter 38 of Education Code also requires the TSHAC to use the results in:

(1)  assessing the effectiveness of coordinated health

programs provided by school districts in accordance with Section 38.014; and

(2)  developing recommendations for modifications to coordinated health program requirements or related curriculum.

TEA provided TSHAC with the analysis of student fitness assessments that were completed during the 2007-08 school year. TSHAC has reviewed the results and respectfully makes the following recommendations in compliance with Chapter 38 of the Education Code.

## Recommendations:

1. Expand the current definition of Coordinated School Health (CSH), as defined in the Texas Education Code that lists four components, to include all eight components of CSH as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These eight components are: health education, physical education/activity, parent and community involvement, staff wellness promotion, counseling and mental health services, healthy and safe school environment, health services, and nutrition education/services.
2. In order to implement coordinated school health programs, sufficient funding is necessary at the local, regional and state levels. It is recommended that the attached CSH model be used in order to develop, enrich and sustain CSH infrastructure at all levels.

3. Immediately revise the health and physical education Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills to align with national health and physical education standards and to reflect state mandates.

1. Establish the TSHAC as a statewide resource for evaluation of CSH recommendations to ensure that proposed school health initiatives have a greater potential for full integration.
2. Work with all districts, especially those with the greatest need, to evaluate and improve CSH utilizing the appropriate state agencies and Education Service Centers.
3. Build accountability for CSH at the local school district level through the use of an annual progress report to the local school board by the district school health advisory council.

1. Develop an annual evaluation of the implementation process for FITNESSGRAM® testing and data collection methods of school districts to identify best practices.

8. Utilize the results of the Texas Education Agency School Health Survey, Youth Risk Behavior Survey and the FITNESSGRAM® data to improve CSH programs and identify best practices and model programs at the state, regional, district and school campus level.

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