



SPARK and the 2011 Carol M. White PEP Grant: A Resource Guide for PEP Applicants

SPARK: Countering Childhood Obesity Since 1989

SPARK is a research-based, public health organization of San Diego State University Research Foundation (disseminated by School Specialty, Inc.) dedicated to creating, implementing, and evaluating programs that promote lifelong wellness.

SPARK strives to improve the health of children, adolescents, and adults by disseminating evidence-based Physical Education, After School, Early Childhood, and Coordinated School Health programs to teachers and recreation leaders serving Pre-K through 12th grade students.

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I. Why previous PEP winners have chosen SPARK

- **SPARK WORKS.** Over 45 publications demonstrate significant outcomes on students and teachers- including academic achievement and moderate to vigorous physical activity- a specified goal for PEP Bill assessment
- **SPARK LASTS.** A 2005 paper in Research Quarterly proved SPARK sustainability/ institutionalization
- SPARK elementary physical education is the **only nationally disseminated program** that positively affects ALL of these student outcomes: Activity levels (moderate to vigorous surpasses 50% of class time), fitness, sport skills, enjoyment, and academic achievement. SPARK is also the **only NIH-researched program** available providing coordinated curriculum, training, follow up support, and equipment for Pre-K through 12th grade teachers.
- SPARK increases MVPA (moderate to vigorous physical activity) to over 50% of class-time (PEP reporting requirement) whether instructed by PE specialists or classroom teachers - and SPARK will consult with you on how to measure it
- SPARK has been honored as an Exemplary Program of the U.S. Department of Education; cited in the Surgeon General’s Report as a “School-based solution to our nation’s healthcare crisis;” earned a “Governor’s Commendation;” and in 2005, was awarded “Gold” (highest ranking) for their elementary and middle school PE programs in an independent study commissioned by the Cooper Institute. **SPARK is the only program to earn “PE Gold” grades K-8.**
- SPARK has been selected by many leading universities as their program of choice for their own research projects
- SPARK offers programs that extend beyond their award-winning K-12 PE Programs, including Early Childhood, After School and Coordinated School Health Initiative (CSHI) (why piecemeal different programs together when they could expand in time to other SPARK offerings and maintain continuity?)
- Each SPARK program provides a coordinated package of curriculum (the “what to teach”), teacher training (the “how to teach it”), content-matched equipment (the “tools you need to teach”), and extensive follow up support (because programs must institutionalize to be successful).
- The SPARK staff of researchers and educators have 20 years of successful experience working at state, community, and district levels in both urban and rural areas; and with a variety of cultures and demographics (including state-wide adoption and city-wide Department of Health initiatives).

- SPARK’s exclusive nutrition services partner, Healthy Kids Challenge (HKC) has earned impressive accolades for their work including:
 - American Dietetic Association’s “Award of Excellence for Community Dietetics”
 - National Advertising Council “CAN (Community Action Network) Award”
 - Cooking Light named HKC one of the “Top 12 Change Makers in Nutrition” over the past 25 years
 - Cooper Clinic study “Silver” ranking for programming
 - National Dairy Council honored HKC as “Most Sustainable Grant Project”

II. What previous PEP winner have said about SPARK

“When looking for a curriculum that was evidence-based and met the standards for physical education, the SPARK curriculum soon distanced itself from the others on the market. We also looked at the ease of implementation based on the equipment we presently have in the various schools. Most of the activities would easily fit with the equipment we already had in stock or were ordering for the school year. The SPARK curriculum also provided staff development for proper implementation. We have been very satisfied with both the training and the curriculum of the SPARK program.”

Julie Graber – PEP Winner 2010

PEP Program Manager & High School PE Teacher
Ellsworth Community School District, Ellsworth, WI

I need to say THANK YOU! The SPARK PE Workshop was incredible! My whole 3rd grade team is now implementing it. It’s become a highlight of our off-the-record planning time and how we’re serving the needs of our students. The coolest thing is we, the teachers, realize how important it is that we prioritize PE for our kids. We’ve noticed how are kids are more attentive and excited about coming to school now. Today, after a short session of “Mingle” activity, my students were so happy they were grinning ear to ear and giggling. They said, “I feel like I can fly.” “I feel like my mind is free.” “I feel so happy!” And much more... Thanks so much for making it happen. If I had not had the wonderful opportunity to attend the training I’d probably be too intimidated to take on the challenge of learning the program and teaching it.

Betsy Cantrall – PEP Winner 2009

Teacher
Oceanside Unified School District - Oceanside, CA

The training was FANTASTIC!!!! I was worried that 3 days with the same trainer would be a little much, but he was great. I got so much out of those three days!! All the other PE teachers were very positive about the training, and were very receptive to the SPARK curriculum. With the training and all the new equipment, I’m sure there will be some very positive changes to our PE program district wide. Very exciting stuff!!!

Pamela Lambert – PEP Winner 2009

Principal District Wellness Coordinator
Williston Public School - Williston, ND

I began the year with anticipation, excitement and yet some apprehension with the implementation of a new curriculum for our Middle School Physical Education classes. Although I love the curriculum and I have seen it work with our Elementary staff and students, I wasn't sure what to expect with our Middle Schools. After Wednesday's Curriculum Meeting, the uncertainty is gone. I would like to share some of the comments the middle school teachers made about the curriculum: -"We no longer have students standing around. Students are actively engaged and actually tired when they leave my class." -"Every kid participates and they don't even realize they are exercising." -"We tried the golf curriculum and it really worked!" -"The kids love the warm-up activities and our activity time has increased." -"The amount of equipment we received has helped to get a ball in every kid's hands. They have more opportunities to learn and improve their skill."

Judy Vanderford – PEP Winner 2008
Health and Physical Education Teacher
Kenosha School District - Kenosha, WI

"SPARK has proven to About Our Kids, Inc., as well as our partner schools, that physical education can have easy, efficient and effective implementation, be fun and enjoyable and incorporate all classroom and after school students while maintaining and increasing motor development and positive behavior. SPARK is utilized in our after school program, school districts and community settings with positive results and feedback wherever implemented. About Our Kids, Inc. is proud to support SPARK and the positive benefits it is empowering our youth with."

Jerod Morey – PEP Winner 2010
About Our Kids, Inc.
Executive Director

"I'm happy to say that I began a long relationship with the SPARK team in 2005 with winning the PEP Grant. I chose the SPARK Active School Program for our organization because of their research base and years of field testing. My staff loves the SPARK curriculum because it's so easy to learn and use. SPARK's staff has always been great to work with and they follow up with me on a regular basis. I strongly recommend their after school program to any organization looking for excellent physical activity content, training, age-appropriate equipment, and consultation. SPARK does it all, and they do it very well."

Mandee Polonsky – PEP Winner 2005 & 2007
Chicago Public Schools

III. SPARK Alignment with 2011 PEP Priorities & Requirements

Priorities

Absolute Priority: Under an absolute priority, we consider only applications that meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(3)). The absolute priorities for this program require that an applicant propose a program that will address its State's physical education standards and develop, expand, or improve its physical education program for students' kindergarten through grade 12 by undertaking the following activities:

SPARK content and instruction can be used to help a district align to their K-12 Physical Education District, State & National Standards:

[National \(NASPE, National Association of Sport and Physical Education\)](#) and [State Standards](#)

(1) instruction in healthy eating habits and good nutrition

[Healthy Kids Challenge](#) (HKC), SPARK's Nutrition Services partner, utilizes evidence-based content and instructional strategies that are aligned with the recommendations of CDC, NIH, American Academy of Pediatrics and USDA to provide effective nutrition education materials and services to schools and staff. For districts willing to invest the time and money to purchase a comprehensive approach to nutrition education, HKC is an excellent supplement to the SPARK content.

In addition, SPARK's password-protected website, [SPARKFamily.org](#), provides two different sections that provide excellent nutrition content for elementary and middle school teachers and students. SPARKfit includes 10 mini-lessons, one for each month of the year; perfect for physical education specialists. The other is Bon-a-PE, which is located in the G.Y.M. (Great Young Minds) section. This provides complete lessons that integrate nutrition and healthy eating concepts with the core subjects and are excellent for classroom teachers -- as well as physical educators.

(2) physical fitness activities that must include at least one of the following:

(a) fitness education and assessment to help students understand, improve, or maintain their physical well-being;

SPARK elementary physical education is the **ONLY nationally disseminated program** that positively affects ALL of these critical student outcomes:

- Activity levels (moderate to vigorous surpasses 50% of class time),
- Physical fitness
- Sport skills
- Enjoyment
- Academic achievement
- Activity levels away from school
- Sustainability

And SPARK positively effects teachers' quantity and quality of instruction and surveys show they rate SPARK's easy to use curricular materials and teacher training programs very highly.

[Click here](#) for SPARK research publications:

SPARK has both instructor and student assessments to help understand, improve and maintain physical well-being. Each SPARK Physical Education curriculum set includes student assessments that may be used to guide learning, authentically assess student progress, and provide criteria for grading.

[Click here](#) to read more about SPARK student and teacher assessment.

SPARK was recently identified as a successful model for combating childhood obesity in the report, *"Fighting Obesity: What Works, What's Promising"* by the HSC Foundation. The report speaks of SPARK's history, practice, and methods. **SPARK was the ONLY program recommended for both physical education AND physical activity.** [Click Here](#) for the full report.

(b) instruction in a variety of motor skills and physical activities designed to enhance the physical, mental, and social or emotional development of every student

SPARK is the only elementary physical education program that showed a significant increase in childrens' manipulative skills (throwing, catching, and kicking). Motor skills are not only instructed, but they are instructed effectively as to produce real student outcomes.

A key to improving a student's physical and mental development is to affect what a PE teacher does every day to increase student MVPA (moderate to vigorous physical activity). SPARK Middle School PE is the **only** program that has shown significant gains in MVPA with both elementary and middle school students. [Click Here](#)

Each SPARK program has a section dedicated to the instruction and assessment of social skills. There are two different social skills for each grade level, K-8. The application of these social skills directly and positively affects a child's social and emotional development.

Additionally, every aspect of SPARK focuses on inclusion. This promotes fairness and equity whenever youth participate in individual, partner, or group activities.

(c) development of, and instruction in, cognitive concepts about motor skills and physical fitness that support a lifelong healthy lifestyle;

SPARK provides lessons for instruction in cognitive concepts about motor skills and physical fitness that support a lifelong healthy lifestyle.

SPARK programs have knowledge based information woven throughout each curriculum binder and on SPARKfamily.org. These include both the historical and social implications of each sport instructed (in the introduction section and in greater detail in the SPARK Event that culminates each unit (middle school)).

SPARK technology (featured prominently on SPARKfamily.org) prompts use of Google Earth to view countries and initiate discussion around the significance of their location in the world and their contribution to sport. Entire sections in SPARK manuals and on their website are devoted to fitness development (including SPARKfit) and these contain (for example) exercise physiology knowledge pertaining to the recommended use of pedometers and heart rate monitors.

A key to SPARK is promoting the maintenance of physical activity outside of the PE class itself and then again off school campuses. Two sections address this, one is the SPARK Personal Best Day which promotes student goal setting to be active and improve their fitness scores away from PE class and monitor their progress over time; the other is the Personally Fit section (middle and high school) which incorporates proven behavior change concepts and integrates them into SPARK content throughout the school year.

Increasing physical activity during class and teaching students the skills they need to be consistently active away from class is one of SPARK's strongest attributes.

(d) opportunities to develop positive social and cooperative skills through physical activity participation; or

Each SPARK program has a section dedicated to the instruction and assessment of social skills. There are two different social skills for each grade level, K-8. The application of these social skills directly and positively affects a child's social and emotional development.

Additionally, every aspect of SPARK focuses on inclusion. This promotes fairness and equity whenever youth participate in individual, partner, or group activities.

SPARK content includes complete units that promote student cooperation and trust through active games that teach and reinforce organization and management, how to work and play with others in activity environments, and even games that foster students' problem solving abilities.

Many SPARK lessons provide ample opportunities to develop positive social and cooperative skills through physical activity participation.

(e) opportunities for professional development for teachers of physical education to stay abreast of the latest research, issues, and trends in the field of physical education.

SPARK offers [on-site professional development](#) (SPARK trainers travel the U.S. to conduct workshops that are convenient for a school or district) AND off-site ([SPARK Institutes](#) in San Diego) training for teachers. Additionally, SPARK conducts monthly webinars to support those already trained and encourage their professional growth path via new and relevant information.

SPARK's content rich eNewsletter is sent to individuals monthly and offers teaching tips, awareness of new tools and resources on SPARKfamily.org, and a schedule of conferences, workshops and classes available for teachers. SPARK's hope is that every physical educator continues to seek new opportunities to learn and grow professionally. Additionally, SPARK staff are long time members of AAHPERD and their state AAHPERD organizations, and as such, often serve on committees and as

consultants to special projects. SPARK Principals and trainers are frequent recipients of awards from state AAHPERD's, national AAHPERD, and NASPE.

Requirements

Requirement 1—Align Project Goals with Identified Needs Using the School Health Index.

(1) Aligning Project Goals with Identified Needs Using the School Health Index

Applicants are required to complete the physical activity and nutrition questions in Modules 1-4 of the CDC's School Health Index (SHI) self-assessment tool or use an alternative needs assessment tool to develop project goals and plans that address the identified needs.

Module 1: School Health and Safety Policies and Environment;

Module 2: Health Education;

Module 3: Physical Education and Other Physical Activity Programs;

Module 4: Nutrition Services

SPARK offers the [Ignite a Healthy Environment Program](#), which can assist your School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) in completing Modules 1-4 of the CDC's School Health Index (SHI). If you have already completed the SHI, the Ignite a Healthy Environment Program can help your SHAC create an action plan to address your needs. HKC has extensive experience in customizing FEASIBLE plans based on existing resources and needs

Requirement 2--Nutrition- and Physical Activity-Related Policies.

Grantees must develop, update, or enhance physical activity policies and food and nutrition-related policies that promote healthy eating and physical activity throughout students' everyday lives, as part of their PEP projects.

With the SPARK [Nutrition Education/HKC program](#), incorporating these goals and creating an action plan and evaluation is a workshop and or distance assistance option. The Balance My Day Curriculum and HKC Wellness Solutions Toolkit provide action ideas to meet this requirement.

Applicants that are participating in a program authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 must describe in their applications their school district's established local wellness policy and how the proposed PEP project will align with, support, complement, and enhance the implementation of the applicant's local wellness policy. The LEA's local wellness policy should address all requirements in the Child Nutrition Act of 1966.

With SPARK's [Ignite a Healthy Environment Program](#), our nutrition training will help establish wellness councils at the school building level and/or to expand and enhance actions taken by existing wellness councils. HKC Wellness Solutions Toolkit is used with this training. Distance assistance (ongoing professional support) is highly recommended for support these policies.

Requirement 4--Linkages with Federal, State, and Local Initiatives.

If an applicant is implementing the CDC's Coordinated School Health program, it must coordinate project activities with that initiative and describe in its application how the proposed PEP project would be coordinated and integrated with the program.

If an applicant receives funding under the USDA's Team Nutrition initiative (Team Nutrition Training Grants), the applicant must describe in its application how the proposed PEP project supports the efforts of this initiative.

A PEP Project in a community that receives a grant under the Recovery Act Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW)-Community Initiative must agree to coordinate its PEP project efforts with those under the Recovery Act CPPW-Community Initiative.

SPARK coordinates its programs to comply with Federal, State and Local Initiatives. SPARK has worked with various CPPW State and Community Initiatives (e.g., FL Department of Health, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation; Boston Public Schools, many more). SPARK is aligned with the CDC prevention outcomes for the CPPW initiative. [Click here](#) to view the resource guide.

Requirement 5--Updates to Physical Education and Nutrition Instruction Curricula.

Applicants that plan to use grant-related funds, including Federal and non-Federal matching funds, to create, update, or enhance their physical education or nutrition education curricula are required to use the Physical Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (PECAT) and submit their overall PECAT scorecard, and the curriculum improvement plan from PECAT. Also, those applicants that plan to use grant-related funds, including Federal and non-Federal matching funds to create, update, or enhance their nutrition instruction in health education must complete the healthy eating module of the Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (HECAT). Applicants must use the curriculum improvement plan from the HECAT to identify curricular changes to be addressed during the funding period. Applicants must also describe how the HECAT assessment would be used to guide nutrition instruction curricular changes. If an applicant is not proposing to use grant-related funds for physical education or nutrition instruction curricula, it would not need to use these tools.

Regarding the PECAT, SPARK will help you simplify this requirement, as we have done the PECAT on our curricula for you. [Click here](#) to view SPARK's alignment to PECAT.

Regarding the HECAT, HKC will help you simplify this requirement as well. The Balance My Day Curricula is aligned with and identified HECAT standards. With the curricula you have the option of a comprehensive or select your own nutrition education plan. [Click here](#) to view HKC's alignment to HECAT.

Requirement 6--Equipment Purchases.

Purchases of equipment with PEP funds or with funds used to meet the program's matching requirement must be aligned with the curricular components of the proposed physical education and nutrition program. Applicants must commit to aligning the students' use of the equipment with PEP elements applicable to their projects, identified in the absolute priority in this notice, and any applicable curricula by signing a Program-Specific Assurance. Applicants that do not submit a Program-Specific Assurance signed by the applicant's Authorized Representative are ineligible for the competition.

SPARK's Content-Matched Equipment (the "tools you need to teach"). SPARK aligns the equipment (tools) to the curriculum. SPARK has taken the guess work out of the equation. Please [click here](#) for SPARK content matched equipment lists.

Requirement 7--Increasing Transparency and Accountability.

Grantees must create or use existing reporting mechanisms to provide information on students' progress, in the aggregate, on the key program indicators, as described in this notice and required under the Government Performance and Results Act, as well as on any unique project-level measures proposed in the application. Grantees that are educational agencies or institutions are subject to applicable Federal, State, and local privacy provisions, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act-- a law that generally prohibits the non-consensual disclosure of personally identifiable information in a student's education record. All grantees must comply with applicable Federal, State, and local privacy provisions. The aggregate-level information should be easily accessible by the public, such as posted on the grantee's or a partner's Web site. Applicants must describe in their application the planned method for reporting.

Applicants must commit to reporting information to the public by signing a Program-Specific Assurance. Applicants that do not submit a Program-Specific Assurance signed by the applicant's Authorized Representative are ineligible for the competition.

Performance rubrics and student self-check assessment samples are provided in each unit to document and guide learning. The SPARK 3-6 PE manual also includes a special **Personal Best Day** section to track fitness progress over time. This is an individualized program designed to allow students to monitor their aerobic capacity, abdominal and upper body strength and endurance, and set goals for individual improvement.

Requirement 8--Participation in a National Evaluation.

Applicants must provide documentation of their commitment to participate in the Department's national evaluation. An LEA applicant must include a letter from the research office or research board approving its participation in the evaluation (if approval is needed), and a letter from the Authorized Representative agreeing to participate in the evaluation.

SPARK supports the LEA applicants to submit letter/documentation.

Requirement 9--Required Performance Measures and Data Collection Methodology.

Grantees must collect and report data on three GPRA measures using uniform data collection methods. Measure one assesses student physical activity levels: The percentage of students served by the grant who engage in 60 minutes of daily physical activity. Grantees are required to use pedometers for students in grades K-12 and an additional 3-Day Physical Activity Recall (3DPAR) instrument to collect data on students in grades 5-12.

(See GRPA Performance Measures below).

The Government Performance and Results Act (GRPA) Performance Measures

There are three GPRA Performance Measures required for this program:

Measure One: The percentage of students who engage in 60 minutes of daily physical activity.

Grantees must use pedometers for students in grades K-12 and an additional 3-Day Physical Activity Recall (3DPAR) instrument to collect data on students in grades 5-12.

SPARK Physical Education has been **PROVEN** to increase MVPA (moderate to vigorous physical activity) to over 50% of class-time (PEP reporting requirement) whether instructed by PE specialists or classroom teachers - and SPARK will consult with you on how to measure it. Over 45 publications demonstrate these outcomes on students and teachers: [\(Click here for a list of publications\)](#)

SPARK LASTS. A 2005 paper in Research Quarterly proved SPARK sustainability and ability to institutionalize [\(Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 2005\)](#)

SPARK provides and recommends pedometers for many activities in grades K-12. SPARK has specific pedometer lessons and myriad pedometer assessment tools to support PEP evaluation requirements. Additionally, SPARK introduces heart rate monitors in middle school and numerous lessons and assessment tools are provided to teachers to support their effective use.

Measure Two: The percentage of students who achieve age-appropriate cardiovascular fitness levels. Grantees are required to use the 20-meter shuttle run to assess cardiovascular fitness in middle and high school students.

SPARK is the **only** nationally-disseminated Physical Education program that has data to show students statistically significantly increase their Fitnessgram scores. [Click Here](#)

A key to improving cardio-fitness scores is to affect what a PE teacher does every day to increase MVPA (moderate to vigorous physical activity). SPARK Middle School PE is the only nationally-disseminated Physical Education program that has shown significant gains in MVPA with both elementary and middle school students. [Click Here](#)

Measure Three: The percentage of students served by the grant who consumed fruit two or more times per day and vegetables three or more times per day. Programs serving high school students are required to use the nutrition-related questions from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey to determine the number of students who meet these goals.

SPARK's [Ignite a Healthy Environment Program](#), helps establish wellness councils at the school building level or to expand and/or enhance actions taken by existing wellness councils. HKC's Balance My Day Curricula has learning activities, tracking logs and other evaluation measures that simplify this requirement. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Guidelines for School Health Programs to Promote Lifelong Healthy Eating

(www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00042446.htm) stress the importance of providing students with knowledge, attitudes, and skills required to make positive health decisions. HKC curriculum uses social learning theory recognized by CDC and other leading experts to develop behavior change. HKC measures, aligned with HECAT identified outcomes (knowledge, skills, and behavior), are directly linked to the learning activities for the most effective outcomes.

IV. Important links to additional PEP resources

1. SPARK Sample Text for PEP Grant Writers [Click Here](#)
Or visit: <http://www.sparkpe.org/grants/pep-grant-info/> to access the full hyperlink
2. PECAT Reports for SPARK K-8 PE [Click Here](#)
Or visit: <http://www.sparkpe.org/grants/pep-grant-info/> to access the full hyperlink
3. HECAT Reports for our Health & Nutrition Partners [Click Here](#)
Or visit: <http://www.sparkpe.org/grants/pep-grant-info/> to access the full hyperlink
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6. SPARK alignment with national & state standards [Click Here](#)
Or visit: <http://www.sparkpe.org/grants/pep-grant-info/> to access the full hyperlink
7. Denver Public Schools PEP Grant success story [Click Here](#)
Or visit: <http://www.sparkpe.org/grants/pep-grant-info/> to access the full hyperlink