

# A Vision for South Dakota

---

Imagine a nation where children and adolescents are healthy, fit, and ready to learn; where youth are prepared with essential skills needed to live life to its fullest; where adult health and wellness are the natural outgrowth of skills, understanding, and behavior established from childhood; where health challenges, differences in ability, and socioeconomic disparities do not prevent our young people – the most precious human resources we have - from reaching their full potential.

Imagine a nation where children and adolescents are wise about the influences of technology and media on their lives; where they are prepared to be prudent consumers of goods and services that enhance their health and well-being; where they are skilled in thoughtful decision-making and goal-setting strategies to achieve their greatest ambitions; where they possess the knowledge and confidence to passionately and compassionately advocate for themselves, their families, and their communities.

We live in a time when many challenges to this vision of impacting health behaviors in our neighborhoods, state and nation are apparent. There is unprecedented competition for our time, our attention, and our resources. Yet we also live in a time when the best foundation for teaching and learning is available to move us in the right direction. Health education has dedicated itself to transforming a vision statement from mere imagination, to an attainable goal for this generation of young people, and for generations to come. Imagine all this, not only from a national perspective, but for the great state of South Dakota as well.

South Dakota is committed to making sure that students leave our schools with the skills they need to be productive citizens, workers and leaders in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The goal of health education goes beyond ensuring students have acquired depth of knowledge in a range of critical health topics. Health education promotes students who have developed the kinds of health skills they will need in their everyday lives; skills that will equip them for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Students who have a high level of health literacy are self-directed learners, critical thinkers and problem-solvers, effective communicators and responsible, productive citizens.

Twenty-first century skills have been defined by business leaders as those skills necessary for young people to live and work in today's highly-competitive global economy. They include skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, leadership and technology literacy. Preparing students for the 21st century cannot be accomplished without a strong and sustained emphasis on all students' health and wellness. Today's world has exploded with physical, mental, and social influences that affect not only

learning in school, but also the lifelong health of the citizens that schools are preparing for graduation. Health education prepares students to function optimally as students, global citizens, and workers who demonstrate personal responsibility for one's health and fitness through an active, healthy lifestyle that fosters a lifelong commitment to wellness.

According to the Joint Committee on National Health Standards, (2007, pg. 119), in order for students to develop lifelong behaviors, they must first develop the *“capacity to obtain, interpret, and understand basic health information and services and the competence to use information and services in ways that enhance health.”*

The academic success of America's youth is strongly linked with their health. Academic success is an excellent indicator of the overall well-being of youth and a primary predictor and determinant of adult health outcomes (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - CDC).



# MOVING EDUCATION FORWARD

**South Dakota Department of Education is committed to making sure students graduate with skills needed to be effective citizens, workers and leaders.**

Every 21st Century Student must be:

- A critical thinker
- A problem solver
- An effective communicator
- An effective collaborator
- A self-directed learner
- Globally aware
- Information and Media literate
- Financially and Economically literate
- Health literate

For more information visit: [www.21centuryskills.org](http://www.21centuryskills.org)

 south dakota  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Learning. Leadership. Service.

# Acknowledgements

---

The creation of this document would not have been possible without the support and efforts of many individuals. A special thank you is extended to:

- Amy Beshara, Coordinated School Health, South Dakota Department of Education, Pierre, SD
- Dr. Kathie Courtney, Northern State University, Aberdeen, SD
- Marilyn Jensen, University of South Dakota, Vermillion, SD
- Rhonda Kemmis, Sioux Falls School District, Sioux Falls, SD
- Maggie Kennedy, Rapid City Area Schools, Rapid City, SD
- Karen Keyser, Coordinated School Health, South Dakota Department of Education, Pierre, SD
- Sandy Klarenbeek, Black Hills State University, Spearfish, SD
- Marsha Kucker, Education Resource Center of South Dakota, Sioux Falls, SD
- Cindy Struck, Rocky Mountain Center for Health Promotion, Lakewood, CO

The South Dakota Health Education Standards (SDHES) give direction for moving toward excellence in teaching health education. Teachers and policy-makers can use the standards to design curricula, to allocate instructional resources, and to provide a basis for assessing student achievement and progress. The SDHES identify knowledge and skills that can be assessed. They provide guidance to all who are interested in improving health instruction.

***"You can't educate a child who isn't healthy and you can't keep a child healthy who isn't educated." - Jocelyn Elders, Former U.S. Surgeon General***