



# Building Healthy Communities

## Tracking Change + Transformation in Sacramento

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### ISSUE

In 2010, The California Endowment (TCE) launched a 10-year, \$1 billion Building Healthy Communities (BHC) initiative in 14 target communities across the state. South Sacramento was one of these selected target areas. BHC grants are provided to the Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) and community-based organizations to cultivate health prevention practices in order to empower residents to improve their neighborhood and school conditions.

After three years of funding:

- What have been the **changes catalyzed** by Sacramento Building Healthy Communities investments in SCUSD on **institutional practice and policy** at the District level related to food access and school culture?



*Photo credit: SCUSD Sacramento City Unified School District*

Students in the Men's Leadership Academy participate in a Navy Seal training in San Diego over their spring break at the Coronado Naval Base.

### METHODS

We reviewed 75+ TCE grants, reports, and news articles from the 4 years of the BHC. A master list of grantees working on school culture and food access issues was compiled. Interviews were also conducted with key stakeholders in Sacramento were conducted. A collaborative identification of key policy changes occurred with TCE Program Officer Christine Tien and members of the LPC Consulting group in Sacramento.

### FINDINGS

#### Major policy impacts for Food Access:

1. The Breakfast First Initiative expanded breakfast availability to 14,000 students across 32 school sites.
2. Salad bars are now in all schools and increasing amount of local produce in schools.
3. A school-based garden curriculum piloted at 5 schools has led to District-level review of garden curriculum for all elementary school sites.

#### Major policy shifts for School Culture:

1. The Anti-Bullying Policy has led to training of parents, teachers, and administrators at all schools.
2. TCE's Boys and Men of Color initiative in Sacramento has led to the development of SCUSD's Men's Leadership Academy, leadership training curriculum to be implemented district-wide to promote a restorative justice practices and disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline for at-risk young men.
3. The Restorative Justice Collaborative is a collection of the Office of the Courts, SCUSD, City PD, and the Black Parallel School Board working to get a social-emotional policy passed district wide that addresses the disproportionate suspension and expulsion of students of color.

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### LESSONS **Leveraging Partnerships**

- The Sac Hub’s ability to leverage partnerships with matching funds and other grant providers has allowed for the greatest institutional level changes. Co-funding streams with the Kaiser Foundation, Novo Foundation, and Whole Foods have led to expanded projects that showcase change at a scale the District is willing to adopt across all schools.



Photo credit: Sacramento BHC

A student selects fresh and locally sourced fruit from the salad bar at his school at a celebration of the district-wide implementation of salad bars in all cafeterias.

### **Changing the Narrative with Youth Leadership**

- BHC funding in South Sacramento has been working towards its goal of changing the narrative on health by focusing on youth development and leadership in key areas. The LGBTQ Task Force from SCUSD’s Connect Center has been effective in providing support to individual students through peer-to-peer mentoring, a youth-led task force, and involvement in the passage of the policies providing inclusion and acceptance for transgender students within the District.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Streamline resource sharing to schools for equitable distribution process.**

*Precedent:* Particular schools have a lot of BHC-funded grant programs while others have few, leading to uneven spread of day-to-day impact for students.

#### *Action steps*

1. Establish formalized partnership with SCUSD to distribute grantee programs evenly to schools.
2. Target different school sites for different pilot programs, allowing spread of new projects and grants.

### **Develop youth leadership as fundamental to building resident power.**

*Precedent:* Successful programs have drawn on youth leadership and advocacy.

#### *Action steps*

1. Expand youth leadership opportunities in all programs in schools by creating youth task forces.
2. Fund curriculum-pilot programs when possible to integrate youth leadership programs at school sites.