



Connections

January-February 2009

In This Issue:

Letter from Executive Director
Rob Bisceglie

Meet Action for Healthy Kids' New
Staff Members

Team Success Stories

NFL Network's Initiative to *Keep
Gym in School*

Partners' News and Resources

[Home](#)

[Team Member Center](#)

[Resources to Improve Schools](#)

[Game On! The Ultimate Wellness
Challenge](#)

[ReCharge! Energizing After-School](#)

[Parents Advocating for School
Wellness](#)

[Progress or Promises? Report](#)

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Schools are under tremendous financial strain as a result of the current economic crunch. Your support is more important than ever and will demonstrate your continued dedication to Action for Healthy Kids and its efforts to

New Volunteers, Partners, Board Members, Donors and Staff Lead Action for Healthy Kids into 2009!

Thank you for your tremendous efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of students in 2008! As Action for Healthy Kids has turned its focus to our strategic priorities for 2009, I would like to highlight some of the ways we are growing and leading in new directions.

Record High Number of Volunteer Members

With Teams in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, the total number of Action for Healthy Kids members increased by more than 19% during 2008, reaching an all-time high of more than 11,200 volunteers.

New Board Member

I am pleased to announce Roel Gonzalez, superintendent of the Rio Grande City Consolidated Independent School District in Texas, as the newest member of Action for Healthy Kids' Board of Directors. Under Mr. Gonzalez's leadership, his school district not only began providing more nutritious school lunches and opportunities for students to exercise during the school day, but it has also incorporated role models into wellness initiatives to encourage children to adopt healthier habits.

Fundraising Successes

At both the state and national levels, Action for Healthy Kids has garnered new support through fundraising. During 2008, AFHK state Team fundraising hit an all-time high of more than \$221,000 (the previous high was just over \$146,000) and national fundraising hit a record high of more than \$4.6 million (the previous high was just over \$3 million). We also launched our first-ever fundraising campaign targeting individuals through a pilot program that sought local funding in four states. Most recently, Action for Healthy Kids received a \$100,000 grant from the Stop & Shop/Giant Family Foundation to implement *Game On! The Ultimate Wellness Challenge* in 18 schools in two states, and a \$400,000 grant from Kellogg's Corporate Citizenship Fund to support the implementation and continuous enhancement of our school wellness initiatives.

impact school wellness. Best of all, your contribution will support our shared mission and ongoing efforts to promote health and learning for all children.

Support our work...
Make a Donation!



New Initiative and Grant Opportunity from NFL Network

A new initiative from the **NFL Network (NFLN)** to restore physical education in America's Schools, *Keep Gym in School*, is engaging partners across the country to combat the childhood obesity epidemic by helping more kids gain access to quality PE programs.

The NFLN is offering a grant of **\$10,000** to one middle school to help improve and sustain its physical education program – build a new track or playing field, refurbish a gym or indoor PE facility, purchase new equipment or supplement a teacher salary.

Already this year, NFL teams and players including Kurt Warner, Antwaan Randle El, Donnie Edwards and Deuce McAllister have helped to refurbish school gyms and fields, provide new equipment and launch a football-themed fitness challenge motivating kids to be active.

Visit www.KeepGymInSchool.com for more information and to nominate your school for the \$10,000 grant. Don't miss your chance to help *Keep Gym in School!*

Grant Program Impacts

With the support of grants from the National Dairy Council, Kellogg's Corporate Citizenship Fund, and glacéau smartwater through the Entertainment Industry Foundation, Action for Healthy Kids Teams in every state and the District of Columbia enabled schools, communities and districts to mobilize resources to improve school wellness. During the 2007-2008 school year, these grants allowed us to reach 141,319 students, teachers, administrators, families and community members in 1,598 schools and 422 different school districts. Teams directed their projects at communities with significant health and education disparities. Among the implemented projects were Action for Healthy Kids' signature programs *Game On! The Ultimate Wellness Challenge* and *ReCharge! Energizing After School*. Click [here](#) to learn more about project results around the country and some of the exciting school wellness efforts already underway in 2009!

Action for Healthy Kids is grateful for your support and commitment to improving the health of children nationwide. We look forward to a continued partnership in 2009.

Best,

Rob Bisceglie
Executive Director

New Action for Healthy Kids Staff Members

Action for Healthy Kids is proud to introduce **JD Beiting** and **Deb New** who recently joined Action for Healthy Kids' staff as Director of Business Development and Director of Communications, respectively. Welcome, JD and Deb!

About JD:

Education: Bachelor's Degree in Art History, University of Pennsylvania

Best resource AFHK has developed: Game On! The Ultimate Wellness Challenge

A goal for your area of work: Engage individuals to support the great work of Action for Healthy Kids

Favorite healthy snack and activity: Grapes, and I'm a rec sports league junkie so throughout the year I play ultimate frisbee, flag football, kickball, racquetball, softball and just about everything else!

Favorite school lunch as a kid: Honestly, I liked everything. The steak hoagies in junior high come to mind especially.

About Deb:

Education: MBA, Indiana University Kelley School of Business; Bachelor's degree in Communications with minor in Supervision, Purdue University



News and Resources from our Partners

Revisions to National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs

AFHK Executive Director Rob Bisceglie provided comments during the Jan. 28 Open Public Forum for the Institute of Medicine's Committee on Nutrition Standards for National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. In his remarks, Rob urged the Committee to attempt to demonstrate what might be achieved should even modest levels of additional funding for the programs be obtained. As an example, Rob shared how mini-grants totaling \$25,000 helped increase school breakfast participation in Ohio 15% in only 13 months. He also provided comment before the Dietary Guidelines 2010 Advisory Committee.

At the request of the **U.S. Department of Agriculture**, the **Institute of Medicine** assembled a committee to recommend updates and revisions to the school lunch and breakfast programs. The first part of the committee's work is reflected in the December 2008 IOM report, Nutrition Standards and Meal Requirements for National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs: Phase I. Proposed Approach for Recommending Revisions. Phase II of the report is

Best resource AFHK has developed: Wellness Policy Tool
A goal for your area of work: Set priorities that will enhance and expand communications to our many audiences
Favorite healthy snack and activity: Snack – apples. Activity – hiking Pinnacle Peak in Scottsdale, Arizona – or, on a more regular basis, total body conditioning class
Favorite school lunch as a kid: Cheese sandwich

Team Success Stories

Michigan Triples Healthy School Environment Awardees

In 2008, the Michigan Action for Healthy Kids Team, in partnership with the state's Surgeon General, recognized 103 schools in the Healthy School Environment Recognition Program. This is double the number recognized in 2007 and more than triple in 2006. Schools were honored for increasing the availability of fruits, vegetables, milk and whole grains; increasing physical activity time and options; installing healthy snack machines; and promoting healthy habits to school staff members.

In addition, the 1,800-member strong Michigan team has helped 512 schools – with nearly 282,000 students – complete the Healthy Schools Assessment Tool to evaluate their environments and implement action plans to provide students with healthier choices.

Idaho Facilitates Parent Engagement Forum

As part of its funding from the Action for Healthy Kids-Kellogg's Team grant program, the Idaho Team convened a parents' forum at the Wilder school district using Parents are the Power - a toolkit developed by the Colorado Team - as a way to empower parents as advocates around school wellness issues. The Idaho Team had previously worked with the Colorado Team to adapt this program for Idaho in both English and Spanish. Wilder is a rural district with an elementary school, middle school, and high school on the same campus. Holmes Elementary (K-5) has 233 students of which 73% are Latino and 81% qualify for free and reduced lunch. Wilder Middle/High School has 239 students of which 80% are Latino and 79% qualify for free and reduced lunch.

More than 50 people attended the bilingual forum including many couples, dads and grandfathers; childcare was provided. After providing an introduction to the issue, the group broke into teams by school and discussed potential projects. They then elected to submit a single proposal to Idaho Action for Healthy Kids to fund a walking track to connect the schools on campus with associated programming at all three schools to increase physical activity, encourage parents to walk with their children before school, and provide facilities for high school sports and physical education. The community is planning to contribute in-kind support.

expected in Fall 2009. The first report provides information about the committee's approach to reviewing the school lunch and breakfast programs. Click [here](#) for more information.



Massachusetts Develops School Wellness Policy Guide

Massachusetts Action for Healthy Kids recently developed School Wellness Policy Guide brochures for a wide range of audiences. Each guide is specific to the audience and discusses their role in improving the school wellness environment to promote health and learning.

Click the links below to view each guide!

[Administrators](#)

[Food Service Directors](#)

[Nurses](#)

[Parents](#)

[Physical Educators & Coaches](#)

[Students](#)

[Teachers](#)



Action for Healthy Kids | Click [HERE](#) to visit our website.

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