



Friend of Action for Healthy Kids,

At the beginning of each new year, I like to take time to reflect on the year that has just ended. I do this to take stock of what we have accomplished, to recognize and acknowledge the great work that has been done in our space, and to inform my plans for the new year.

Looking back, I'll be honest; 2021 was not my favorite year, though there were some amazing high points for our work at Action for Healthy Kids. Despite all the challenges facing the nonprofit and education sectors—and there were more than I have ever seen before—our dedicated, creative, passionate team:

- CREATED** Created a new tool — **AFHK's Equity Index** to leverage available data about school communities and help us prioritize our investments in communities with the greatest needs;
- DEVELOPED** Developed our first-ever **ConnectEd social emotional health curriculum**; and
- OVERHAULED** Completely overhauled our **program model** to ensure that our NourishEd (healthy eating), EnergizEd (physical activity), and ConnectEd (social emotional health) program areas offer our school and family partners exactly what they need to care for their kids.



I could go on, because in the face of all the challenges thrown at us, our team at Action for Healthy Kids never lost faith in our cause. This year, however, I've decided to adopt a different approach. I've spent less time looking backward and much more time preparing for future challenges and opportunities. The fact of the matter is that we continue to face a child health crisis. It has been exacerbated by COVID, but its roots go much deeper than the current pandemic. It impacts both the physical and mental health of our kids. It is wreaking havoc on our schools and kids, especially in underserved communities. And, most importantly, it is eminently preventable.



I know we can't solve all the world's problems overnight. But, we can and must reshape our priorities to make sure that child health is at the top of our list. We owe our kids nothing less. After all, health is a human right and protecting our children is a moral imperative.



This means, in 2022, we can no longer wait for a return to normal. During 2022, Action for Healthy Kids will celebrate its 20th anniversary, and we will commemorate this occasion by:



Launching our **new resource library** of content and materials in Spanish



Releasing a **new Child Health Bill of Rights** to serve as our renewed statement of belief that health is a human right for our kids



Conducting demonstration projects with our **new and first-ever ConnectEd curriculum** with select schools in preparation for making it widely available after our testing is complete



Launching a **campaign for child health equity** that will help grow the work of Action for Healthy Kids over the next decade of its service to our underserved schools, families, and children



Hosting on Nov. 2–4, 2022, a **new national conference** to convene for the first time in more than two years leading family-school partnership and health advocates and practitioners

I can't thank our sponsors and supporters, staff, board members and volunteers enough for all the contributions you made to our work during 2021. Without each of you, our 2021 accomplishments and 2022 plans would not have been or be possible.

Michael Jordan once said,

Some people want it to happen,
some wish it would happen, others
make it happen.

As not only a basketball fanatic but also a human rights advocate, I couldn't agree more. Over the last two years, there have been times to hold back and act cautiously. Those times have passed.

Please join me and Action for Healthy Kids in making 2022 the turning point year for child health.

Yours in good health,



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HEALTHY
KIDS 