



# **PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT**

***“Before anything else, preparation is the  
key to success.” - Alexander Graham Bell***

## Plan for Improvement: Instructions

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### Instructions

This section will help you choose the specific areas that you want to focus on and develop a focused plan of action that will serve as the foundation for your advocacy efforts.

#### I. Choosing an action

Complete the three **Planning Questions** (in the following pages), taking into account the results shown on your **Overall Scorecard**.

- Question 1: Identify your school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Question 2: Brainstorm possible courses of action to improve your school's scores.
- Question 3: Get more specific about your plans for improvement. The chart will help you prioritize.

#### II. Developing a plan of action

Complete the **School Health Improvement Plan**.

- Using your answers to the **Planning Questions**, discuss and decide, as a group, on one or two actions that can realistically be done over the course of the year.
- Make sure to mix short-term and long-term goals.
- Start with a few actions that you know can be easily accomplished to generate enthusiasm. This helps to create momentum for future projects and plans.
- At this point you also may want to develop another student survey that will be used to see how students feel about your planned actions.

## Plan for Improvement: Choosing an Action

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### Planning Questions

1. Look back at the scores you assigned to the questions in each module. According to these scores, what are the strengths and weaknesses of your school's student health environment?

2. For each weakness identified above, list several recommended actions to improve the school's scores. For example:

- Change the focus of your student group to include school policy as part of your mission
- Create and maintain a school health committee
- Participate in creation of School Wellness Policies (all schools must have a Wellness Committee that creates different health policies for the school, so find out about your school's committee)
- Change the physical education course options
- Work with your school to increase the time required for PE
- Work to change the after-school policies in your school to offer physical activity or nutrition programs to the students.
- Set guidelines for vending machines or a la carte lines
- Create policies or guidelines to offer healthy fundraisers or class parties
- Create policies to allow annual student input on health education topics

**Note: Please see the Resource CD for other great ideas.**

3. List each of the actions identified in planning question 2 on the table below. Use the five-point scale defined below to rank each action on five dimensions (importance, cost, time, commitment, and feasibility). Add the points for each action to get the total points and use the total to help you choose one, two, or three top-priority actions that you will begin to implement this year.

**Importance:** How important is the action to my school?

5= Very important                      3= Moderate                      1= Not important

**Cost:** How expensive would it be to plan and implement the action?

5= Not expensive                      3= Moderately expensive                      1= Very expensive

**Time:** How much time and effort would it take to implement the action?

5= Little or no time and effort                      3= Moderate time and effort                      1= Very great time and effort

**Commitment:** How enthusiastic would the school community be about implementing the action?

5= Very enthusiastic                      3= Moderately enthusiastic                      1= Not enthusiastic

**Feasibility:** How difficult would it be to complete the action?

5= Not difficult                      3= Moderately difficult                      1= Very difficult

**Total Points:** Add the number of points for each specific action and enter the total score.

**Rank:** Based on the total points of each action, assign a number rank for each action with the number 1 having the highest total point score.

Module Actions	Importance	Cost	Time	Commitment	Feasibility	Total Points	Rank

4. List the three highest scoring actions from the chart above.

a. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Plan for Improvement: Developing an Action Plan

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*“ Students Taking Charge helped us to organize and create a strong argument for change. We always had ideas, but the tool helped us to focus our energy and make changes.”*

-Westport High School student

Now that your student group has identified your strongest ideas for change, it is time to develop a specific plan of action to implement your ideas. Developing a plan of action will help your student group stay focused and understand the challenges and potential successes ahead.

Developing a strong plan of action is one of the most important steps in advocating for change. A well-developed plan of action will allow your group to be taken seriously by the decision makers and help you build support for the change that you are working for. It will also help members of your group be accountable and complete assigned tasks.

In your action plan, you can incorporate two or three actions from above or you can focus on one action from above.

### **A plan of action should include the following:**

#### **1. A list of goals and desired outcomes:**

This section of the plan should list what your student group hopes to achieve. It is important to have a mix of short-term and long-term goals in order to create some early accomplishments that will keep your group motivated while it tackles long-term goals.

#### **2. A list of anticipated challenges:**

Before taking action it is important to anticipate and plan ahead for any challenges that you may face as you carry out your plan. These challenges can be within your organization such as lack of membership, conflicting schedules, time, leadership, etc. Or they can come from outside of your organization such as lack of support from the student body. Acknowledgment of these challenges from the beginning will help increase your chances of success and avoid having problems that could have been prevented at an earlier date.

#### **3. A list of the important decision makers:**

(adapted from CA Project Lean's Playing the Policy Game)

Decision makers are the people who have the power to change things. It will be important to talk to these people if you want to influence policy in your school. Decision makers in schools will most likely include:

- Superintendent
- School principal and/or Assistant Principal
- Individual teachers, parents and/or PTA
- School board members
- Food service director and/or manager (for policies that deal with eating and food)
- Director of the Physical Education department (for policies dealing with physical activity)
- City and County Legislators
- State Representatives and State Senators

#### 4. A list of potential sources of opposition and support:

Students at West Boylston High School said that “being persistent” is the best piece of advice that they could give to any student group trying to make change.

*“You have to keep going to different people until you get what you want. If the PE teacher doesn’t listen, go to the principal, the school board or the parents in your community. The most important thing is to stay focused and keep trying.”*

As advocates, you will inevitably run into decision makers and other people who are in opposition to the change you are pushing for, but with persistence and a strong backing you will be able to overcome this resistance. By identifying these people/groups early on in your campaign, you will be able to plan ahead on how to deal with your opposition. In many cases, building a strong coalition of support is the best strategy, and therefore it is also important to identify potential allies who can offer you support and assistance in achieving your long-term goals. In school, teachers, coaches, parents, administrators, and other students can be great teammates. They have a big interest in making the school a healthier place so students can learn better. The community in which you live is also a great source of potential allies. Here is a list of some potential allies:

##### **At school:**

- Students, Teachers, Coaches, Administrators
- PTA and other parenting organizations or School Health Councils

##### **In your Community:**

- School Board, Improvement Team or Committee
- Health professionals (doctors, nutritionists, etc.)
- A local hospital
- Local Health Department
- A community center
- A school health center
- Food Co-ops and/or local farmers
- Religious groups
- Community groups, such as the medical auxiliary, YMCA, YWCA, Boys and Girls’ Club, 4-H clubs, or senior citizen groups
- Local chapters of civic organizations, such as Rotary, Kiwanis, or Lions Club
- Local Chapters of professional organizations, such as the American Dietetic Association and the American Association of University Women
- Local chapters of unions and other employee-related organizations, such as municipal employees and State or local teacher associations
- Voluntary organizations such as the Red Cross
- Boards of Supervisors for county government
- City Councils for city government
- The American Heart Association
- The American Cancer Society
- City Parks and Recreation Department



## 5. A timeline

A timeline is a tool to help to chart out where you hope to be with your project/action at the end of the school year. Creating a timeline will help you map out the specific steps that need to be taken, who will do them, and when they will be completed.

This timeline will keep your plan on track and give people specific responsibilities. To be complete the timeline complete the following steps.

- 1) Write your desired outcomes in the Desired Outcomes section.
- 2) Beginning with the month in which you are starting your project/action, fill in that month with the current specifics of your project.
- 3) Fill in the remaining monthly sections with the next steps, to do's, and specific actions that must take place during each month to achieve your desired outcomes. For each step list the person(s) responsible for carrying out the step and when the step will be completed. Highlight any milestones that will serve as markers of the success of your student group's work.

**Please Note:** As you begin to implement your action plan you may need to adjust your timeline. The timeline is a working document and feel free to add or delete steps as necessary.

### Desired Outcomes:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Month</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>By whom</i>	<i>When</i>
September	1) _____	1) _____	_____
	2) _____	2) _____	_____
	3) _____	3) _____	_____
	4) _____	4) _____	_____
	5) _____	5) _____	_____
	6) _____	6) _____	_____
	7) _____	7) _____	_____
October	1) _____	1) _____	_____
	2) _____	2) _____	_____
	3) _____	3) _____	_____
	4) _____	4) _____	_____
	5) _____	5) _____	_____
	6) _____	6) _____	_____
	7) _____	7) _____	_____

<i>Month</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>By whom</i>	<i>When</i>
November	1) _____	1) _____	_____
	2) _____	2) _____	_____
	3) _____	3) _____	_____
	4) _____	4) _____	_____
	5) _____	5) _____	_____
	6) _____	6) _____	_____
	7) _____	7) _____	_____
December	1) _____	1) _____	_____
	2) _____	2) _____	_____
	3) _____	3) _____	_____
	4) _____	4) _____	_____
	5) _____	5) _____	_____
	6) _____	6) _____	_____
	7) _____	7) _____	_____

<b>Month</b>	<b>Steps</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>When</b>
March	1) _____	1) _____	_____
	2) _____	2) _____	_____
	3) _____	3) _____	_____
	4) _____	4) _____	_____
	5) _____	5) _____	_____
	6) _____	6) _____	_____
	7) _____	7) _____	_____
April	1) _____	1) _____	_____
	2) _____	2) _____	_____
	3) _____	3) _____	_____
	4) _____	4) _____	_____
	5) _____	5) _____	_____
	6) _____	6) _____	_____
	7) _____	7) _____	_____

<b>Month</b>	<b>Steps</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>When</b>
March	1) _____	1) _____	_____
	2) _____	2) _____	_____
	3) _____	3) _____	_____
	4) _____	4) _____	_____
	5) _____	5) _____	_____
	6) _____	6) _____	_____
	7) _____	7) _____	_____
April	1) _____	1) _____	_____
	2) _____	2) _____	_____
	3) _____	3) _____	_____
	4) _____	4) _____	_____
	5) _____	5) _____	_____
	6) _____	6) _____	_____
	7) _____	7) _____	_____

<b>Month</b>	<b>Steps</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>When</b>
May	1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____ 5) _____ 6) _____ 7) _____	1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____ 5) _____ 6) _____ 7) _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
June	1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____ 5) _____ 6) _____ 7) _____	1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____ 5) _____ 6) _____ 7) _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____