

# **ENGAGING PARENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN SCHOOL WELLNESS**

## **Formative Research Report April 2008**

California Project LEAN  
(Leaders Encouraging Activity and Nutrition)

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 2006 schools participating in the national school lunch program were required to establish a local school wellness policy (LSWP). The LSWP required schools to set goals for nutrition education, physical activity, all foods and beverages available on campus and school-based activities designed to promote student wellness. Schools are currently in various stages of implementing the policy. A literature review was conducted by California Project LEAN (CPL) to identify existing research, tools and resources on parent engagement in schools and specifically, parent engagement in LSWP activities.

Key informant interviews were conducted with parents and stakeholders working with parents to determine why parents participate, what would get parents involved, obstacles and barriers to participation, gaps in parent's knowledge about LSWP, ways parents are interested in becoming involved, and the best vehicles for communicating with parents. The literature review and key informant interviews were conducted for the purpose of developing resources that will assist stakeholders to increase awareness of LSWP among parents and assist with the engagement of parents as advocates in the implementation of LSWP.

Key Informant Interviews were conducted by CPL state staff between June and August of 2007. Twenty-five parents from throughout California and 10 parent stakeholders were interviewed. The primary target audience for the parent group were English and Spanish-speaking mothers of school-aged children in low-income communities throughout California, with an emphasis on parents from existing Healthy Eating, Active Communities (HEAC) Initiative regions funded by The California Endowment (TCE). The parent stakeholder group represented individuals representing local, state, and national private and public institutions and organizations who work with parents and families.

### **Important Findings**

The literature review revealed a great deal of evidence supporting parent involvement in their children's education and schools. Prominent research supports parents playing a range of roles in schools, including roles in decision-making, governance and advocacy. Parent involvement in schools has a significant benefit for the students, including improved quality of schools and academic achievement among students.

Rates of obesity and overweight in California children are greater than the national averages, and disparities exist among certain ethnic groups and across differing income groups. Parents of children in these groups are traditionally less likely to be involved in schools and their roles are more likely to be traditional roles (such as fund raisers and chaperones) versus advocacy roles. Research indicates that this can be attributed to

cultural factors, transportation, safety, childcare issues, limited education and discomfort in an advocacy role.

Research shows that healthy students are more successful students. Well-nourished, physically active students are more prepared to learn, have increased concentration, have improved test scores, are more likely to attend school, show better attendance, have a more positive attitude toward school, and are better able to take advantage of educational opportunities.

The key informant interviews revealed several findings that CPL should consider when developing their *Engaging Parents and Stakeholders in School Wellness* resources. The following are important findings from the key informant interviews:

Why parents participate:

- To be informed (about school events/activities, treatment of the child at school, child's friends, and academic progress of the child).
- Volunteering makes parents feel good.
- To show they care (about child's health and education).
- Feel it's their duty.

What would get parents involved:

- Incentives (such as food, childcare, gift cards, raffle prizes, and discounted trip tickets).
- Input valued and validated; parents being treated as equals and as partners with school personnel.
- Caring, compassionate, warm and welcoming environment.

Barriers to parent participation:

- Work
- Lack of childcare
- Time
- Language barriers
- Don't care
- Lack of transportation
- Feel of inadequacy
- Lack of respect/opinions not valued

Gaps in parent's knowledge about LSWP:

- Very few are knowledgeable about LSWP

Ways parents are interested in becoming involved:

- Conducting surveys and administering taste tests
- Volunteering for physical activity for after-school programs
- Attending and discussing health-related topics in group meetings and workshops
- Attending school board meeting or speaking to school boards members
- Introducing healthy fundraising ideas

- Soliciting parent involvement

Optimal vehicles for communicating with parents:

- Personal phone calls
- Print media
- Incentives
- Email
- Back to school/open house
- Automated phone calls
- Parent-teacher conference
- Parent coordinator on staff
- Parent-parent communication
- Conduct workshops that satisfy basic needs

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## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

California Project LEAN (Leaders Encouraging Activity and Nutrition) (CPL) is a joint program of the California Department of Public Health and the Public Health Institute, focusing on youth empowerment, policy and environmental change strategies, and community-based solutions. CPL's mission is to increase healthy eating and physical activity to reduce the prevalence of obesity and chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, osteoporosis, and diabetes.

CPL works with state and local physical activity and nutrition leaders to conduct programs in communities throughout California. Through an infrastructure of nine regions, CPL implements local interventions that utilize the Spectrum of Prevention model which describes six levels of prevention activities—from strengthening individual knowledge and skills to influencing policy.

CPL has a proven track record of developing successful community interventions and toolkits that increase opportunities for youth to eat healthfully and to be physically active. CPL has a long history of collaborating with key school and community organizations including the California Department of Education (CDE), California School Boards Association (CSBA), California Parent Teacher Association (PTA), and local school health councils. Additionally, CPL works closely with statewide groups such as California Senator Torlakson's Youth and Workplace Wellness Task Force, and the Strategic Alliance for Healthy Food and Physical Activity Environments.

## **BACKGROUND/NEED**

The landscape of the school food and physical activity environment is poised for positive change. By the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, schools participating in the National School Lunch or Breakfast Program were required to establish a local school wellness policy (LSWP) that sets goals for:

- Nutrition Education.
- Physical Activity.
- All foods and beverages available on campus.
- School-based activities designed to promote student wellness.

School districts across the country have passed wellness policies to address the proliferation of high-fat, high-sugar foods, and increase the physical activity levels of their students and are now working to implement these policies. One of the requirements of the LSWP was that school districts involve their communities, including parents, in the development of the policies. In order to successfully implement the policies, and ensure children have access to healthy foods and physical activity, parents must be involved beyond the policy development stage and into the implementation and maintenance stages. If empowered to work with schools, parents can be effective allies in the institutionalization of policies that ensure optimum health and learning for students.

## INTRODUCTION

California Project LEAN's *Engaging Parents and Stakeholders in School Wellness Campaign* aims to better understand how to support parent efforts to improve the school environment to increase healthy food and physical activity options for students through the efforts put forth by LSWPs. The overall project purpose is fourfold:

- 1) To educate and engage English and Spanish-speaking parents from low-income communities who are actively and non-actively involved in school and community decision-making processes to become aware of LSWP requirements and the expected changes to their children's school environment.
- 2) To give parents the skills to advocate and be proactive participants when those changes are not occurring.
- 3) To expand parent awareness of advocacy opportunities in their communities.
- 4) To provide stakeholders working with parents tools and resources to assist in the engagement of parents in implementation of LSWP.

While no single definition of parent engagement in schools prevails, it can be defined as meaningful, active participation in decision-making and governance and can result in parents who have an increased knowledge of what impacts students, positive school change, parent opinions and perspectives being valued, and parent empowerment.

This report summarizes the literature review and key informant interviews that were completed in order to determine the educational materials and training needs for this project.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

LSWP legislation was enacted in response to the rising rates of childhood obesity and the recognition that schools play a critical role in promoting student health, preventing childhood obesity, and combating problems associated with poor nutrition and physical inactivity. Parent involvement in the implementation of LSWP has not been studied but parents have the potential to play a critical role in the quality of and extent to which LSWPs are implemented. Increasingly, parent involvement/engagement in schools is shifting from that of the traditional role of volunteer, fundraiser and/or participant in parent groups to a more active role of advocate for the improvement in quality of education and school environments. Parent involvement in LSWP implementation provides an important opportunity for parents to promote both the academic achievement and health and wellness of their own children and all those children attending the school.

The importance of engaging parents in school activities was recognized in law as early as 1994 through the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA), and subsequently, in the 2004 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. IASA required that schools/districts adopt specific strategies for developing school-family partnerships. Two of the

provisions of IASA emphasized parent involvement in policy at the school/school district level and the development of school and parent capacity for productive mutual collaboration (U.S. Department of Education, 1997). NCLB continued to acknowledge the role parents/families play in student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring “that parents are full partners in their child’s education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees” (U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

Research overwhelmingly shows that active parent/family involvement in their children’s education and in their schools has a significant benefit for the students, including improved academic achievement. When schools, families and communities work together, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, like school more, and schools do better (Henderson & Map, 2002, p.7). Epstein (2001) suggests the use of the term “school and family partnerships” instead of parent involvement because it “emphasizes the importance and potential influence of all family members, not just the parents” (Epstein, 2001, p.1). She calls for schools to work in partnership with families and the community to share the responsibility for improved schools and successful students. Epstein’s School/Family/Community model identifies six types of involvement as being essential for successful partnerships. One of these is parental involvement in decision-making, which requires the inclusion of families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy activities through school councils or improvement teams, committees, and parent organizations (Epstein, et. al. 2002).

School/parent/community partnerships have been described as the continuous planning, participation, and evaluation of activities that enhance the success of students (Indiana Department of Education, 2001). Healthy students are more successful students. Well-nourished, physically active students are more prepared to learn, have increased concentration, have improved test scores, are more likely to attend school, show better attendance, have a more positive attitude toward school, and are better able to take advantage of educational opportunities (California School Boards Association and California Project LEAN, 2005, p.5). Research also shows that routine physical activity supports learning and academic achievement. In California, those schools with the lowest rates of student engagement in physical activity and healthy eating had smaller gains in test scores, while schools with strong physical activity programs saw greater gains in math, reading and writing scores (Hanson and Austin, 2003). Strong LSWPs can improve the physical activity levels, nutrition status, and health of the students and, therefore, the success of the students.

According to a study conducted by the California Center for Public Health Advocacy (2002), nearly 40 percent of public school children are unfit based on two key indicators of health: fitness and body weight. In addition, disparities in childhood overweight exist among certain ethnic groups and across differing income groups. According to Henderson (2002), families of all income and social levels are involved at home, but families with high income and social class tend to be more involved at school. Pena (2000) reports that working class and minority parents, if included in school activities, have tended to be included mostly in the traditional roles of fund raisers and



chaperones. This can be attributed to cultural factors, transportation, safety, childcare issues, limited education, and discomfort in an advocacy role. Given that this group of students is particularly vulnerable to poorer health status, it is especially important that specific outreach efforts be made to affected groups with particular attention being paid to addressing the barriers to their engagement in school activities. Specific outreach activities identified in the literature for Spanish-speaking parents included going to them (versus waiting for them to come to you), and identifying community-based organizations, churches and/or family advocates who have already developed positive relationships and trust with them (Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition, pg 22). Additional strategies identified for Mexican immigrant parents were a welcoming school climate and invitations into the school or classroom as these are received as signs of respect (Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition, pg 8). Finally, once you have Mexican immigrant parents together, relational time is important to them because interpersonal relationships are the basis for building trust and confidence with others (Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition, pg 10).

Various agencies have developed tools and resources aimed at engaging parents in school activities (*see Appendix A: Summary of Parent Engagement Resources*); a few have directed their efforts specifically at the engagement of parents in nutrition and physical activity efforts in schools/LSWP. The National PTA, in collaboration with Parent's Action for Children, developed a resource titled "Healthy Lifestyles at Home and School" (2005). Its focus is two-fold: one, to educate parents about what actions they can take in the home to promote healthy eating and physical activity, and two, to educate PTAs as to how they can encourage and support healthy eating and physical activity in schools. Strategies outlined for improving student health focus primarily on parent education as the means to this end (e.g., how to make proper food choices and how to incorporate physical activity behaviors into the family's lifestyle). Additionally, there are suggestions about how to make existing PTA activities more health conscious (i.e., fundraising, meetings, and events). Finally, there are a few suggestions about what PTAs can do to change the nutrition/physical activity environments in schools, although the tie-in with LSWP is limited and there is no outline of the process and action steps necessary to make such changes.

The Ohio Action for Health Kids (AHFK) organization developed "Make Positive Changes in Your Schools: Parent Guide to Creating Nutrition and Physical Activity Changes in Schools" (2006). This toolkit is directed towards parents and describes a step-by-step guide for how parents can collaborate with other parents to take action and advocate for better wellness practices and nutrition and physical activity programs in their local schools. This guide provides comprehensive and detailed information on ways parents can impact policy and provides prescriptive outlines (through their P.A.R.E.N.T Process) for how to go about tackling LSWP components. The components of the P.A.R.E.N.T process are:

- P – Pick a Project
- A – Assess the Situation
- R – Research
- E – Education

- N – Network
- T – Take Action

The Colorado AFHK utilized this same process for a similar toolkit titled “Parents are the Power!” Again the intended audience for this toolkit is parents.

School districts were required to establish a local school wellness policy by the beginning of the 2006 school year. While school districts have now developed their LSWP and are in the process of implementation, the extent of compliance, monitoring, and evaluation varies widely. As mentioned, there are no studies that specifically address the roles parents have played in the implementation of LSWPs. It is, however, clear from the research that parent/family involvement in policy and governance at schools is essential for quality schools and successful students. It is therefore believed that engaging parents in the implementation of LSWP will ensure strong policies, will provide an opportunity for parents to take action to support students’ overall health and well-being, and will result in improved nutrition and physical activity environments in schools.

Outreach to parents should include strategies that have been outlined in various existing resources. In addition, specific strategies should be employed that target disparate populations. Finally, efforts should also be made with stakeholders who are already engaged in LSWP efforts as they could play an important role in engaging parents and facilitating their role as advocates in LSWP activities.



## **KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS**

Key informant interviews were conducted between June and August of 2007 with two key informant groups, parents, and stakeholders. Specific protocol and methodology for each group is described at the beginning of each of their respective sections.

### **KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS: PARENTS**

#### **Methodology: Parents**

The primary target audience was English and Spanish-speaking mothers of school-aged children in low-income communities throughout California, with an emphasis on parents from existing Healthy Eating, Active Communities (HEAC) Initiative regions funded by The California Endowment (TCE). Thirty-three potential names were submitted by CPL coordinators working within identified HEAC regions. Six additional names outside HEAC communities were identified totaling thirty-nine potential parents to interview. Twenty-five parents (n=25) met the following criteria and were interviewed:

- Mothers of school-aged children (defined as attending pre-school through 12<sup>th</sup> grade).
- Parents living in rural, suburban, or urban school districts.
- Parents who are involved in school matters, involved in nutrition and physical education (PE) or physical activity (PA), or uninvolved.
- Parents from low-income school districts (defined as 50 percent or more eligible for free or reduced-price lunch).
- English and Spanish-speaking parents.
- Parents who had a telephone.

The interviews were administered by state CPL staff. CPL staff received instructions on conducting the interviews. Interviews were done via telephone or in person and took an average of 30 minutes each.

The parent sample consisted of:

- 44% (n=11) Latinas (of which five interviews were conducted solely in Spanish).
- 36% (n=9) Caucasians.
- 16% (n=4) African-Americans.
- 4% (n=1) Native Americans.

#### **Principle Objectives: Parents**

The principle objectives that guided the development of the key informant interviews with the parents were:

- To identify reasons why parents participate in school decision-making processes and what would get them involved.
- To identify barriers to parent participation.

- To identify gaps in parents' knowledge that warrant education and training about LSWP.
- To determine appropriate vehicles of communication that parents find to be most effective.

See *Appendix B: Parent Survey: Purpose, Key Questions, and Objectives*.

The parent interview tool consisted of ten categories and a total of 16 open-ended questions [see *Appendix C: Parent Key Informant Interview Survey Tool (English)* and *Appendix D: Parent Key Informant Interview Survey Tool (Spanish)*]. The following are the 10 categories of questions for the parent interviews:

1. Attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge about school foods.
2. Attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge about PE and PA in schools.
3. Parent participation in school activities.
4. Reasons for parent participation.
5. Barriers for parent participation.
6. Strategies to increase parent participation.
7. Methods of communication.
8. Knowledge of local school wellness policies.
9. Personal involvement for change.
10. Final comments.

## **Key Informant Interview Findings: Parents**

### **1. Attitudes, Beliefs, and Knowledge about School Foods**

Parents were asked what they thought about the foods and beverages available at their children's schools. The findings suggested that there were two groups of thought on this; one group who felt there has been improvement, the other who felt strongly that school meals need improvement. Overall, the top four responses regarding school meals were:

- That there is a need for more healthy choices.
- That the foods and beverages are good.
- That the foods and beverages are unhealthy and bad.
- That parents are happy to see sodas gone.

#### There is a need for more healthy choices.

Most frequently, parents reported that schools needed to provide students a variety of items and more healthy choices, such as more fruits and vegetables and different beverage options such as milk and juice.

#### Comments:

- *The entrees are basically the same every week.*
- *I'd like less junk food and sodas.*
- *More fruits and vegetables are needed.*

- *Milk choices are chocolate and white. It would be nice to have other options such as soy, rice, or almond milk.*
- *They need to serve more healthy meals like chicken, Caesar salad, edemame, and green vegetables in general.*

The foods and beverages are good.

Several parents reported that the foods and beverages are good and that they had seen recent improvements. A few parents noticed that the schools no longer have sodas and were happy about that fact.

Comments:

- *I think there has been a big improvement over the last few years.*
- *I think they have good healthy choices. The cafeteria lady is trying to do better.*
- *Most of it's pretty good. I think the real problem is there's always at least one item that seems like junk.*
- *The schools have taken the soda machines out, which is a positive thing.*
- *Overall, I think they are good.*

The foods and beverages are unhealthy and bad.

The majority of parents who used words like “bad,” “unhealthy,” “gross,” “junk,” “unappealing,” and “horrible” to describe the foods and beverages available on their children’s school campus, particularly in the high and middle schools, were Latina. One parent reported that the school meals were “like prison food.” Some parents described the food as “ill-prepared,” “under/over-cooked,” “too greasy,” and “over-ripe.” Due to what some parents thought about the foods and beverages served, two parents reported not allowing their children to buy school meals.

Comments:

- *I don't let my kid buy lunch.*
- *The food is very bad, it is not healthy. My kids are obese and I prefer to pack their lunch.*
- *Horrible.*
- *The food is “gross looking.”*
- *Not healthy.*

**2. Attitudes, Beliefs, and Knowledge about Physical Education (PE) and Physical Activity (PA) in Schools**

Parents were asked what they thought about PE and PA opportunities available at their children’s school and what they knew about PE requirements. The top three answers included:

- Not enough PE/PA.
- PA opportunities are good.
- PE requirements are unknown.

A number of parents indicated that the schools are not providing enough PE and PA opportunities for their children. Some parents stated PE is unstructured and unsupervised and that there are no real PE teachers. Parents reported that students are not active and “just hang around” and that they do not have enough equipment or the capacity for PE activities (e.g., for rainy days). One parent reported that her child’s school has the Sports, Play, and Active Recreation for Kids (SPARK) program but that the teacher does not use it. As for after-school PA programming, a few parents would like to see more affordable PA opportunities for their children. One parent reported, “A lot of low-income parents can’t afford to buy shoes and stuff; they don’t have the money.”

Comments:

- *I don’t think there are enough physical activities.*
- *PE is taught by the classroom teacher and this is often not structured PE with organized activities.*
- *I see the kids on campus standing around during PE not really doing anything.*
- *The school is preaching to the students that they should be getting at least 30 minutes per day. However, the school does not provide PE everyday for the students.*

Several parents commented that the schools were doing a good job at providing PA opportunities. Opportunities described included school sports teams, adequate space for play at recess, walking programs, weight training, swimming, and cultural dance groups (such as Mexican Folkloric dance).

The majority of parents did not know about PE requirements. Four parents weren’t completely sure or gave a response that was somewhat correct. Some parents mentioned programs such as the President’s Challenge and Fitnessgram® or talked about the dress-code and attendance policies of their children’s schools.

### **3. Parent Participation in School Activities**

Parents were asked to describe ways in which they have been actively involved in their child’s school and how that makes them feel. Areas in which parents reported volunteering included the classroom, school events, and committees.

The majority of parents stated that they were actively involved; six parents indicated they were not. According to the parents who were involved, volunteering in the classroom (for mostly parents of elementary school students) ranked as the number one activity, followed by helping out at school events such as parties, carnivals, sports events and games, book fairs, and chaperoning for fieldtrips (mostly parents of high school students). Other volunteer roles for parents included clerical and administrative work, yard duty/supervision, and cafeteria and snack bar help.

Other ways in which parents get involved included PTA, English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC), School Board, School Site Council, Band Boosters, Future

Farmers of America, GATE Advisory Committee, School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC), and Parent Institute.

#### 4. Reasons for Parent Participation

Parents were asked to give reasons they get involved in their children's schools. The three reasons parents reported getting involved included wanting to be informed, wanting to know the interaction between their children's teachers and friends, and volunteering makes them feel good.

Quite a few parents stated they get involved because they want to know what is going on and to learn more about school events and activities. Some parents said it is "important" to be involved for the sake of their children's health and education and to show they "care." A handful of parents wanted to know about their children's academic progress.

Parents also reported wanting to know more about how teachers treat their children, wanting school administrators and teachers to know who they are, and wanting to know more about their children's classmates and friends.

A few parents reported volunteering because they want to be close to and spend time with their children; a couple of parents reported that volunteering was their "duty" and made them a "good mom."

Other reasons given as to why parents get involved in their children's schools ranged from sharing in the school experience or to bond with their children, to it is "fun," it is a "good use of time," and having the ability to do so because of having the day off from work.

##### Comments:

- *It is important for me to know exactly what goes on at [school name].*
- *I want to know how she's doing, where she's making progress, and where she's lacking.*
- *I want them [her children] to know I am interested in their education.*
- *I try to see if the teacher knows my children and how they treat them.*
- *This gives me an opportunity to see what goes on, on campus and let teachers, students and administration know that I am aware of what goes on and I am willing to volunteer when needed.*
- *I like to see who my children's friends are.*
- *I want to be close to them and see what kind of activities they're involved in.*
- *It's my duty as a mom.*
- *To be a "good" mom.*

Parents were asked how getting involved in their children's school made them feel. Many of the parents used the following words to describe how they feel when they volunteer: "great," "good," "good parent," "proud," "happy," "excellent," and

“satisfied.” A number of parents used other words like “active” and “partner” to describe how they feel.

Parents not only stated that volunteering makes them feel good, but also that they felt “helpful.” Others stated that their children are “proud” and “motivated” when their parents volunteer. Some parents said volunteering helps build better relationships with teachers and other parents. A small number of parents shared that they felt “comfortable” and “welcomed.”

Comments:

- *It makes me feel good!*
- *It makes me feel like I am being a good parent.*
- *It makes me feel like I’m a partner with my child’s school.*
- *It makes me feel like an “active parent.”*

Parents were also asked what activities other parents’ have been involved in at their child’s school. The top three areas reported included school events, PTA/PTO and fundraising activities. Many parents stated that other parents get involved in school events, such as carnivals, class parties, Grad night, book fairs, and multicultural events. Some parents reported that other parents are involved in their local PTA/PTO or are involved in fundraising activities such as Cinco de Mayo and jog-a-thons.

Comments:

- *I’ve seen other parents get involved with a fundraiser for multicultural events, such as Cinco de Mayo.*
- *PTA and fundraisers is all that I know of.*
- *I also see parents helping with the school carnival and selling foods.*

Parents were also asked: “Why do you think other parents choose to get involved in their children’s schools?” The top reasons reported were:

- Parents want to support their child’s education.
- Parents care about their child’s well-being.
- Parents have time.
- Parents want to be informed.

The majority of parents said that other parents volunteer because other parents want to help and are concerned about their child’s education. Caring about their children was another reason reported. Some parents said time was also a reason why other parents volunteer. Lastly, a few parents reported wanting to be informed as a reason why other parents get involved in their children’s school.



Comments:

- *They want to help the school and help their child's education.*
- *They get involved because they care about their child's education and social well-being.*
- *Because they are parents who have a lot of extra time and is a social event with other parents.*
- *Knowing what's going on is very important, especially because these are the people who spend the majority of the day with your child.*

## 5. Barriers to parent participation

Parents were asked what they believe are barriers or reasons why parents do not get involved in their children's school. Parents were first asked to identify reasons why parents do not get involved. Most parents expressed that "work" was the main reason followed by a number of parents who said "time," while others cited "language," "parents just don't care," and "lack of transportation." Other reasons included childcare and feelings of inadequacy. One parent summarized, "Some parents just don't care, others don't have the time and some feel inadequate because of language and their own educational barriers."

Parents were then asked to rank their responses by only giving the top three reasons they believe parents do not get involved. Work, childcare, and lack of time were the top three barriers for parent involvement.

Barriers: Before being ranked	Barriers: After being ranked
Work	Work
Time	Childcare
Language, don't care, transportation	Time

Comments:

- *Some parents work, and they would love to help but they can't.*
- *They have more than one child, work full time, don't feel qualified to volunteer, childcare, and transportation issues.*

## 6. Strategies to Increase Parent Engagement

Parents were asked about ways in which their children's school currently attempts to get parents involved and to identify if the methods used were "very effective," "somewhat effective," or "not effective." A number of parents expressed that a personal phone call is a "very effective" method a school could use when requesting parent help followed by making the parents feel appreciated and other incentives, and print media, such as newsletters and teacher's notes.

Comments:

- *Phone calls are very effective because it's an opportunity to have one-on-one conversations.*
- *Parent appreciation is very effective. Prizes are donated for parents. Parents like to feel appreciated.*
- *Notices sent home is somewhat effective, probably the least effective, but sometimes it works.*

Aside from what schools are currently doing to increase parent participation, parents were asked to offer other suggestions they considered the best ways to get parents involved. It was recommended that highlighting the importance and benefits for getting involved needs to be explained to parents in order to solicit parent participation. Offering childcare was another suggestion made by the parents. Some parents suggested not only offering incentives (such as gift cards, food at meetings, and awards) but also rewarding the students whose parents are involved.

Comments:

- *Talk to parents about the importance of having a commitment to their kids so they can see and understand that their parents are interested in seeing them succeed.*
- *Reward students whose parents volunteer, by giving students coupons for the store, or even just pencils, like ones that say "My Parent is a Volunteer."*
- *Offer childcare so they can volunteer.*
- *Make parents feel special with awards or certificates when they do volunteer.*

Parents were then asked to rank their suggestions for increasing parent participation. Collectively, the top three responses included phone calls, incentives, and print media (specifically teacher's notes and letters). It is important to note that what schools are currently doing and what parents offered as suggestions to engage parent participation were the same.

Effective strategies schools use to engage parents:	Other suggestions offered and ranked by parents interviewed to engage parents:
Phone call	Phone call
Incentives	Incentives
Print media	Print media

## 7. Methods of Communication

Parents were asked about the methods of communication their children's schools use to communicate with them and their families. Most parents stated that print media, (teacher's notes, newsletters, flyers, etc.) followed by phone calls and email, were the ways in which schools communicate most often. Other methods shared were Back to School Night and Open House events, mailings, school bulletin, automated phone calls, parent-teacher conferences, and school website.

Parents were then asked the following question: “Out of all of the ways to communicate to parents mentioned above, for you personally, what would you say are the top three?” The top three methods of communication reported by parents included:

- Phone calls.
- Teacher’s notes and letters.
- Other printed materials.

Comments:

- *Phone calls are best.*
- *Phone calls or notices mailed or sent home with student.*
- *Teacher sending direct letters home with kids.*

## **8. Knowledge of School Wellness Policies**

Parents were asked the following question: “Do you know about your school’s local school wellness policy?” Very few parents knew about their school’s LSWP. The majority of parents did not know about it and a few other parents had heard about it, but were not sure.

Comments:

- *I do, but I know that a lot of other parents don’t.*
- *No, Nothing.*
- *I assume they have one, because they have been stricter about what they have been able to sell. I think it’s a district policy.*

## **9. Personal Involvement for Change**

Parents were asked a number of questions related to their potential involvement in nutrition and PE and PA endeavors, specifically regarding their school’s wellness policy. For example, parents were asked: “In what ways do you think parents like yourself would be interested in getting involved to improve nutrition and physical activity opportunities, including PE classes, at their child’s school?” Parents stated they would attend and discuss health-related topics (e.g., nutrition, PE/PA, obesity, etc.) in group meetings and workshops. Other parents reported a willingness to conduct surveys, administer taste-tests to students, and educate teachers, school administration, and students about health. Some parents reported an interest in helping their school provide healthier food options, volunteering to provide PA opportunities in after-school programs, and contacting/speaking to their school boards.

Comments:

- *We could all be on a health committee to discuss these issues and to make recommendations.*

- *I wouldn't mind being in a group, not necessarily PTA, to help the school do healthy lunches or help to find out what the children would eat and do assemblies and taste-tests.*
- *I am interested in going to school board meetings. I have recently learned how important these meetings are and how many decisions get made here.*

Parents were given four specific ways in which they could be interested in getting involved in nutrition and PE and PA efforts in their children's school. They were asked to answer with a "yes" or "no" and to give a reason for their responses. The following section includes a bulleted summary, as well as the scenarios in which parents were asked to respond. A majority of parents:

- Would meet to discuss nutrition and PA efforts in schools.
- Are interested in speaking to school board members.
- Are interested in introducing healthy fundraising ideas.
- Are interested in soliciting parent involvement.

**Scenario 1: I am interested in participating with a group of parents who meet regularly to talk about nutrition and physical activity issues in the school.**

The majority of the parents said "yes" with one parent questioning, "If I don't get involved, who will?" Of the 21 who said "yes," two said they couldn't because of limited time.

Comments:

- *Yes, because parents should know what is going on in new rules and policies, and parents should be able to make recommendations.*
- *Yes, because they [parents] respect the opinions and feedback we provide.*

A few parents who were not interested in participating with a group of parents stated as reasons a lack of time, lack of interest, and a belief that other parents would do it.

**Scenario 2: I am interested in speaking to school board members one-on-one or at a meeting about the importance of improving nutrition and physical activity opportunities for students.**

The majority\* of parents said "yes." A few parents would "probably" speak to school board members. One said if she "felt secure enough" and another mother would if it weren't for her limited English.

Comments:

- *Yes because they are the ones that make the rules and have the power. I know that if we go talk to them, they will take our opinion into account.*
- *Yes, so they can find out that parents do care about and are concerned about their kids' nutrition.*

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\* Only twenty-four of the twenty-five parents responded to this question.

The remaining parents said “no” citing not being able to speak in public and having no time. One parent admitted that speaking to school board members would be something for her husband to do.

**Scenario 3: I am interested in introducing to school staff, students, and/or parents, fundraisers that don’t involve the sale of unhealthy foods.**

Most\* parents said “yes” to introducing fundraising ideas that do not involve the sale of unhealthy foods.

Comments:

- *It’s aggravating to keep telling kids to eat healthy and then do fundraisers that sell unhealthy foods.*
- *Yes! We’re all tired of selling candy and cookies. We need better ideas for fundraising.*

The few parents who said “no” gave reasons such as “other parents are doing fundraising activities,” they are “tired” or “burned out,” as well as have no time.

Comments:

- *No, I am so tired of my son coming with boxes of candy that we don’t eat or need.*
- *Sometimes I feel guilty selling junk to friends and family.*
- *No, it’s too much work. I don’t have it in me. Fundraisers are hard and too much responsibility.*
- *No, I am burned out on fundraisers. If the government money was spent correctly, schools would not need to sell cookies for science books. Parents should not have to hustle for money for their child’s public education. The government should provide for the education and nurturing of children, especially since school attendance is mandatory.*

**Scenario 4: I am interested in communicating with other parents to get them involved or to help them understand why these changes are occurring or needed on their children’s school campus.**

The majority of parents said “yes, they are interested in communicating with other parents to get them involved.” One reason parents gave is that parent-to-parent conversations are “easier” than conversations between parents and school staff/administrators. Simply being asked and invited to participate, or wanting to help out if they were more familiar with the issues were other reasons given. Parents are able to communicate better and feel “comfortable” with familiar parents, their “peers.”

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\* Only twenty-four of the twenty-five parents responded to this question.

Comments:

- *Yes! Parents always like to talk to one another. They feel that they are on the same level and can talk to each other without using their best "English," or speaking correctly.*
- *Parent-to-parent education is easier to swallow sometimes than that coming from staff or teachers who are "educated."*
- *I would be okay with talking with parents that I am already familiar with.*

The remaining parents who responded with a "no" gave reasons such as having no time, not feeling "respected" or being "too young," and that "they [other parents] may feel that they're not doing their jobs."

Comments:

- *I rarely have the time to dedicate to educating others.*
- *I don't think they would respect me or my opinion. Maybe it's my own fears.*

## 10. Parents' Final Comments

At the end of the interview, parents were asked to offer any final comments they would like to share before the interview ended. More than half of parents used this time to reflect and make other suggestions that were not revealed by the other fifteen questions. One of the comments was made by a mother whose children tell her that their school needs more coaches. Another said, "We need people that are specialized in working with parents so they can provide the guidance and support we need." And lastly, one mother exclaimed, "If any of this is implemented in the school I'm ready to help promote it!"

## STAKEHOLDERS

### Methodology: Stakeholders

The secondary target audience was parent stakeholder groups. Fourteen local, state, and national private and public institutions and organizations with an emphasis on working with parents and families (academic, health, advocacy, etc.) were identified and submitted by CPL staff members. Of the 14, ten individuals (n=10) representing the organizations met the following criteria and were interviewed:

- The primary work of the organization indirectly and/or directly focuses on parents and families.
- The person was able to participate in a one-on-one interview.

The interviews were administered by state CPL regional coordinators and staff. CPL regional coordinators and state staff received instructions on conducting the interviews. Interviews were done via telephone or in person and took an average of 30 minutes each.

## **Principle Objectives: Stakeholders**

The principle objectives that guided the development of the key informant interviews with the stakeholders were:

- To identify successful strategies used by parent stakeholder groups to get parents involved.
- To identify the barriers or problems parent stakeholder groups face when working with parents.
- To identify existing work and materials related to engaging parents in nutrition and PE and PA.
- To identify how parent stakeholder groups communicate with culturally and linguistically diverse parents, specifically Spanish-speaking parents.
- To identify ways parent stakeholder groups disseminate information and materials to parents.
- To identify gaps in parent stakeholder groups' knowledge that warrant education and training about engaging parents in implementing and evaluating their LSWPs.

*See Appendix E: Stakeholder Survey: Purpose, Key Questions, and Objectives.*

The stakeholder interview tool consisted of eight categories and a total of 16 open-ended questions. The following are the eight categories of questions asked of the stakeholders:

1. Topics addressed by stakeholders requiring parent participation.
2. Strategies to recruit and maintain parent participation.
3. Barriers to parent participation.
4. Methods of communication.
5. Stakeholder knowledge about LSWP.
6. Tools and resources.
7. Stakeholder interest in LSWP.
8. Final Comments.

*See Appendix F: Stakeholder Key Informant Interview Survey Tool.*

### **1. Topics addressed by stakeholders requiring parent participation**

Stakeholders were asked what types of issues they address that require parent participation. Most of the issues were related to the school environment such as student academic achievement, working with minority students, and preparing for higher education. Some of the groups work on other specific school issues such as healthy eating and wellness policy implementation. Other groups, not necessarily involved within the school environment, work on subjects such as media, developing tools and resources, and creating educational messages.

## 2. Strategies to recruit and sustain parent participation

Stakeholders were asked a number of questions related to strategies they use to recruit and sustain parent participation. The top three strategies reported included:

- The use of incentives.
- Ensuring parents' needs are addressed.
- The inclusion of parent voices throughout the decision-making process.

The number one response for a successful strategy was the use of incentives, specifically providing both food and childcare. Other incentives included gift cards (e.g. grocery, gas, department store), lottery tickets, raffle prizes, and discounted trip tickets.

Comments:

- *If you feed them they will come.*
- *To get people in the door and motivated we use little things that help like reimbursing parents for their gas.*
- *Provide no/low cost fieldtrips for parents to places like Laughlin, Las Vegas, and "Family Day" trips with children.*

Other ways to recruit and sustain parent participation reported were offering meetings, workshops, and classes that focus on meeting parents' needs. One respondent reported conducting an assessment of parents' needs; another reported bringing in community groups to help parents with personal concerns such as credit, home-buying, and selecting health-care professionals/dentists. Many of the stakeholders stressed the importance of a non-threatening, warm, and welcoming atmosphere during meetings, workshops, and classes.

Comments:

- *Start with their basic needs first, i.e. housing, food needs, resources. Once you address their primary needs, then you can engage parents on issues pertinent to the organization, such as nutrition issues.*

Bringing in people who represent the community was another strategy mentioned. Some stakeholders reported hiring someone, such as a parent/parent coordinator and offering the opportunity for parents to facilitate meetings.

Comments:

- *Get parents to run the parent groups, not paid staff members.*

It was also reported that constant communication between the organization and parents is needed and communication efforts should be culturally and linguistically appropriate and meet the educational levels of the parents. Another important piece mentioned was to treat parents as equals. One stakeholder emphasized the importance of building "relationships with them [parents] as equal partners."



Stakeholders were also asked about recruiting and sustaining parent participation in nutrition and PE/PA efforts. Not all of the organizations interviewed specifically engage parents in these issues, but offered ways that may be useful such as using print media, involving students, creating partnerships, and providing incentives. Some stakeholders suggested that the message parents receive should be provocative, yet not “demonizing.” Others commented that such messages should be framed in a way that touches on consequences, not just a “good idea” for parents to be involved.

Stakeholders were asked to share successful approaches used to reach Spanish-speaking parents. The most reported strategy was to have accurately translated information, preferably by a native speaker. Hiring Spanish-speaking employees and providing bilingual speakers were two other highly mentioned strategies. It was also stated that personal contact, either in person or by phone, was another way stakeholders reach Spanish-speaking parents.

Comments:

- *You need to establish a rapport and build trust with Spanish-speaking parents.*
- *It's one of the things we're doing right now. We've hired more Latino staff.*
- *Not a recorded message but an actual live person calling and inviting them.*

Many ideas on how to sustain parent involvement were shared. The most recommended suggestion given was to provide opportunities for parents to voice their needs and concerns, followed by acknowledging, validating, and valuing them and their ideas in a nurturing environment. It was also stated that offering incentives, such as food at meetings and other rewards, are strategies to keep parents involved over time.

### **3. Barriers to parent participation**

Stakeholders were asked about problems or barriers they encountered when implementing strategies to get and keep parents involved. The top four barriers reported were:

- Lack of time due to work commitments.
- Culture and language.
- Parent's inability to prioritize involvement due to financial situations.
- Lack of assigned parent coordinator/staff person to help mobilize parent participation.

Lack of time due to work schedules and cultural/linguistic barriers tied for the top responses. Many stakeholders reported that lack of money is also an important issue and must be considered when soliciting parent participation. Additionally, stakeholders reported that parents prioritize their personal responsibilities (e.g., time, work, childcare, transportation) and avoid getting involved when family responsibilities

are a priority. One stakeholder said, “The real barrier is lack of money. Parents need to have funds allocated to pay for food, and even funds to pay for childcare, and transportation, as these are the issues our parents are faced with.”

Other barriers to parental involvement shared by stakeholders included not having a designated staff or point person who is responsible for engaging parents or well-trained and culturally competent staff members who demonstrate respect and authentic caring for parents and their children. One stakeholder revealed that a lack of respect may be one of the barriers, if not the predominate barrier, affecting parental involvement reporting that “Sometimes the parents perceive the school employees as not having respect for them or their kids. This is the biggest barrier.” One stakeholder reported that the lack of a welcoming parent center that is strategically located on a school campus is also a barrier. Another stakeholder reported a barrier specific to Latino parents; all school volunteers are required to go through a screening process which includes a background check and fingerprints with the Department of Justice. Latino families, particularly the parents, may be undocumented, and because of their immigration status, are prohibited from volunteering.

Stakeholders were asked about ways they have overcome or plan to overcome barriers that affect parent participation. Stakeholders stated that addressing parents’ needs through incentives (e.g. providing childcare, offering transportation tickets or gas gift cards, having bilingual staff members, offering food, and holding meetings at times that are convenient for parents) was the most important way to overcome barriers to parent participation. One stakeholder concluded, “Allocate funds to cover food, and other relevant needs such as childcare and transportation.”

The second-most reported suggestion was to know the target population of parents by providing staff training to better understand the parent population. Another key approach to addressing barriers was to encourage and promote parent voice and participation throughout the decision-making process. One stakeholder said, “Try as hard as you can to include them more; let them know it is safe to voice their opinions.”

An additional suggestion included more public education and awareness through a variety of mass communication methods as one stakeholder confirmed, “Get the word out in different avenues, brochure or flier or email. The more they see, the more they become involved.”

#### **4. Methods of communication**

Stakeholders were asked to share the most creative and effective ways they disseminate information to parents, including Spanish-speaking parents. It is important to note that some stakeholders did not necessarily share methods in which they actually carry out disseminating information to parents, but rather told of possible ways that may be useful. The top three responses reported were:

- Phone calls.

- Newsletters and flyers.
- Religious and other community-based organizations.

Many of the stakeholders stated phone calls to the residences, not place of employment, especially made by other parents who are already involved in some capacity, are a great way to disseminate information. It is necessary to note that phone calls were identified by parents as the best method of communication. Word of mouth and one-on-one conversations were other ways suggested by stakeholders to get information to parents.

Stakeholders also reported using newsletters, that are either mailed to the homes or handed out through the schools, as another way to disseminate information. It was pointed out that printed materials should be developed in a simple, clear way with the use of graphics and limited text for low literacy, in addition to being translated for specific populations.

A few stakeholders acknowledged religious and community-based programs to draw on when needing to get information out to the public. Two stakeholder groups reported on the strategy of going door to door, with one group emphasizing the use of promotoras\*, especially when attempting to communicate with Spanish-speaking parents.

Stakeholders were asked a series of questions about strategies they may have witnessed being done by other groups that are not successful. The top three reported were:

- Using a single approach.
- Letters.
- The internet.

A majority of stakeholders reported that parent outreach should be a multi-pronged with numerous methods of follow-up including phone calls and mailings. One stakeholder stated, “One-shot communication does not work.” Another one responded, “One touch doesn’t make an impact. You need to reinforce the message.”

Many of the stakeholders said letters or “things parents have to read,” especially if they are not culturally and linguistically relevant or match parents’ education levels, are not strategic ways to communicate with parents. Some examples included flyers and letters sent via students as well as information printed in newspapers. One stakeholder said, “Sending out letters with students is least effective.” It is important to recall that stakeholders themselves remarked the use of newsletters and other printed materials as the second-best effective method to reach parents, whereas,

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\* An outreach worker in a Latino community who is responsible for raising awareness of health and educational issues

parents viewed letters mailed to their homes or brought home by students as somewhat effective.

Some stakeholders said the use of the internet, including email, may not be a successful method as not everyone has access to the internet and the internet may not be accessed or seen by the target population.

Automated phone calls—particularly at dinnertime—scare tactics, and health fairs were deemed unsuccessful strategies to communicate with parents. With regards to health fairs, one stakeholder commented, “I see organizations do this all the time. This is not effective.”

## **5. Stakeholder knowledge about local school wellness policies**

Stakeholders were asked what they knew about LSWP. Six of the ten stakeholders were not informed and had no knowledge. The remaining four had knowledge and could speak to what they are. Three of them currently have resources, such as brochures, manuals, curriculum, and materials that address parent involvement; only two of these have information specific to parent involvement in LSWP.

## **6. Tools and resources**

Stakeholders were asked if they have come across other organizations’ tools or resources that address engaging parents in their LSWP. Four of them said no and the other six mentioned the following as possible resources: TCE, the Dairy Council, HEAC grantees, PTA, CANFit, Alliance for a Healthier Generation, the Clinton Foundation, Rachel Ray, school nurses, Action for Healthy Kids state teams, the Pennsylvania Food Trust, and California Project LEAN.

Stakeholders were asked the following question: What topics do you think the trainings and toolkit should cover? Recommendations included:

- How to navigate the school system.
- Provide information about LSWP.
- Address reasons why parents should be concerned and involved.
- Provide leadership development.
- Provide information about general health and wellness.

A number of stakeholders stated that helping parents navigate the school system should be an essential piece of the toolkit and trainings. This would include the ability to identify, talk to, and work with key individuals (e.g., principals, teachers, food service personnel, school board members and others). One stakeholder commented, “Provide information on how schools work.” Another said to provide information about “what a parent can and cannot do.”

Another key component stakeholders suggested was to introduce and explain the LSWP mandate in addition to possible consequences if district policies are not implemented or do not exist. One stakeholder asked, “What are the outcomes or results if schools are not implementing a school wellness policy?” Providing information on why parents should care and how to get involved was another suggestion offered by a few stakeholders. One stakeholder recommended answering the question: “Why should I get involved?” Another stakeholder expressed, “They need to know why they should care about this issue, what should be in place at their kid’s schools, and then how they can help!”

Providing leadership development was another suggested topic, particularly public speaking and the advocacy process. One stakeholder said, “Often time, organizations focus on their agenda or issues, and ignore the leadership and public speaking skills that are essential for this process.” Understanding the process, being knowledgeable of the issues, knowing their rights as parents, and speaking with authority in public will help parents become more comfortable and “have a voice in the civic and policy participation process.” One stakeholder put it this way, “If they [parents] feel comfortable that people are going to listen, it empowers them to be involved”.

Other topics stakeholders recommended be part of the toolkit and training include information on general health and wellness, such as basic nutrition, the obesity-diabetes connection, and PA tips parents can do with their children.

Other organizations that may find toolkit and trainings useful

Stakeholders were asked to identify other organizations that may find the toolkit and training useful. A few stakeholders recommended working with the PTA and others suggested schools, CSBA, ELAC, and churches. Below is a combined list of all organizations suggested by stakeholders according to category:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Names of Organizations</b>
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Boys and Girls Clubs</li> <li>▪ YMCA (Young Men’s Christian Association)</li> <li>▪ Other youth-focused organizations</li> </ul>
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) Program</li> <li>▪ Cafeteria staff</li> <li>▪ School Administrators</li> </ul>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clinics</li> <li>▪ Faith-based organizations</li> <li>▪ Other groups who work with parents</li> </ul>

Category	Names of Organizations
State and National Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ACSA (Association of California School Administrators)</li> <li>▪ CSBA</li> <li>▪ PTA</li> <li>▪ Teachers Union</li> <li>▪ Principals' Association</li> <li>▪ Alliance for a Healthy Generation</li> <li>▪ American Academy of Pediatrics</li> </ul>
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CDE</li> <li>▪ ELAC</li> <li>▪ Head Start</li> <li>▪ Migrant Education</li> <li>▪ Public Housing</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Foundations</li> </ul>

## 7. Stakeholder interest in local school wellness policies

Stakeholders were asked if they would be interested in participating in trainings that focused on engaging parents in the implementation and evaluation phases of local school wellness policies. The majority of them responded with a “yes.” Of the few who said they would not participate, one stakeholder cited her organization is “no longer in that business” and another said his organization would “probably” be interested. Stakeholders were also asked if their organizations would like a copy of the toolkit and the majority of them said “yes.” A very small number said they would not like a copy as one stakeholder said, “No, I could just download it from the CPL website.”

## 8. Stakeholder Final Comments

Stakeholders were asked to offer any final comments they would like to share before the interview ended. A few stakeholders stated they would like to collaborate with CPL by reviewing, sharing, and highlighting materials. One stakeholder said, “We want to work more closely with you on the parent campaign.”

As for final words regarding the toolkit, it was mentioned by a few stakeholders not to “just translate” materials into Spanish, but rather “the materials need to be developed in Spanish from the start, representing the needs of the community.” The toolkit should also include “models of good practice.” It was also advised that the tool be field-tested, especially with minority populations before its final version is made available to the public.

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**APPENDIX A**

**SUMMARY OF PARENT ENGAGEMENT RESOURCES**

**APPENDIX A:**

**Summary of Parent Engagement Resources**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Primary Purpose</b>	<b>Target Audience</b>	<b>Highlights</b>	<b>Addresses LSWP (Y/N)</b>
Action for Healthy Kids-Colorado	Parents are the Power! Toolkit for Creating Change: Improve your school's nutrition and physical activity environment	For Colorado parents of school age children to become empowered and actively engaged as advocates for change and implementation of the District Wellness Policy specifically in the area of nutrition and PA/PE	Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Understanding the school environment</li> <li>○ Steps for creating change</li> <li>○ Background on school foods</li> <li>○ PE information</li> <li>○ Sample projects</li> <li>○ Success stories</li> </ul>	Yes
Action for Healthy Kids-Ohio	Make Positive Changes in Your Schools: Parent Guide to Creating Nutrition and Physical Activity Changes in Schools	Guide for Ohio parents to take an active role in nutrition and physical activity projects in schools. Focus on PTAs.	Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Understanding wellness policies</li> <li>○ School health environment assessment</li> <li>○ Distinct sections of school-related nutrition and</li> <li>○ physical topics with fact sheets and ideas for action using the PARENT process</li> </ul>	Yes

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Primary Purpose</b>	<b>Target Audience</b>	<b>Highlights</b>	<b>Addresses LSWP (Y/N)</b>
Colorado Department of Education	Strengthening Parent Involvement: A Toolkit	To help schools and districts comply with the regulations for parent involvement as prescribed in the “No Child Left Behind Act”	Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Parent involvement and student achievement</li> <li>○ Template for developing district policies</li> <li>○ Sample parent involvement policies</li> <li>○ Strategies for parent involvement</li> <li>○ Suggested parent involvement activities</li> <li>○ Assessment Tools</li> </ul>	No
Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition	A Guide for Teachers: Engaging Mexican Immigrant Parents in Their Children’s Educations	To help teachers who work with English-language learners to understand the differences between the education systems in Colorado and Mexico	Colorado School Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Understanding cultural strengths and conflicts</li> <li>○ Communication strategies</li> <li>○ Assessment questions</li> <li>○ Strategies to reach Spanish-speaking parents</li> </ul>	No
KSA Plus Communications	Parent Leadership Starter Kit	Parent leaders who are ready to become more effective advocates and serve as decision makers on school based councils and committees. Focus on academic achievement and school performance.	Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Numerous fact sheets for parents</li> <li>○ School partnerships with parents</li> <li>○ Things parents should know and expect</li> <li>○ Creating school-parent compact</li> <li>○ Receiving timely info on school performance</li> <li>○ Developing school improvement and parent involvement plans</li> </ul>	No

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Primary Purpose</b>	<b>Target Audience</b>	<b>Highlights</b>	<b>Addresses LSWP (Y/N)</b>
National Association of Partners in Education with Metlife Foundation	2002 Teacher-Parent Engagement Through Partnerships Toolkit	To provide resources needed to develop successful and innovative teacher-parent partnerships in and out of the classroom	Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ List of resources</li> <li>○ Effective leadership and communication</li> <li>○ Best Practices and Tips</li> </ul>	No
Michigan Department of Education	Parent Engagement Information and Tools: Moving Beyond Parent Involvement to Parent Engagement	To assist districts and schools in their parent engagement efforts	Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Standards and quality indicators</li> <li>○ Assessment tools</li> <li>○ Sample parent involvement policies</li> <li>○ Fast facts about parent involvement</li> </ul>	No
Options for Sexual Health	Your Power as a Parent: Parent Advocacy Toolkit	To help improve school sexual health education (SSHE)	Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Definitions</li> <li>○ Background information</li> <li>○ How to work with schools</li> <li>○ Tools and resources</li> </ul>	No
Parent Involvement and Training Task Force of Parents for Public Schools, San Francisco	Parent Involvement in San Francisco's Public Elementary Schools: Sharing Stories of Effective Family Involvement	To share real-life stories and lessons of effective parent involvement in the San Francisco Unified School District	Anyone concerned with improving schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Practical tips to engage parents</li> <li>○ Success stories</li> <li>○ Assessment tools</li> <li>○ Resources</li> <li>○ Sample documents</li> </ul>	No
PTA	Parents Empowering Parents Guide	To assist local PTA leaders to carry out an effective parent education and involvement program	Local PTA leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sample documents</li> <li>○ Parenting tips</li> <li>○ Handouts and articles</li> </ul>	No

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Primary Purpose</b>	<b>Target Audience</b>	<b>Highlights</b>	<b>Addresses LSWP (Y/N)</b>
The First 5 Association of California by The Center for Health Improvement	The First 5 Advocacy Toolkit	To assist county children and families commissions as leaders in advocating children's issues	For those entering or already in the field of policy and advocacy work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The policy process</li> <li>○ Building coalitions</li> <li>○ Communicating with policymakers</li> <li>○ Conflict resolution and consensus building</li> <li>○ Media advocacy</li> <li>○ Tools and samples</li> </ul>	No
Action for Healthy Kids, National (Publication Pending)	Parents Advocating for School Wellness	To motivate and assist parents and those working with parents to move towards hands-on advocacy surrounding LSWP.	LSWP advocates and Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tools for program organizers and trainers</li> <li>○ Particular focus on inclusion of underserved parents</li> <li>○ Tipsheets</li> </ul>	Yes

**APPENDIX B**

**PARENT SURVEY:  
PURPOSE, KEY QUESTIONS, AND OBJECTIVES**

## APPENDIX B:

### Parent Survey: Purpose, Key Questions, and Objectives

#### Project Purpose

The purpose of this project is three-fold:

- 1) To educate and engage parents who are actively and non-actively involved in school and community decision-making processes from low income communities to become aware of school wellness requirements and expected changes to their children's school environment.
- 2) To give parents the skills to advocate and be proactive participants when those changes are not occurring.
- 3) To expand parent awareness of advocacy opportunities in their communities.

#### Target Audience

Parents of school-aged children who are actively and non-actively involved in school and community decision-making processes from low-income communities throughout California with an emphasis on parents from existing TCE-funded communities.

#### Key Questions

- 1) Why do parents participate in decision-making processes in their child's school?
- 2) What are the barriers that affect parents' participation in decision-making processes in their child's school?
- 3) What are successful strategies to get parents involved in school and/or community decision-making processes?
- 4) What are the effective methods to communicate with parents?
- 5) What do parents know about their school districts' Local Wellness Policies?
- 6) In what types of wellness policy activities are parents willing to get involved?

#### Objectives

- 1) To identify reasons why parents participate in school decision-making processes and what would get them involved.
- 2) To identify barriers that prohibit parent participation.
- 3) To identify gaps in parents' knowledge that warrant education about Local Wellness Policy.
- 4) To determine appropriate vehicles of communication parents find to be most useful.

**APPENDIX C**

**PARENT KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW  
SURVEY TOOL, ENGLISH**



## Appendix B:

### Parent Key Informant Interview Survey Tool, English

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

HEAC Community/Project LEAN Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Introduction**

Hi and good (morning, afternoon, evening).

My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

Thank you Ms./Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ for agreeing to be interviewed.

I really appreciate it that you are taking time from your busy schedule to meet with me today.

Again, thank you.

#### **Purpose**

As you may know, I am working with Healthy Eating Active Communities (HEAC) initiative/California Project LEAN. We are conducting interviews with parents to better understand how to support parents to increase healthy foods and beverages, physical activity, and physical education in their children's schools. You are among 30 other parents from around the state of California who will be interviewed.

#### **Procedure**

Today, I will be asking you a number of questions. These questions will ask for your thoughts and opinions. I would like to hear what you think and feel about these topics, whether it is positive or negative. There are no right or wrong answers, and your honest opinions are appreciated.

To make sure I get everything you say, I would also like to audio tape our conversation. Is this okay with you? Results from this interview will be combined with other interviews to help us develop educational materials and future trainings. Your name and address will be separated from your responses so that the information you share will not be linked back to you. This interview is confidential and the information you give will be placed in a locked cabinet only to be accessed by the principal investigator.

The interview should last between 30 and 45 minutes.

As a thank you for taking the time to complete this interview, you will be provided a \$40 grocery gift certificate.

I know I have covered a lot. But, before we begin, do you have any questions?

1. What do you think about the foods and beverages available at your child's school?  
***(Pause a moment to give parent time to think of a response.)***

PROBE: What do you think about school meals, vending machines, snack bars, student stores, fundraisers, etc. and why?

2. What do you think about the physical activity opportunities that your child's school provides?  
***(Pause a moment to give parent time to think of a response.)***

PROBE: What do think about physical education classes, recess activities, before and after school programs, etc. and why?

3. Please tell me what you know about schools' physical education requirements?

4. Please describe ways in which you have been actively involved in your child's school.  
***(If parent has not been involved, skip to question #7.)***

5. What are the reasons you get involved in your child's school?

6. Please describe how getting involved in your child's school makes you feel.

7. What activities have **other** parents been involved in at your child's school?  
***(Pause a moment to give parent time to think of a response.)***

PROBE: What about PTA, school site councils, school board, classroom volunteer, fieldtrips, fundraisers, etc.

8. Why do you think **other** parents choose to get involved in their children's schools?

9. What do you think are reasons why parents **DO NOT** get involved in their child's school?  
***(Pause a moment to give parent time to think of a response.)***

PROBE: What about time constraints, childcare needs, transportation issues, work schedules, uncomfortable with school personnel/administration, never been asked, offered but no follow-up from school, communication/language barriers, etc.?

Out of all of these reasons why parents do not get involved, what would you say are the top three? **(Read back her ideas first followed by those in the probe.)**

1<sup>st</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>rd</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

I will now ask you a few questions about how schools can involve more parents.

10. Please tell me in what ways does your child's school try to get parents involved? **(List responses indicating if "Very Effective, Somewhat Effective, or Non-Effective" with reason(s) why. If parent does NOT know, write DOES NOT KNOW and proceed to question #11.)**

Response(s)

Very Effective/Somewhat Effective/Non-Effective

Reason(s) Why?

11. Aside from what your child's school already does to get parents involved, what other suggestions would you offer and why?

PROBE: What would you say are the best ways to get more parents involved? **(Read back her ideas followed by those mentioned in question #10 and have her rank them: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>.)**

---

1<sup>st</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>rd</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

12. What are the best ways for your child's school to communicate with you and your family? **(Pause a moment to give parent time to think of a response.)**

PROBE: What about through newsletters, phone calls, email, text messaging, teacher notes, school events (i.e. Back to School/Open House), from your children, etc.? Other ways?

Out of all of ways to communicate to parents mentioned above, for you personally, what would you say are the top three?

1<sup>st</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>rd</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for sharing with me your thoughts and opinions about what schools can do to involve more parents. Now, I will ask you a few questions about what parents feel about nutrition and physical activity efforts in schools. For example, offering students appealing, healthy meals rather than high fat and sugary foods and beverages, or increasing the amount of or quality of physical education and physical activity opportunities for students.

13. Do you know about your school's wellness policy? **(If yes, ask: What does it cover? If no, then read description and see if the respondent is familiar. If they now remember, ask again: what does it cover?)**

Please allow me to give you a brief description.

Any school district participating in a federal nutrition program is mandated to adopt a policy on student wellness. According to the requirements for the local wellness policy, school districts must set goals for nutrition education, physical activity, campus food provision and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness. Additionally, districts are required to involve a broad group of individuals in policy development and to have a plan for measuring policy implementation.

14. In what ways do you think parents like yourself would be interested in getting involved to improve nutrition and physical activity opportunities, including physical education classes, at their child's school?

**(Pause a moment to give parent time to think of a response.)**

15. I will read to you other examples of how parents can get involved in nutrition and physical activity efforts in their child's school. Please answer if you are interested in getting involved in these ways with reasons why or why not.

I am interested in...

A. Participating with a group of parents who meet regularly to talk about nutrition and physical activity issues in the school. **(Check either YES or NO and then PROBE: Why or why not?)**

- YES
- NO

B. Speaking to school board members one-on-one or at a meeting about the importance of improving nutrition and physical activity opportunities for students. **(Check either YES or NO and then PROBE: Why or why not?)**

- YES
- NO

C. Introducing to school staff, students, and/or parents fundraisers that don't involve the sale of unhealthy foods. **(Check either YES or NO and then PROBE: Why or why not?)**

- YES
- NO

D. Communicating with other parents to get them involved or to help them understand why these changes are occurring or needed on their children's school campus. (**Check either YES or NO and then PROBE: Why or why not?**)

- YES
- NO

16. Is there anything else you would like to add or to clarify before we end?

Thank you Ms./Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ for doing this interview. Your participation means a lot to us. To ensure that your \$40 grocery gift certificate gets mailed to the right address, please give me your address. Again, thank you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Two nearest grocery stores:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX D**

**PARENT KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW  
SURVEY TOOL, SPANISH**

## Appendix D:

### Parent Key Informant Interview Survey Tool, Spanish

#### Involucrando a los Padres de Familia en el Bienestar Escolar Proyecto LEAN de California

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

Comunidad HEAC/ Región del Proyecto LEAN \_\_\_\_\_

Entrevistador: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Introducción**

Hola y buenos (días, tardes, noches).

Mi nombre es \_\_\_\_\_.

Gracias Sra. \_\_\_\_\_ por aceptar que le hagamos esta entrevista.

Le agradezco mucho de que se haya tomado el tiempo para platicar conmigo el día de hoy.

Nuevamente, muchas gracias.

#### **Propósito**

Como ya sabrá, estoy trabajando con la iniciativa Healthy Eating Active Communities (HEAC) initiative y el Proyecto LEAN de California. Estamos llevando a cabo entrevistas con los padres de familia para tener un mejor entendimiento de cómo apoyar a los padres y poder incrementar los alimentos y bebidas saludables, la actividad física y la educación física en las escuelas de sus hijos. Usted es uno de 30 padres de familia alrededor del estado de California que será entrevistado.

#### **Procedimiento**

Hoy, le estaré haciendo un número de preguntas sobre sus pensamientos y opiniones. Me gustaría escuchar lo que piensa y siente sobre estos temas, ya sea positivo o negativo. No hay ninguna respuesta correcta o incorrecta y nos interesa obtener su opinión honesta.

Para asegurarme de que estoy captando todo lo que usted me diga, me gustaría grabar nuestra conversación. ¿Le parece bien?

Los resultados de esta entrevista serán combinados con otras entrevistas para ayudarnos a desarrollar materiales educativos para entrenamientos que realizaremos en un futuro. No hay manera de que sus respuestas la identifiquen a menos de que en un futuro, usted esté de acuerdo. La entrevista es estrictamente confidencial y durará entre 30 y 45 minutos.

Como muestra de nuestro agradecimiento por su tiempo, usted recibirá un certificado de \$40.00 para un supermercado.

Se que le he dado mucha información. Antes de comenzar, ¿tiene alguna pregunta?

1. ¿Qué piensa de los alimentos y bebidas disponibles en la escuela de sus hijos?  
***(Pause un momento para dar tiempo a que piense en su respuesta)***

PARA PEDIR MAS INFORMACION: ¿Qué piensa de los alimentos en la escuela, las máquinas vendedoras, tiendas estudiantiles, los alimentos que se usan para recaudar fondos, etc. ¿ Y ¿por qué?

2. ¿Qué opina acerca de las actividades físicas que ofrece la escuela de sus hijos?  
***(Pause un momento para dar tiempo a que piense en su respuesta)***

PARA PEDIR MAS INFORMACION: ¿Qué opina sobre las clases de educación física, las actividades durante el recreo, o los programas antes y después de la escuela, etc? Y ¿por qué?

3. Por favor dígame lo que sabe sobre los requisitos de educación física de las escuelas.

4. Por favor describa las maneras en las cuales ha estado involucrado en la escuela de sus hijos ***(Si los padres no han estado involucrados, pase a la pregunta #7)***

5. ¿Cuáles son las razones por las que se involucra en la escuela de sus hijos?

6. Por favor dígame cómo se siente cuando se involucra en la escuela de sus hijos?

7. ¿En que actividades han estado involucrados **otros** padres en la escuela de sus hijos? ***(Pause un momento para dar tiempo a que piense en su respuesta)***

PARA PEDIR MAS INFORMACION: Asociación de padres, concilios escolares, mesa directiva, voluntario en la clase, ayudante en los paseos, a recaudar fondos, etc.,

8. ¿Por qué piensa que **otros** padres deciden involucrarse en la escuela de sus hijos?

9. ¿Cuáles son algunas razones por las cuales los padres **NO** se involucran en la escuela de sus hijos? ***(Pause un momento para dar tiempo a que piense en su respuesta)***



PARA PEDIR MAS INFORMACION: Falta de tiempo, cuidado de niños, horarios de trabajo, incómodo con el personal escolar, si ha ofrecido su ayuda pero no ha tenido respuesta de la escuela, barreras de lenguaje, etc.?

De todas las razones por las cuales los padres no se involucran, ¿cuáles son las tres respuestas principales? **(Leerle de nuevo las ideas que mencionó en la pregunta #9, seguidas por las que usted le dio en la sección donde pedía más información).**

1<sup>era</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nda</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>era</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

Ahora le haré preguntas sobre cómo las escuelas pueden involucrar más a los padres de familia

10. Por favor dígame algunas de las maneras en que la escuela de sus hijos ha tratado de involucrar a los padres de familia **(haga una lista indicando si las respuesta son “Muy Efectivas, Un Poco Efectivas o No Son Efectivas” y por qué. Si el padre de familia NO sabe, escriba NO SABE y pase a la pregunta #11.**

Respuesta(s)	Muy efectivas/Un poco efectivas/No son Efectivas	¿Por qué?
--------------	--	-----------

11. Aparte de lo que la escuela de sus hijos ya hace para involucrar a los padres de familia, qué otras sugerencias podría ofrecer y ¿por qué?

PARA PEDIR MAS INFORMACION: ¿Cuáles son las mejores maneras de involucrar a los padres de familia? **(Lea las ideas dadas, seguidas por las mencionadas en la pregunta #10. Póngalas en orden 1era, 2nda 3era.)**

1<sup>era</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nda</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>era</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

12. ¿Cuáles son las mejores maneras en que la escuela de sus hijos puede comunicarse con usted y su familia? **(Pause un momento para dar tiempo a que piense en su respuesta)**

PARA PEDIR MAS INFORMACION: ¿Boletines escolares, llamadas por teléfono, correo electrónico, mensajes en el celular, cartas, eventos escolares? ¿Otras maneras?

De todas las maneras para comunicarse con los padres mencionadas arriba, para usted personalmente, ¿cuáles son las tres mejores?

1<sup>era</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nda</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>era</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_

Gracias por compartir conmigo sus pensamientos y opiniones sobre lo que las escuelas pueden hacer para involucrar a los padres de familia. Ahora le voy a hacer algunas preguntas sobre lo que algunos padres sienten acerca de los esfuerzos en nutrición y actividad física en las escuelas. Por ejemplo, el ofrecerle a los estudiantes alimentos saludables en lugar de de alimentos y bebidas altos en grasa y azúcar, o el incrementar la cantidad o la calidad de educación física y las oportunidades de actividad física para los estudiantes.

13. ¿Usted sabe acerca de la política de bienestar que hay en su escuela de sus hijos? **(Si contesto que SI, pregunte: ¿Qué cubre esta política??Si contestó que no, lea la descripción y vea si esto ayuda a que la información sea más familiar. Si ahora si la recuerdan, pregunte de nuevo ¿Qué cubre esta política?)**

Permítame darle una breve descripción de lo que es una política de bienestar

Cualquier distrito escolar que participe en un programa de nutrición federal es requerido de adoptar una política de bienestar estudiantil. De acuerdo a los requisitos, los distritos escolares deben forjar metas de educación sobre nutrición, actividad física, el proveer alimentos en el plantel escolar, y otras actividades diseñadas para promover el bienestar de los estudiantes. Además, los distritos tienen como requisito el involucrar a un amplio grupo de individuos en el desarrollo de la política y de tener un plan para medir la implementación de dicha política.

14. En que maneras cree que los padres de familia como usted estarían interesados en involucrarse para mejorar la nutrición y las oportunidades de actividad física, incluyendo las clases de educación física en la escuela de sus hijos? **(Pause un momento para dar tiempo a que piense en su respuesta)**

13. Le voy a leer algunos otros ejemplos de como los padres de familia pueden involucrarse en la nutrición y esfuerzos de actividad física en la escuela de sus hijos. Favor de contestar si esta interesado en involucrarse en estas maneras y dígame por que sí o por qué no.

Estoy interesada/o en...

A. Participar en un grupo de padres que se reúne regularmente para platicar sobre los temas de nutrición y actividad física en la escuela . **(Marque SI o NO y luego pregunte por qué sí o por qué no?)**

- SI  
 NO

B. Hablar con los miembros de la mesa directiva escolar sobre la importancia de mejorar la nutrición y oportunidades de actividad física para los estudiantes. **(Marque SI o NO y luego pregunte por qué sí o por qué no?)**

- SI  
 NO

C. Presentarle al personal escolar, estudiantes, y/o padres de familia, ideas para recaudar fondos que no involucren el vender alimentos que no son saludables. **(Marque SI o NO y luego pregunte por qué sí o por qué no?)**

- SI  
 NO

D. Comunicarme con otros padres para involucrarlos o ayudarles a entender por qué estos cambios están ocurriendo o por qué son necesarios en la escuela de sus hijos. **(Marque SI o NO y luego pregunte por qué sí o por qué no?)**

- SI  
 NO

14. ¿Hay algo más que le gustaría agregar o aclarar antes de terminar?

Gracias Sra. \_\_\_\_\_ por participar en esta entrevista. Su participación significa mucho para nosotros. Para asegurarnos de que su certificado de \$40 para un súper mercado le llegue a su casa, por favor déme su domicilio.

Nuevamente, gracias!

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

Domicilio: \_\_\_\_\_

Ciudad: \_\_\_\_\_ Código postal: \_\_\_\_\_

Número de Teléfono: \_\_\_\_\_

Súper mercados más cercanos: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX E**

**STAKEHOLDER SURVEY:  
PURPOSE, KEY QUESTIONS, AND OBJECTIVES**

## APPENDIX E:

### Stakeholder Survey: Purpose, Key Questions, and Objectives

#### **Project Purpose**

The purpose of this project is three-fold:

- 5) To educate and engage parents who are actively and non-actively involved in school and community decision-making processes from low income communities to become aware of school wellness requirements and expected changes to their children's school environment.
- 6) To give parents the skills to advocate and be proactive participants when those changes are not occurring.
- 7) To expand parent awareness of advocacy opportunities in their communities.

#### **Primary Audience**

Parents of school-aged children from low-income communities throughout California with an emphasis on parents from existing TCE-funded communities.

#### **Secondary Audience**

Parent stakeholder groups

#### **Key Questions for Secondary Audience**

- 1) How do parent stakeholder groups engage parents?
- 2) Are parent stakeholder groups identifying strategies to engage parents in the implementation and evaluation of school wellness policies?
- 3) What existing materials do parent stakeholder groups have related to engaging parents around the issue of school wellness policies?
- 4) What effective methods do parent stakeholder groups use to communicate with culturally and linguistically diverse parents?

#### **Objectives**

- 1) Identify successful strategies used by parent stakeholder groups to get parents involved.
- 2) Identify the barriers or problems parent stakeholder groups face when working with parents.
- 3) Identify existing work and materials related to engaging parents in nutrition and physical education and activity.
- 4) Find out how parent stakeholder groups communicate with culturally and linguistically diverse parents.
- 5) Identify ways parent stakeholder groups disseminate information and materials to parents.
- 6) To identify gaps in parent stakeholder groups' knowledge that warrant education and training about engaging parents in implementing and evaluating their school's Local Wellness Policy.

**APPENDIX F**

**STAKEHOLDER KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW**

**SURVEY TOOL**

## Appendix F:

### Stakeholder Key Informant Interview Survey Tool

Name: _____	Date: _____
Organization: _____	
Interviewer: _____	

#### **Introduction**

Hi and good (morning, afternoon, evening).

My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

Thank you Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ for agreeing to be interviewed.

I really appreciate it that you are taking time from your busy schedule to meet with me today.

Again, thank you.

#### **Purpose**

California Project LEAN is currently conducting a parent engagement campaign. We are conducting interviews with parents to better understand how to support parents to increase healthy foods and beverages, physical activity, and physical education in their children's schools. We are also conducting key informant interviews with parent stakeholders, much like yourself, to gather information about how to help parents become more involved. You are among a list of experts in the field whom we believe are most helpful in this endeavor.

#### **Procedure**

I will be asking you a number of questions. These questions will ask for your thoughts and opinions. I would like to hear what you think and feel about these topics, whether it is positive or negative. There are no right or wrong answers, and your honest opinions are appreciated.

To make sure I get everything you say, I would also like to audio tape our conversation. Is this okay with you? Results from this interview will be combined with other interviews to help us develop educational materials and future trainings. Your name and address

will be separated from your responses so that the information you share will not be linked back to you. This interview is confidential and the information you give will be placed in a locked cabinet only to be accessed by the principal investigator.

The interview should last no longer than 30 minutes.

I know I have covered a lot. But, before we get started, do you have any questions?

1. Please tell me what types of issues your organization addresses that require parent participation.
2. What successful strategies has your organization used to reach and engage parents? PROBE: What about incentives? How effective are they and why?
3. What about ways to reach parents and engage them in health-related issues, like nutrition and physical education and physical activity? PROBE: How effective are they and why?
4. What successful approaches have you used to reach and engage Spanish-speaking parents? PROBE: Please tell me how effective these are and why.
5. Please identify the steps you would take to **keep** parents involved and why.
6. What are the biggest problems or barriers you have encountered when implementing strategies to get and keep parents involved?
7. What could you do to overcome them?
8. Please share with me the most creative ways you disseminate information to parents, including Spanish-speaking parents. PROBE: Are these effective and if so, why?
9. In your line of work, what do think are the least effective ways **other** groups use when trying to reach out to parents and engage them in active participation?
10. Please tell me what you know about school wellness policies. ***(If person does not know, read the description below. If person does recall, read the question again and allow time for an answer. If they do know, proceed to question #11.)***



Please allow me to give you a brief description.

Any school district participating in a federal nutrition program is mandated to adopt a policy on student wellness. According to the requirements for the local wellness policy, school districts must set goals for nutrition education, physical activity, campus food provision and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness. Additionally, districts are required to involve a broad group of individuals in policy development and to have a plan for measuring policy implementation.

11. What tools or resources does your organization have that focus primarily on engaging parents around the issue of school wellness policies?
12. What other organizations' tools or resources have you come across that address engaging parents in their schools' wellness policies?
13. Because California Project LEAN is in the process of developing trainings and a toolkit that address how to engage parents in school wellness policies, what topics do you think the trainings and toolkit should cover?
14. Can you name a few organizations you think would benefit from our trainings and toolkit?
15. Would you be interested in participating in trainings that focused on engaging parents in the implementation and evaluation phases of school wellness policies? What about acquiring a toolkit?
16. Are there any other ideas or comments you would like to add or clarify before we end?

Thank you Ms./Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ for doing this interview.