



THE CHAMPLAIN DECLARATION:

A Call to Action for Physically Active &
Healthy Eating Environments in Schools

VISION STATEMENT:

The nine School Boards in the Champlain District of Ontario, in partnership with the Champlain Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Network (CCPN), commit to creating healthy school environments so that school-aged children (aged 4 to 18) in the Champlain District can be physically active and can make healthy food choices at school on a daily basis.

GOALS

The goals in signing *The Champlain Declaration: A Call to Action for Physically Active & Healthy Eating Environments in Schools* are to:

1. Formally bring together the nine School Boards in the Champlain District to solidify the collective commitment to ensuring healthy school environments for children and youth across the Champlain District of Ontario;
2. Foster communication and sharing in relation to Board-level healthy eating and physical activity initiatives between the nine School Boards through participation annually in a regional committee; and,
3. Demonstrate regional commitment and leadership in addressing issues of physical activity and healthy eating among school-aged children.

APPROACH

This Declaration is grounded in a Comprehensive School Health (CSH) approach to health promotion in schools. This CSH approach is made up of the following four components (as drawn from the *Canadian Consensus Statement, 2007*):

- **Teaching and Learning:** the basic way students and staff receive information about health, wellness, health risks, and health issues;
- **Health and Other Support Services:** the availability and accessibility of health and other support services that lead to early identification and treatment;
- **Supportive Social Environment:** the mental health and social support available within the school and in relation to the home and community; and,
- **Healthy Physical Environment:** a clean, safe, health-promoting environment to prevent injuries and disease as well as enabling healthier choices.

RATIONALE

WHY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & HEALTHY EATING?

According to the 2004 Canadian Community Health Survey, 1 in 4 children and youth are overweight or obese. Children are spending less time engaged in physical activity, while food environments abound with energy-dense, low-nutrient food high in sugar and fat. Lack of adequate physical activity and poor nutrition are also linked to increased risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and other chronic illness.

WHY THE SCHOOL-BASED SETTING?

The school setting is widely recognized as an important influencing environment with respect to promoting healthy weights among school-aged children. Recent research also supports the link between nutrition, physical activity and improved student performance.

WHY NOW?

At the *Champlain Healthy School-aged Children Summit* held in October 2007, we heard leaders in education, health, pediatric research and the community recommend comprehensive school-based policy approaches in areas such as healthy eating and physical activity as one action to take in addressing the issue of childhood obesity. This initiative seeks to address this recommendation, although it is only one action of a larger undertaking. The CCPN is simultaneously working on an awareness campaign aimed at educating parents on the importance of physical activity and healthy eating, as well as how to facilitate skills development opportunities for educators, parents, and children alike.

WHY A "REGIONAL" APPROACH?

Each School Board is making strides in addressing physical activity and healthy eating among their students. This Declaration is intended to apply within the context of each Board's existing progress, but also to catalyze a collective effort across Boards. We want to "raise the bar" as a region by taking action together to ensure Champlain children and youth are eating well and are active on a daily basis.





ACTION ITEMS

Signatories agree to work towards the following action items:

SCHOOL BOARDS AGREE TO:

- 1 Assign a key contact to participate in a region-wide, Champlain District **Healthy Schools Steering Committee** that will include representation from each School Board and the CCPN (inclusive of each of the four regional Public Health Units). Other relevant partners may be included as appropriate. This committee will meet approximately once a year with a mandate to share resources and best practices in the area of healthy eating and physical activity; and,
- 2 Support the development of an annual Summary Report and District Action Plan which outlines current Board-level activities and approaches and identifies future action priorities relating to healthy eating and physical activity. This would be accomplished through completion of a reporting template on an annual basis.
Suggested priority areas for inclusion in the Summary Report could include:
 - a. Options and partnerships to develop **healthy fundraising alternatives** at the school level;
 - b. Collaborations with Food Service providers, Public Health Units, and other relevant partners to institute **healthy nutrition guidelines** based on existing, evidence-informed standards and criteria (e.g. Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in Public Health School Nutrition Workgroup Steering Committee) as part of Food Service contracts for cafeterias, vending machines, tuck shops, canteens, and/or catering as they are renewed;
 - c. Options to enhance teachers' ability to implement physical activity and healthy eating curriculum through **skills development opportunities**;
 - d. Inclusion of a **vision statement**, such as the one provided above, into individual School Board strategic plans, accountability agreements, and/or annual school improvement plans of the next calendar year; and,
 - e. Support for **evaluation mechanisms** that track School Board progress of policy interventions and/or programming in the area of healthy eating and physical activity.

THE CCPN AGREES TO:

- 1 Assign a key contact(s) from the CCPN, including representatives from each of the four Public Health Units, to participate in a Champlain District **Healthy Schools Steering Committee**. This includes facilitating the opportunity to gather the committee on, at minimum, an annual basis to share progress, successes and challenges to date;
- 2 In partnership with the School Boards, based on information supplied through the reporting template, produce an annual Summary Report on current Board-level practices and progress on identified priority areas for action associated with healthy eating and physical activity;
- 3 Provide School Boards with **policy and program models** from the Champlain District and Canada when requested;
- 4 Provide healthy eating and physical activity **resources** to School Boards when requested (lead: Public Health);
- 5 Facilitate **increased "linkages"** between School Boards, CCPN partners (such as public health), and other relevant partners (e.g. community, recreation, and food industry); and,
- 6 Link School Boards to other **complementary activities** being undertaken in the region that relate to physical activity and healthy eating within the school-aged child population.

DECLARATION STATEMENT

The Champlain Declaration: A Call to Action for Physically Active & Healthy Eating Environments in Schools formalizes the commitment of the nine Champlain District School Boards, in partnership with the CCPN, to work towards creating healthy school environments for Champlain children and youth.

We, the undersigned, are committed to the vision, goals and action items as outlined in this Declaration.

CHAMPLAIN DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARDS

William J. Gartland
Director of Education
Catholic District School Board
of Eastern Ontario

Lise Bourgeois
Director of Education
Conseil des écoles catholiques de
langue française du Centre-Est

François Benoit
Director of Education
Conseil des écoles publiques de
L'est de L'Ontario

Roger Paul
Director of Education
Conseil scolaire de district catholique
de L'Est ontarien

James McCracken
Director of Education
Ottawa Catholic School Board

Lyall M. Thomson
Director of Education
Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

Michele Arbour
Director of Education
Renfrew County Catholic District
School Board

Roger Clarke
Director of Education
Renfrew County District School Board

David K. Thomas
Director of Education
Upper Canada District School Board

CHAMPLAIN CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE PREVENTION NETWORK

Dr. Andrew Pipe
Chair
Champlain Cardiovascular
Disease Prevention Network

CHAMPLAIN DISTRICT PUBLIC HEALTH UNITS

Dr. Paul Roumeliotis
Medical Officer of Health
Eastern Ontario Health Unit

Dr. Isra Levy
Medical Officer of Health
Ottawa Public Health

Dr. Anne Carter
Medical Officer of Health
Leeds, Grenville and Lanark
District Health Unit

Dr. Michael Corriveau
Medical Officer of Health
Renfrew County and District
Health Unit



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STROKE
FOUNDATION
OF ONTARIO**

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The Champlain Declaration was made possible through funding from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario.



THE CHAMPLAIN
CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE
PREVENTION NETWORK

The CCPN is a partnership which includes Ottawa Public Health, Eastern Ontario Health Unit, Renfrew County and District Health Unit, Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, and the Healthy Active Living and Obesity Research Group at CHEO, among others. In addition to public health's mandate to work with schools on health promotion and policy development activities, the CCPN as a whole is committed to establishing relationships with the nine School Boards of the region to support progressive action related to physical activity and healthy eating among school-aged children.