



Frequently Asked Questions

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What is Smart Source?

Smart Source is a comprehensive school-level inventory of health policies and practices with items that focus on the following nine content areas associated with both the [Coordinated School Health Model](#) and the [Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model](#):

- General Health Policies and Practices
- Nutrition
- Physical Education/Physical Activity
- Health Education
- Health Services
- Counseling, Psychological, Social Services
- Healthy and Safe School Environment
- Family, Community, and Student Involvement
- Staff Health Promotion

The primary purpose of Smart Source is to provide schools with a tool that inventories the best practices related to school health and safety in order to inform school and district policies and practices. We know that healthy students perform better academically and Smart Source provides schools with specific guidance they can use to improve their school health efforts and ultimately, impact the health of their students. Additionally, Smart Source serves as a statewide data collection effort that yields state and regional data to identify strengths and gaps related to health and inform how resources, such as funding and professional development, are allocated.

How was Smart Source developed?

The Smart Source tool and methodology have been developed by numerous stakeholders including school and district representatives, researchers, evaluators, funders, state agency representatives and other school health and safety experts. This diverse group informed how Smart Source might best fulfill its purpose, which includes: 1) to serve as an inventory for schools of their health and wellness practices and policies, 2) to reduce the burden on schools by streamlining multiple school health tools into one effort, 3) to improve the quality of school-level health policy and practice data collected, and 4) to increase the number of schools assessing their health policies and practices.

How much time is involved in being a Smart Source participant?

During the 2015-16 administration, the majority of site coordinators spent 2 hours or less to complete the Smart Source tool. This includes time spent [meeting with other school staff](#) as a team to gather responses and inputting responses into the Smart Source platform.

We also recommend that school teams spend time using data from the Smart Source to inform action around improving school health efforts. This may include reviewing your data upon receipt of [your report in February 2017](#), attending one of the data use trainings slated for Spring 2017 to learn how to

interpret and take action with your results, and working with your team to develop an action plan for addressing gaps in health policies and practices.

Who at my school should complete it?

Everyone who is interested should provide input! While we ask you to designate one [site coordinator](#), schools that complete the survey as a team achieve higher accuracy on their responses and more meaningful results. We strongly recommend that the site coordinator convene or, at a minimum, gather input from:

- administrators
- PE teachers
- health educators
- school nurses/school nurse consultants
- school counselors
- food service staff
- members of the school wellness team
- students, parents, and community partners (bonus!)

If you're able to hold a 1 to 2-hour meeting with these members of your school community, you can fill out a paper version of the survey together and, as an added bonus, start a conversation about your health and wellness practices. The site coordinator should then input the group's responses into the online survey for submission.

What is a site coordinator?

The site coordinator is the "team lead" for the Smart Source survey. This person agrees to:

1. Ensure the online survey is completed and submitted by January 20, 2017.
2. Hold a 1 to 2-hour meeting with the wellness team. (Don't have a wellness team? Meet with [these suggested staff members](#).) Be sure to invite families, students, and community partners to this meeting as well!
3. If a meeting is not possible, coordinate with staff members to provide responses to survey items in their areas of expertise.
4. Receive your school's report in February 2017, and disseminate to your school and district community.

What are the benefits of participating?

The site coordinator will receive the school-level Smart Source report in February 2017, which summarizes the school's results alongside comparison data from the state, and when available, regional and district levels, and how these align with best practice. Additionally, school staff will also have an

opportunity to attend a regional data use training in Spring 2017 and learn strategies for interpreting their Smart Source data and using those together with other complementary data sources.

Since responses to questions are not scored in any way, the process of completing Smart Source and reviewing your results allows your school an opportunity to take an objective look at gaps in school health and wellness to inform and motivate improvements.

How do we participate?

Send an email to Christine Williams (cwilliams@coloradoedinitiative.org) expressing your interest. Include your school name, and the name and email address of your site coordinator.

We focus on academics, not health and wellness. Why should we participate?

It's not only a great way to see what other schools are doing in Colorado and your region, but also to begin a conversation about what is possible in your school. You will be able to use your results as a baseline, so that when you complete the inventory in future years, you can see change and growth in your health and wellness efforts. Finally, participating in Smart Source can help you start to build mindsets and cultivate a culture that aligns with the broader shift toward valuing and measuring non-academic outcomes and how those lead to gains in academic outcomes as referenced in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

What is the time frame we have to complete Smart Source?

The administration window opens **September 6, 2016** and closes **January 20, 2017**. You can decide to participate at any point during this timeframe – [just email us to get started!](#)

Do we have to complete it all at once?

No. The survey link you receive will be unique to your school, so you can stop at any point, close your internet browser, and all the answers will be saved. Simply click on the survey link again to open the survey where you left off.

What if I don't know how to answer some of the survey items?

Ask a colleague! All of the items are made to be answerable by school-level personnel. We provide recommendations on various school staff members who can support completion of Smart Source, noted in the descriptions under each section header throughout the tool. Even better, **invite everyone to a 1 to 2-hour meeting** where you can fill out the paper version of the survey together.

We already do Healthy Kids Colorado Survey. How is this different?

Smart Source measures the policies and practices in place at the school. Healthy Kids Colorado measures student attitudes and behaviors about their health. Smart Source is completed once per school by staff members. Healthy Kids Colorado is completed by students individually.

While they are distinctly different surveys, Smart Source and Healthy Kids Colorado results are often used together by schools to understand how their school-level efforts affect their students' behaviors. By combining the power of school-level and student-level data, schools can more accurately identify gaps and priorities in their health efforts. Thus, we recommend that schools administer Healthy Kids Colorado in tandem with Smart Source for a robust picture of how their current efforts are impacting the attitudes and behaviors of their students.

We already do other health surveys. How is this different?

Smart Source is unique to Colorado, and serves as the standardized tool for assessing school health policies and practices. While it is completely voluntary, the more schools and districts that commit to this one tool, the more consistency in school health data statewide, allowing for more meaningful comparisons for all. Having statewide support and participation will allow educators, funders, and agencies to all work from the same "play book."

Who will see my school's data?

Both the graphic report and spreadsheet with your school's data will be sent to your school's [site coordinator](#). We encourage the site coordinator to share reports and data with various staff at your school including but not limited to, administration, health and wellness staff, and classroom teachers.

Your school's results may also be shared with a district staff member or team focused on health and wellness efforts (e.g., district wellness coordinator, food services director, health services staff, student support services staff). These data may also be shared with leadership in your district, including superintendents, assessment and research personnel, and other central office staff (as appropriate).

If your district has staff who have interest in supporting schools to understand and implement best practices related to school health, then your school's data may also be sent to those district-level staff.

The Colorado Education Initiative (CEI) will not share your school's results outside your school or district for any reason. The sharing of identifiable data outside of the school and district is as the discretion of the schools. State and local agencies, nonprofits, program providers, or any other entity will only have access to aggregated results of all Smart Source participants. We hope the aggregated data will be used by these entities to better allocate resources, and to start conversations between these entities and the schools they support. From there, schools can determine whether to share their data with the entities they partner with.

Additionally, keep in mind that no student-level data or personally identifiable information is collected by Smart Source.

These data privacy considerations described above are determined by CEI's Research and Impact team and informed by current best practices.

How does Smart Source streamline multiple data collection efforts?

Smart Source streamlines multiple efforts into one system so that all schools are assessing the same best practice strategies that have the greatest impact on health and wellness. There are multiple efforts to collect school health policy and practice data, and many Colorado schools and districts have experienced "data measurement overload." Other schools and districts do not assess health policies and practices and lack access to a reliable tool to do so.

Smart Source has replaced the Healthy School Champions Score Card as the school health assessment tool for Colorado. Additionally, Smart Source is working with other efforts, such as the School Health Profiles out of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to integrate key items so schools aren't approached separately to participate in that effort.

Lastly, many indicators assessed with Smart Source have been identified for shared measurement by Colorado Healthy Schools Collective Impact, which aims to systematically support schools in their health and wellness efforts, including consistent data collection across schools.

How is Smart Source funded?

Smart Source is funded through a five year grant from Kaiser Permanente and is a collaborative effort between The Colorado Education Initiative (CEI), the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE).

Has Smart Source undergone a third party review?

The Smart Source tool and methodology received formal IRB approval in 2016. Additionally, the Educational Data Advisory Committee (EDAC) reviewed the tool in methodology in 2014 and 2015 and approved its administration in Colorado schools.