

BlueCross Names Winners of \$10,000 Shape the State Grants

*Twenty middle schools earn nationally acclaimed
PE curriculum, equipment*

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — The decisions are in. Out of nearly 100 Tennessee middle schools that applied, 20 are being notified today that they are being awarded [Shape the State](#) grants to improve their physical education programs. The grants, valued at \$10,000 each are funded by the BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Health Foundation.

The grant provides the nationally acclaimed SPARK physical education curriculum, teacher training and equipment for each recipient school. In addition each school will receive \$1,000 to spend on PE, nutrition and wellness efforts.

“These twenty Shape the State schools demonstrated a need and the desire to take their students’ health to a new level,” said Calvin Anderson, BlueCross senior vice president of corporate affairs, and executive director of the Foundation. “We look forward to seeing them using these tools to transform their students’ fitness this year.”

According to the state Department of Health, about 40 percent of Tennessee children are overweight or obese. Obesity dramatically increases a person’s risk for [dangerous health conditions](#), such as Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and cancer. The Shape the State grants continue a longstanding practice of BlueCross’ Tennessee Health Foundation supporting efforts to fight childhood obesity in the state.

In November, faculty and staff from the Shape the State schools will gather for training from SPARK professionals on using the program with their students. In addition, they will receive complete SPARK curriculum materials, as well as accompanying exercise equipment.

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SPARK was launched in 1989 after being developed by researchers at San Diego State University. Since then, its evidence-based curriculum has been used in public schools, YMCAs and other settings across the nation.

The Shape the State grant winners are:

- Auburn School, Auburntown
- Camden Junior High School, Camden
- Central Middle School, Wartburg
- Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy, Chattanooga
- Chester County Jr. High, Henderson
- Concord Academy, Memphis
- Cornerstone Middle School, Baxter
- Eagleton Middle School, Maryville
- East Middle/Fayette Co. Schools, Somerville
- East Ridge Middle Hamblen County Schools, Whitesburg
- Haywood County School District, Brownsville
- IB Tigrett Middle School, Jackson
- Incarnation Catholic School, Collierville
- McEwen Jr. High School, McEwen
- Ocoee Middle School, Cleveland
- Rogersville Middle School, Rogersville
- Sequatchie County Middle School, Dunlap
- South Pittsburg Academy, South Pittsburg
- Union City School System, Union City
- West Middle School, Tullahoma

About Tennessee Health Foundation, Inc.

The BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Health Foundation, Inc. (THF) was established in December, 2003 as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation organized to promote the philanthropic mission of BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee. THF awards grants focused on high-impact initiatives across the state, which promote healthy lifestyle choices and help control health care costs for all Tennessee residents. Working with civic and economic partners, THF is dedicated to the support of research, innovative programs and creative approaches to improve the health and quality of life of Tennesseans for generations to come.

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