

To:

In an effort to address the obesity epidemic in South Dakota, the Department of Health (DOH) along with the Department of Education (DOE) will partner with schools to collect current height and weight data on school age children. In addition, we have resources to assist with data collection. **Please consider working with us to address this issue.**

School Height and Weight Data: This school year marks our 21st year collecting heights and weights of children 5-18 years of age. The voluntary program has been underway since 1998 as an effort to track childhood obesity in South Dakota. It serves as a basis to develop state and local strategies and is a way for participating schools to quantify the problem of childhood obesity.

The obesity rate of SD students has remained level over the past few years. In the 2016-2017 school year the obesity rate was 16.0%. This information is monitored annually with a goal of decreasing obesity to 14% by 2020.

To save school staff time and ensure there is a representative population of our students we have included 2 instruction sheets: **Guidelines for weighing and measuring students in school settings** and **Directions for completing school height and weight data** using the Infinite Campus system.

Free Measuring Equipment: The DOH is again accepting applications for equipment (wall-mounted measuring board and balance beam scale) if needed for your school to participate in the School Height and Weight Data project. There is a limited supply available. Please contact Sue Alverson at Susan.Alverson@state.sd.us about the equipment.

We look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,

Sue Alverson

Sue Alverson, RD, LN
Nutrition and Physical Activity Co-Directors

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