



DIVISION OF FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH

Child & Family Services | Disease Prevention & Health Promotion

TO: Superintendents, Principals, School Nurses, PE teachers or other school health personnel
FROM: SD Department of Health
Larissa Skjonsberg, Nutrition & Physical Activity Program Director
DATE: September 1, 2022
RE: 2022-2023 School Height & Weight survey

In an effort to address the obesity epidemic in South Dakota, the Department of Health (DOH) partners with schools to collect current height and weight data on school age children. In addition, we have resources to assist with data collection. We appreciate your assistance in helping us address the obesity issue.

School Height and Weight Data: This school year marks our 24th year collecting heights and weights of children 5-19 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.

In the 2020-2021 school year the obesity rate was 20.84%, but only represented 16,881 students, down considerably from years past. This information is monitored annually with a goal of decreasing obesity to 15.5% by 2025.

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 '**Instructions for completing school height and weight data**' using the Infinite Campus system.

***FREE* Measuring Equipment:** The DOH is 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** so not all applications will be awarded. If interested in applying complete the '**Application for Anthropometric Equipment form**'.

For information about the project and additional resources visit the link on the Department of Health's website: <https://doh.sd.gov/statistics/school-height-weight.aspx>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Larissa Skjonsberg'.

Larissa Skjonsberg
Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Director
South Dakota Department of Health