



Breaking Physical Activity Barriers in Kershaw County School District

October 2023

Thanks to Kershaw County School District's ([KCSD](#)) dedication to support healthy learners and a healthy community, the elementary playgrounds and walking areas are open for public use after school hours. The local school board passed the [Open Community Use of School Recreational Areas](#) policy in August 2022. With this policy in place, staff, students, their families, and the community have access to free, safe, and conveniently located places to be physically active.

"This is a win for schools, children and the community. It provides access for children and community members to play and be active," stated KCSD Superintendent Harrison Goodwin.

"We know healthy children are better learners. This is a great example of partners working together for a healthier community."

- Harrison Goodwin, KCSD Superintendent

Local Open Community Use expert, Robin Cooper with DHEC Midlands Community Engagement Team, was a critical partner who provided training and technical assistance to the community and school district wellness champions so that they were prepared to present the policy to their local school board. Community partners included [LiveWell](#)

[Kershaw](#), [KC Trails](#), and [Wholespire Kershaw County](#). In addition, Robin worked directly with the KCSD's Coordinator of Nursing Services, Elizabeth Starling, who led the effort in the district.

"I was grateful for the opportunity to partner with Kershaw County Schools," Robin shared. "Physical activity is important for better health outcomes but many don't have access to places to be physically active. This policy offers Kershaw County residents the opportunity to engage in physical activity for better health outcomes."

"We are so fortunate to have wonderful partners who care for the health and well-being of our children and families in Kershaw County," Elizabeth shared. "We know that healthy and physically active children learn better. This is a great way to encourage and support physical activity and will make an impact in our community for generations to come."

In addition to supporting Open Community Use, KCSD is also a SC FitnessGram Influencer School District. They are working with DHEC's SC FitnessGram to explore how using students' fitness data and proven practices that support physical activity can improve health outcomes. Their successes are being shared statewide to support students from head to heart.



Join the movement to support students' health from head to heart: scdhec.gov/fitnessgram