



Partner agencies include the Big Sur International Marathon, Salinas SAMBA Soccer, Cal State Monterey Bay Farm to School Gardens Program, Monterey County Office of Education, Monterey County Health Department, Boys and Girls Clubs, American Heart Association, Alisal 5 a Day Program, and more. Program is funded by major grants from Salinas Valley Memorial Health Care System/CMN, Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula and the American Heart Association.

Monterey County Program has been identified as a pilot for California by our State leaders in order to leverage private/public partnerships across the state for increased funding for healthier school food alternatives and for our schools' nutrition, aged, wellness and physical activity programs.

Our larger statewide strategy is being developed in partnership with the 52 member California County Superintendents Association (CCSESA) which represents 1000 school districts. This aspect is lead by CCSESA Executive Director Glen Thomas and our County Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Bill Barr, who sits on the HELP Leadership Council.

We have already forged a Tri-county partnership with San Benito and Santa Cruz for this program's expansion in the coming year. We are now identifying 5-6 Counties in California where our program can be replicated. We will focus on strong Ag-based Counties. The Monterey County model will potentially unite California's public schools with a strategic and unified strategy which provides legislators and food growers and shippers with economy of scale and a focused, not fragmented, system to work with schools to solve the obesity crisis and provide healthier school meals by bundling school food purchasing power across the region and the State.

With the assistance and support of our HELP parent organization, the Grower-Shipper Association of Monterey County, we will activate other similar Grower-Shipper Associations within the other Ag Counties we partner with to leverage the strength of the State's Ag industry behind this effort for the State's schools.

We have secured the support of the California State Superintendent Jack O'Connell's office in this effort which aligns with his Healthy Children Ready to Learn platform. Also, the Governor's office is aware of our efforts thru his Chief Advisor, Katie Whelan, as is the office of First Lady, Maria Shriver. We are working to build on this awareness and turn it into true support in the coming months.

Congressman Sam Farr has done a letter to the Governor in support of the Monterey County Pilot Wellness Policy Program becoming a model for the State. He has pledged his active support as we proceed with any Federal piece of this program.