



Kansas State High School Activities Association

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Member of the National Federation of State High School Associations

September 15, 2017

TO: KAY Sponsors and Principals
FROM: Cheryl Gleason, KAY State Director



RE: **BE THE SPARK CHALLENGE**

In an effort to get Kansas teens to value the importance of leading an active lifestyle, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Kansas and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Kansas City are proud to partner with the KAY Alumni Association (KAYAN) to launch the BE THE SPARK challenge. This new program supports Kansas Youth as they raise awareness amongst their peers regarding the importance of being physically active.

With an eye towards improving the quality of life in Kansas for future generations, BCBSKS and BCBSKC are providing KAYAN (Kansas Association for Youth Alumni Network) a two-year \$165,000 grant for KAY clubs to help them create new places in their communities where they can be active.

The kick off for the **BE THE SPARK** challenge took place this summer at KAY Leadership Camp with 249 campers and staff members celebrating this exciting opportunity. On August 15 all KAY clubs received a special mailing with information about BE THE SPARK. The following link will provide you with a booklet in that mailing that addresses the following:

What is **BE THE SPARK**; Why We Need **BE THE SPARK**; Why KAY Is Involved; Why Your KAY Club Should Consider Participating; Where Do We Start; etc.

<http://www.kshsaa.org/Public/KAY/BeTheSpark/InformationBooklet.pdf>

On October 1 KAY clubs will receive another **BE THE SPARK** mailing, including but not limited to the following:

- Talking points for visiting with your principal to seek their support as you move forward
- A survey tool to use in seeking input from your student body, etc.
- A list of possible ideas for “your challenge”, intended to trigger additional ideas
- A pre-Regional Conference **BE THE SPARK** challenge for all KAY clubs
- Information about a “Letter of Intent”, challenge checklist/timeline, etc.

In the meantime, we encourage KAY clubs to

- Engage in a social media campaign to increase awareness for the need for physical activity as a part of a healthy lifestyle
- Continue participating in the 6 challenges in the **BE THE SPARK** Leaders Action Guide (also located on back page of attached link).

We are excited and honored that BCBSKS and BCBSKC have identified KAY clubs to undertake this fantastic endeavor! **BE THE SPARK** provides a tremendous opportunity for KAY student leaders to DREAM BIG as they brainstorm and collaborate with their peers to ignite a spirit that will make a difference in their school and community for a healthier Kansas.