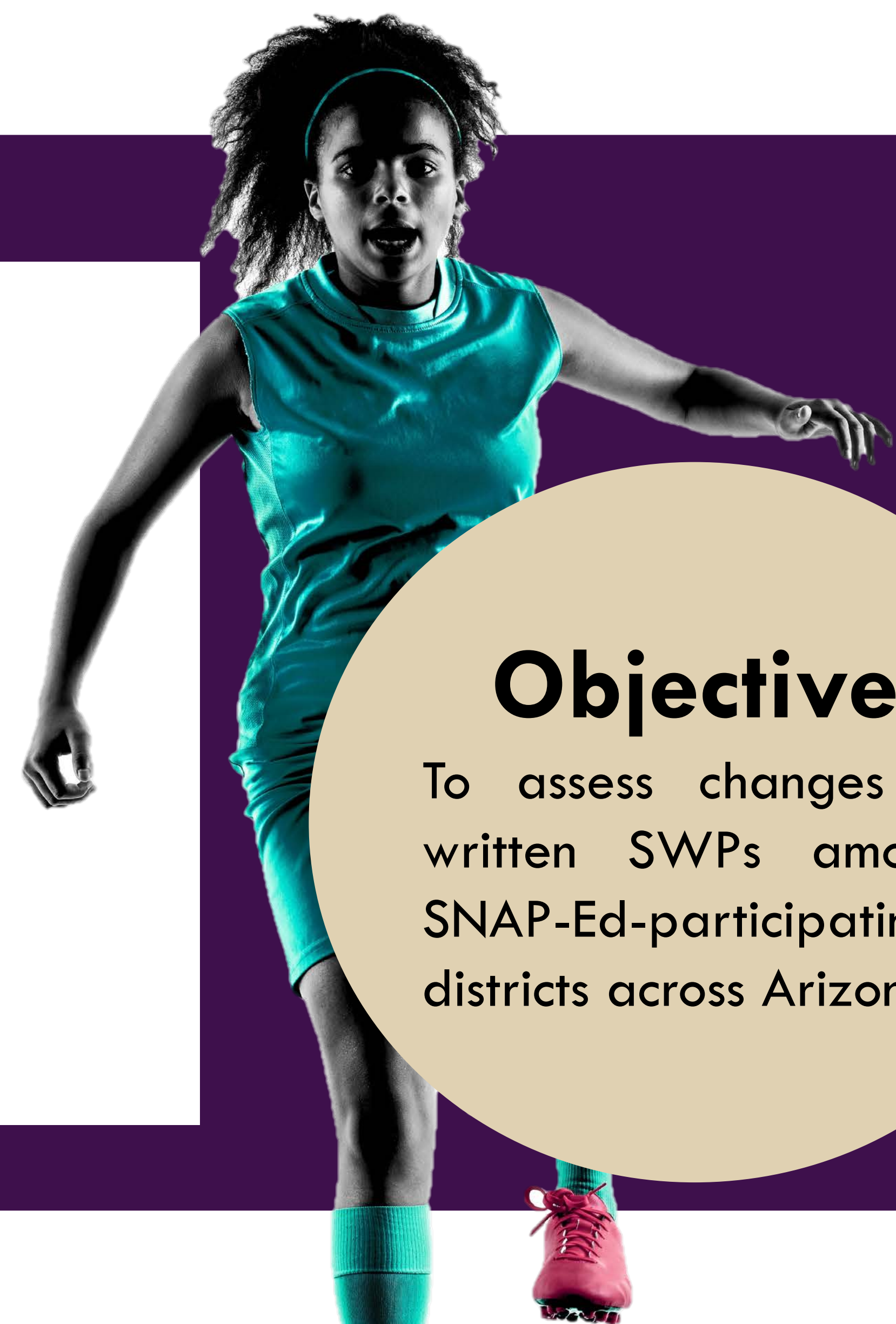




# A Statewide School Wellness Policy Assessment Finds Marked Improvements among SNAP-Ed-Supported School Districts

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**Objective**  
To assess changes in written SWPs among SNAP-Ed-participating districts across Arizona.

## Background

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) encourages nutrition and physical activity in districts and schools where over 50% of students receive free-and-reduced-price lunch. In Arizona, the AZ Health Zone implements SNAP-Ed, which includes support for developing, implementing, and evaluating districts' school wellness policies (SWPs).

## Methods

**FY16:**  
Oct 2015-Sept 2016

- Local SNAP-Ed agencies in 13 counties submitted 57 SWPs to state evaluation team for WellSAT scoring
- They received back scores & custom recommendations

**FY17:**  
Oct 2016-Sept 2017

- Local agencies shared results & recommendations with districts
- Local agencies supported SWP revision among interested districts

**FY18:**  
Oct 2017-Sept 2018

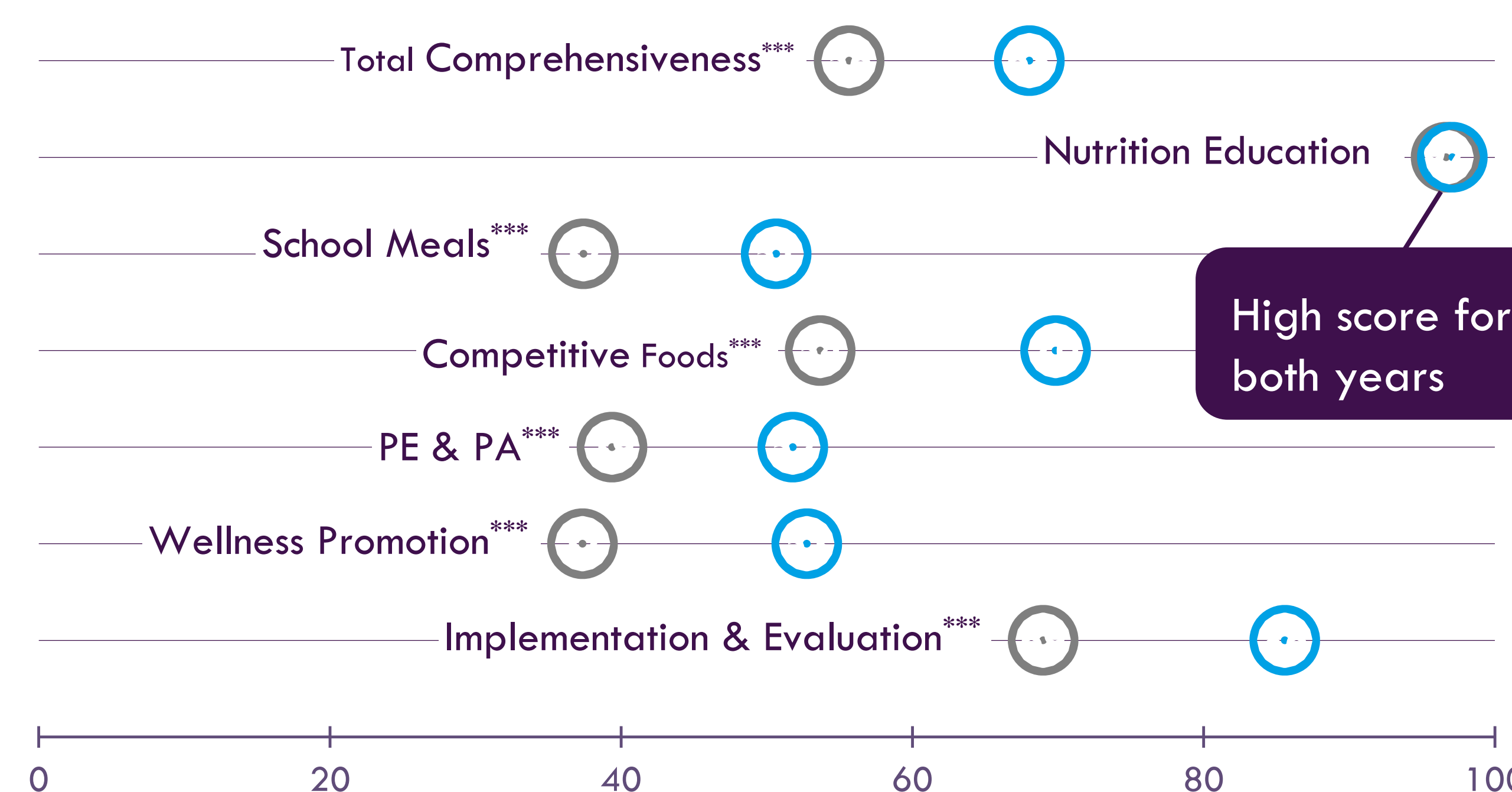
- Local agencies continued to support SWP revisions
- SWPs from the same districts were scored again to assess changes

**Measure.** The AZ Health Zone developed a scoring system using the **WellSAT 2.0 tool** to measure the quality of written SWPs and encourage use of findings among partner districts. We completed the six-section WellSAT 2.0 to generate scorecards for each SWP. Scorecards included section and total scores for **comprehensiveness and strength**, from **0 (worst) to 100 (best)**.

**Data Analysis.** We used the paired t-test to compare scores across time. We then explored changes in scores as they related to **SNAP-Ed interventions** and **state administrative reviews of SWPs from the Arizona Department of Education (ADE)**. We used content analysis of the SNAP-Ed agencies' report narratives and the ADE administrative review findings to investigate potential causes for the pre-post changes found during the quantitative analysis.

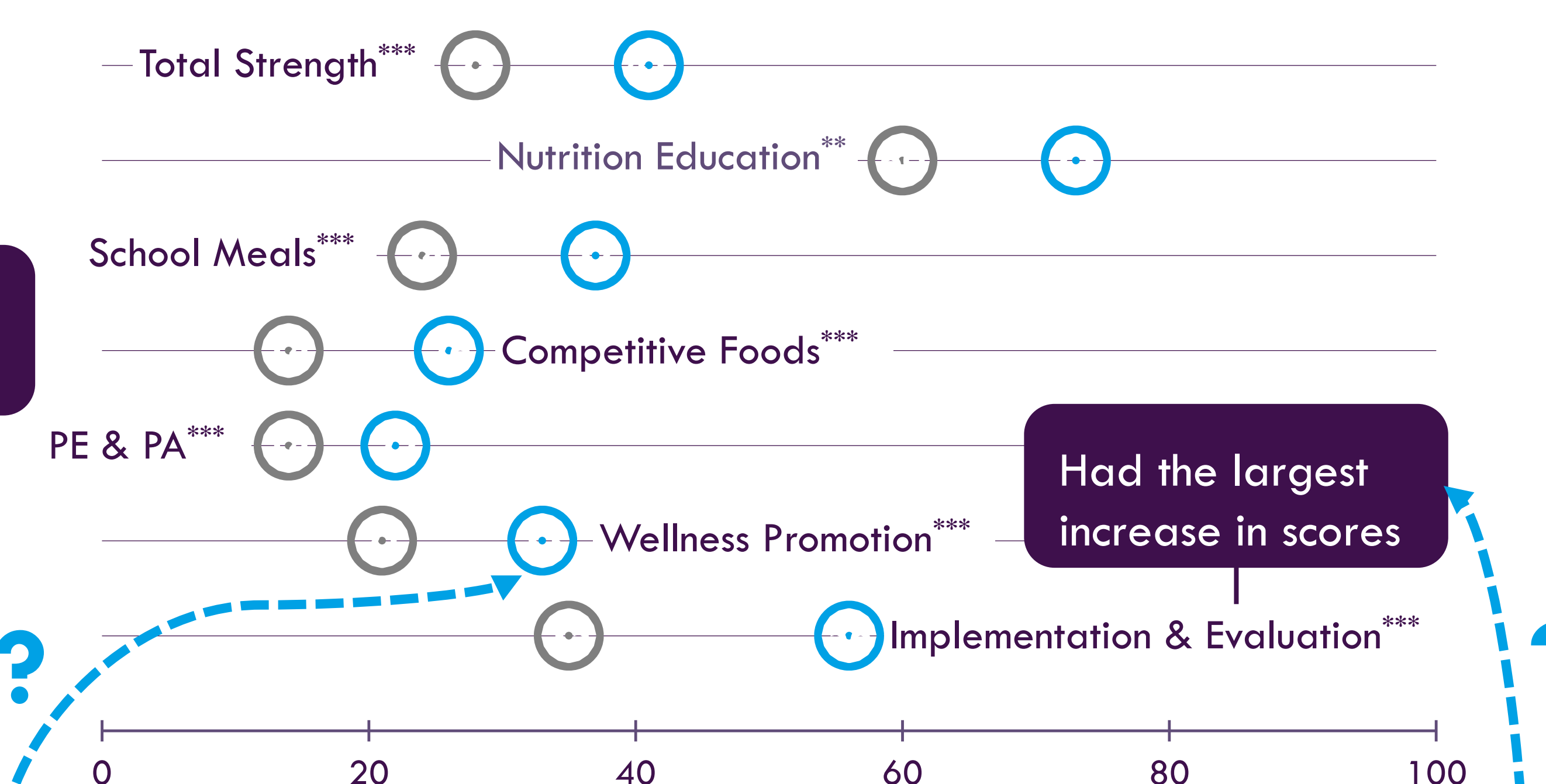
## Results

Mean comprehensiveness scores increased from **FY16** to **FY18**.



N=57. Scores are rounded to the nearest whole number. \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001

Mean strength scores increased but show room for improvement.



### LOCAL SNAP-ED AGENCIES REPORTED PROVIDING STRONG SUPPORT TO DISTRICTS FOR REVISING SWPs:

"[S]ome School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) members...worked together to revise Section 6: Implementation, Evaluation & Communication, using the WellSAT2.0 Scorecard recommendations from the 2016 evaluation. Because we have established an active, ongoing SHAC, they simply had to write down what is happening now. They also added language about how documents and reports will be made available to the school community."

### MOST OF THE ADE ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS CENTERED AROUND TWO AREAS FOR SWP IMPROVEMENT:

**Wellness Promotion & Marketing**  
The SWP did not contain the required elements for nutrition promotion or food & beverage marketing.

**Implementation & Evaluation**  
The SWP did not contain a plan for measuring implementation, a recent assessment of SWP implementation had not been conducted, and the public was not notified of the results of the SWP implementation assessment.

## Conclusion

Written SWPs in Arizona's SNAP-Ed-supported school districts have improved in recent years. SNAP-Ed interventions likely worked synergistically with state-mandated SWP reviews to influence improvements. Further research is needed to understand more about these interrelationships.

## References

- [www.wellsat.org](http://www.wellsat.org), [nutritioneval.arizona.edu](http://nutritioneval.arizona.edu)
- [https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/tn/LWPsummary\\_finalrule.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/tn/LWPsummary_finalrule.pdf)

