

FLORIDA HEALTHY SCHOOLS

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New Year Messages From Your State Leaders



Children are unable to reach their full potential in school when they are hungry, afraid, depressed, disengaged, absent, or have unmet dental or physical needs. By bringing together the expertise and resources of individuals on the state, county, and school levels, we reduce physical, mental, and psychosocial learning barriers. This allows schools, health departments, and communities to work together. A healthy learning environment prepares students for higher education and the workforce enabling them to become leaders in their families and communities.

The Florida Department of Health recognizes that schools play a major role in the health of children and that Florida's children are our future. The challenges of meeting the needs of children must be addressed through partnerships at all levels. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Coordinated School Health approach is an effective strategy for promoting the prevention, preparedness, and personal responsibility goals of the department.

We commend those who are working to improve the health of students and staff in Florida's schools.

Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H.

State Surgeon General



disparities gap are important goals of both health and education reform. Florida has been steadily working toward these ends by employing the Coordinated School Health approach at the state level and in local school districts. This systematic approach to promoting student health and learning doesn't increase responsibilities, but instead structures how existing responsibilities and resources can be more efficiently addressed. Empowering our students with the knowledge and skills to become health literate adults is a key strategy to lowering our burgeoning health care costs and becoming a world class educational system.

We all know that health and academic success are inter-related. Schools that are successful in their primary mission of educating students also support environments that nurture physical, social and psychological health. The Florida Department of Education is committed to working with districts to provide a safe and healthy environment for all students to learn, and faculty and staff to work.

I look forward to working with our family and community partners in 2009 to make certain our children are healthy, safe, supported, engaged and challenged!

Closing the achievement gap and assisting our partners in closing the health

Dr. Eric J. Smith

Commissioner of Education

Florida Prevention Partners Unite

On October 24, 2008, a group of dedicated members from the Florida School Health and Education Consortium, Florida Action for Healthy Kids

Partnership, and the Alliance for a Healthier Generation met to form Florida's Coordinated School Health Partnership (CSHP). Members represent professional associations, foundations,

not-for-profit organizations, business, insurers, health and education. The partnership is committed to working together to improve the health of children, adoles-

cents, and staff in Florida schools. The 2009 goals focus on advocacy, policy, partnership, access to health care for all children and (continued on page 3)

Four Florida School Districts Receive Grant from USDA for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables



Marion County's Wayne Green enjoys his broccoli.

(From the Ocala Star Banner) *"In Ocala, first grader Tyler Pennington looked at the cherry tomato carefully, rolled it between his thumb and forefinger and realized that he had never tasted one before. Seconds after he was urged to try it by a classmate at Hammett Bowen Jr. Elementary School, he shrugged his shoulders and took a bite of the juicy treat that was a part of his midmorning snack. "Not bad," the 7-year-old said with a smile. Tyler is one of 900 students in Marion County who get fresh fruits and vegetables as part of the school district program funded through a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture."*

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded grants to four Florida school districts; Indian River, Marion, Santa Rosa, and Orange to expand the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program in 25 schools. The program provides students with **free** fruits and vegetables throughout the school day. April Liles, the Marion District Food Service Coordinator said "The program has

been used in eight states for about a decade, but a new Farm Bill passed over the summer expanded the concept to all 50 states. Marion County School District was awarded \$360,000. The idea is to give students a taste of alternative snacks in hopes it will motivate healthier choices in the future. They also hope a newfound taste for veggies and fruit will be carried home to parents and siblings." To supplement the grant, Marion County received a **Making Better Food Choices** (MBFC) mini-grant from Florida Action for Healthy Kids to implement, *Game On!* *Game On!* is a social marketing tool that provides the basis for a comprehensive program to increase fresh fruit and vegetable intake and physical activity. Activities of the two grants include taste tests; challenges before, during, and after school; an obstacle course; and activities to promote fruits and vegetables, low fat dairy, and whole grains. They are currently working on before school challenges that will include families. Menus contain fresh fruit daily in these schools. Students have an opportunity to test the new foods before they are added to the menu. They have created a book and DVD documenting their activities. The evaluation includes pre- and post-surveys of 100 fourth and fifth graders per school. The surveys collect information about knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. For more information on *Game On!*, visit the Action for Healthy Kids Web site at <http://actionforhealthykids.org/> and click on the *Game On!* logo.



Marion Cafeteria Manager Gayann Seice encourages students to eat fruits and vegetables.

According to Laura Roberts, Indian River Food Service Director, Treasure Coast Elementary School was the original school winner of the USDA grant in Indian River County. Additional participating schools are: Fellsmere Elementary, Pelican Island Elementary, Citrus Elementary, Dodgertown Elementary, Vero Beach Elementary, Thompson Magnet, Sebastian Elementary and Highlands Elementary. The value of this grant is \$354,689. Teachers received the following tips for how to incorporate fruits and vegetables into classroom instruction.

- Schedule the serving of prepared fruits and vegetables as classroom nutrition education activities where children can dice, shred, chop, slice, squeeze, and blend the fruits and vegetables with their classmates and teachers.
- When studying fractions, divide produce into halves, quarters, etc.
- Experiment with a selection of fruits to determine which sink or swim.
- Students can develop graphs and tables of favorites and kinds of fruits and vegetables.
- While studying atoms, use grapes to make atom forms.
- While studying plants, look at seeds, tops and bottoms.

Santa Rosa County Dietician Tracy Cooper states that "We are so thankful to have received the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable (FFVG) grant for Santa Rosa County District Schools. Out of 25 schools in the state of Florida, we received 6 grants for our schools. Our senior administrators, principals, teachers and students are so excited about this program and the health benefits it provides. This program takes away unhealthy snack items that contain higher fats and calories that parents and teachers routinely provided to students and replaces them with more healthy nutritious snacks that contain vitamins and minerals that kids need in their diets to help protect against certain diseases. We have received excellent comments on this program from everyone involved. We've received letters from students telling us how much they enjoy this program. We in Santa Rosa County will continue to encourage all our students to eat more fruits and vegetables because remember, *More Matters.*"

educating stakeholders about school health and wellness issues. The mission of the Coordinated School Health (CSH) Partnership is: **Health literate and health practicing students and staff in all Florida schools.**

Purpose: Facilitating the creation of policies and environments that provide students and staff the opportunity to reach their personal potential by means of positive decision-making-skills and access to health care.

Five year goals and strategies include:

Decrease school absenteeism/increase attendance by:

Advocating for adequate numbers of school nurses, health and physical education teachers, and counselors.

Reducing the nurse to student ratio to 1:2000.

Increasing the number of students completing health education courses in middle and high school.

Working to ensure that all school-aged children have a medical and dental home.

Decrease health related financial risk to schools by:

Working to eliminate medication errors.

Implementing staff wellness in all districts.

Increase knowledge and involvement of parents and community in school health and wellness initiatives by:

Advocating for inclusion of a health representative in every School Advisory Council (SAC) and include a

health related goal in School Improvement Plans.

Working with the Florida Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and other organizations to keep parents informed of issues and explore opportunities for collaboration.

Engaging community and business representatives as participating members of state level CSHP and district level School Health Advisory Committees (SHACs).

Facilitate the development of district level policies and programs that lead to sustainability by:

Promoting the Florida Healthy School District Assessment Tool and awarding districts that demonstrate high levels of commitment and infrastructure in the eight components of the CSH model.

Facilitating the development of Healthy School teams in all Florida schools.

Providing training on Florida policy and program best practices.

For more information about the Coordinated School Health Partnership contact:

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Calendar of Upcoming Events in 2009

February 6-9	Orlando	Florida Association of School Nurses Conference http://www.fasn.net/conference.html
March 31-April 4	Tampa	American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance National Convention http://www.aahperd.org/convention/
April 14-17	Daytona Beach	Florida Partners in Education Conference www.flpie.net
May 13-15	Orlando	Florida School Health Association Conference http://www.fsha.net/
August 4-7	Palm Beach Gardens	Florida Public Health Association and Southern Health Association Conference http://fpha.org/meetings.html

If you would like your upcoming events posted in the summer newsletter, please send the information to carol_vickers@doh.state.fl.us by March 1, 2009

Florida's Coordinated School Health Partnership

Your DOH and DOE Staff Contacts	
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Resource Center : Eileen Smith	850-245-0978
Tobacco Grants: Lynn Vinson	850-245-0480



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
www.fldoe.org



E-mail your success stories and upcoming events to carol_vickers@doh.state.fl.us



Staff Wellness Quick Tip: Having a district-level coordinator and having school-based wellness champions is an effective way to serve the population across your district.



Carol Vickers (left), Florida Department of Health, and Penny Detscher (right), Florida Department of Education

It is a New Year...a year when partnerships and collaborations will be more important than ever. In these tight economic times, we must unite in order to continue our important work in the area of student and staff health and wellness. Locking arms and moving forward through partnerships will bring the results we are all striving to achieve. Health and education must continue to present a united front and combine our expertise, knowledge and resources.

Where do we begin? By identifying

New Year Message From the Editors

our common ground. Education is a protective factor that reduces participation in health risk behaviors. Improved health literacy and behaviors improves likelihood of academic success.

In a partnership, no two partners have exactly the same ingredients to bring to the table and some have more than others, but each has something to contribute and each can benefit from the resources of others. Furthermore, each represents a different point of view and a unique perspective.

The journey of partnership begins with networking, and it takes time to move toward collaboration. Getting to know each other, learning each other's language, and identifying common goals evolve into collaboration.

When systems come together, they must first understand each other and develop ways of functioning that can accommodate differences. Capitalize on each other's professional and personal strengths and agency capaci-

ties.

Learning to trust each other is vital. Trust is a necessary step in effective collaboration. It is important that the priorities of all partners are considered. Learn what each partner's goals are and decide how you can work together to help meet them.

By working together, the experts represented on your School Health Advisory Committee; School Wellness Team; School Advisory Council; or Safe and Drug Free Schools, Tobacco, Alcohol or other community coalitions have a much greater impact on the health and academic success of Florida's children than any one of us could alone.

Strength through adversity... lemonade out of lemons...the power of many...lets just do it! Our children and school staff deserve the absolute best we have to offer and together we can yield superior services, richer resources and high level outcomes. So join in, go out on a limb...we all know that is where the best fruit is!