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## Howard County School Health Council

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July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017

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On behalf of the Howard County School Health Council (HC-SHC), I am very pleased to submit our annual report, attached, which is due at the end of each school year, per the HC-SHC's bylaws.

This year's report is divided into two parts. The first part of the report is our annual report to the Interim Superintendent and the Health Officer. It summarizes our accomplishments and information gathering activities during the past year and also makes recommendations. The second part of the report consists of our feedback report to the Board of Education on the implementation of Wellness Policy 9090. We would welcome an opportunity to meet with each of you to discuss the report.

Please let us know if you have any questions. We can be reached at [schoolhealthcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:schoolhealthcouncil@gmail.com).

Warm Regards,



Anne Rossier Markus, PhD, MHS, JD  
Chairperson, Howard County School Health Council  
SY 2015-2017

**Strengthening School Health and Wellness in Howard County:**  
*Recommendations from the Howard County School Health Council*  
(School Year 2016-2017)

PART ONE

Annual Report to the Interim Superintendent and the Health Officer

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## PART ONE

### **1.0 Mission and Objectives**

The mission of the Howard County School Health Council (HC-SHC) is to promote coordinated school health policies and programs to enhance academic achievement, health and wellness for all students. The School Health Council is a COMAR-mandated advisory group, which identifies needs, reviews practices, programs and policies, and generally provides advice to the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) and the Howard County Health Department (HCHD) on aspects of child health as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Coordinated School Health (CSH) approach. The CSH approach is a systems approach to improving the health and well-being of all students so they can fully participate and be successful in school. CSH integrates health promotion efforts across eight interrelated components: (1) Counseling, psychological, and social services; (2) Family and community involvement; (3) Health education; (4) Health promotion for staff; (5) Health services; (6) Healthy school environment; (7) Nutrition services; and (8) Physical education.

The HC-SHC has several objectives:

- Act as a “hub” between the Public School System (HCPSS), the Health Department (HCHD), the PTA Council of Howard County (PTACHC), the Howard County Association of Student Councils (HCASC) and other community partners where any matter pertaining to school health, well-being, and wellness – broadly defined – can be discussed, studied, and considered for improvement on a system-wide level;
- Follow a transparent and systematic process for consideration of these matters;
- Assess the status of school health, well-being, and wellness, identify problems, and outline possible solutions for the development of broad policy recommendations and/or practices targeting areas selected for improvement;
- Monitor or evaluate the implementation of existing policies, and identify strengths to build upon and weaknesses to address.

## 2.0 Meeting Snapshot for School Year 2016-2017

During the 2016-2017 School Year, the HC-SHC met 10 times, convening 5 times as a full council, and 5 times as a smaller, executive board. The meeting dates, topics, and presenters are presented in Table 1, below. The membership roster is attached in Appendix 1.

**Table 1: Howard County School Health General Council Meeting Dates and Topics, 2016-2017**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Presenters/Speakers</b>
10.5.16	<p>“Howard County Adolescent Mental Health Symposium: A Call to Action” Update and Next Steps</p> <p>Later Start Times: Update on HCPSS SSDT Committee</p>	<p>Sharon Hobson, Jackie Dougé, &amp; Anne Markus, HC-SHC Executive Board</p> <p>Frank Eastham, HCPSS, Executive Director, School Improvement and Administration</p>
12.7.16	Meeting cancelled due to flooding at HCHD	Rescheduled for February 2017
02.1.17	<p>Overdose Response Training in Schools</p> <p>Ad Hoc HealthyMind Sub-Committee Update and Next Steps</p> <p>Later Start Times BoE Public Hearing February 7, 7pm</p>	<p>Seante’ Hunt, MA, CAC-AD, Program Administrator, Opioid Misuse Prevention Coordinator, Overdose Response Program Coordinator, Bureau of Behavioral Health, Howard County Health Department</p> <p>Sharon Hobson, Jackie Dougé, &amp; Anne Markus, HC-SHC Executive Board</p> <p>All</p>
04.5.17	<p>Overview of School Implementation Activities under Wellness Policy 9090</p> <p>Update on Follow-Up Activities to Adolescent Mental Health Symposium</p> <p>Update on BoE School Start and Dismissal Time Public Hearing &amp; Next Steps</p>	<p>Ekere Olojola, MS, RD, LD, Registered Dietitian, HCPSS</p> <p>Jackie Dougé, MD, MPH, FAAP Medical Director of Bureau of Child Health, HCHD &amp; Sharon Hobson, RN, MSN, CPNP-PC School-Based Wellness Centers Program Administrator, HCHD</p> <p>Debi Lattimer, MPH, Executive Board Member, Howard County School Health Council &amp; Deb Jung, JD, Co-Chair, Later Start Times Local Chapter</p>
06.7.17	<p>Thoughts on Student Health and Wellness</p> <p>Recommendations for Annual Report</p>	<p>Dr. Martirano, Interim Superintendent, HCPSS</p> <p>All</p>

Source: Howard County School Health Council, June 2017.

### 3.0 Summary of Key Accomplishments and Progress to Date

At the beginning of SY 2016-2017, the HC-SHC membership decided to continue working on two priority issues identified during the prior school year: 1. Later School Start Times; and 2. Academic Stress, Anxiety and Depression. The key objective for each issue area is described below, followed by a summary of progress to date. Draft recommendations were proposed for discussion to the general membership of the Council on June 7, 2017. The final recommendations are included in this annual report in Section 4.0.

#### 1. ACADEMIC STRESS, ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

**Key Objective:** To convene by September 2016 – as a follow up to student and parent panel presentations made at a Spring 2016 general meeting of the Council – a student mental wellness summit to coordinate efforts and issue a call for action.

**Progress to Date:**

- 1) The Howard County Adolescent Mental Health Symposium was held on September 27, 2016. Over 80 individuals and organizations from the County attended the meeting. A symposium proceedings report was issued in early 2017, and posted on the HC-SHC website, which now boasts pages dedicated to mental health issues and resources for parents. The HC-SHC and HCHD presented at multiple venues at the request of the Horizon Council Regions, Local Children’s Board, and HCPSS Mental Health Task Force, among others. The event was covered in the press (Baltimore Sun/Howard County Times) as part of a larger story on mental health in the county.
- 2) The Symposium was followed by a parent building resilience workshop organized by the HCHD, Local Children’s Board, HC DrugFree, Howard County Mental Health Authority, and HCPSS. Dr. Bostic was the keynote speaker; his slides are available on the HC-SHC website for download. Dr. Bostic also taped a podcast on stress for Dr. Dougé’s Teen Health Matters (podcast is available under the ‘Parents’ tab on the HC-SHC website). Dr. Dougé also recorded a complementary podcast on depression with Dr. Wissow (podcast also on the website).
- 3) Follow-up activities were delegated to a newly formed *ad hoc* committee of the HC-SHC (see ‘HealthyMind Sub-Committee’ tab on the HC-SHC website), which is currently set to sunset in August 2017. Activities included recommendations for the incoming administrator of the Local Children’s Board.
- 4) HC-SHC chair was invited to participate in a number of additional projects that are the direct consequence of the Symposium, including the HCHD Horizon-funded project to pilot a coordinated school mental health model, which would add licensed social workers or professional counselors in the schools to augment existing counseling resources, and the planning of a follow-up meeting to the Symposium targeting County youth scheduled for October 2017.

## 2. LATER SCHOOL START TIMES

**Key Objective:** To ensure that the Board of Education follows scientific evidence, professional recommendations, and HCPSS stakeholder survey results, which show that 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of Howard County respondents favor all schools starting after 8am. Furthermore, HB 39-Orange Ribbon for Healthy School Hours, which was enacted in the 2016 Maryland legislative session, incentivizes local school districts to be recognized as leaders in this area if they meet the following minimum criteria: 1) No elementary school student boards a school bus before 7am; 2) No elementary school student is in class before 8am; 3) No middle school or high school student boards a school bus before 7:30am; and 4) No middle school or high school student is in class before 8:30am.

### **Progress to Date:**

- 1) The HC-SHC invited Frank Eastham to provide an update on the models to be presented to the Board in Fall 2016.
- 2) The HC- SHC sent individualized letters to the BoE members requesting that the issue be put back on the Board's agenda in order to be able to implement changes in Fall 2017.
- 3) The HC-SHC submitted oral and written testimony on the academic and health (both physical and mental) benefits of later start times for adolescents and recommended that the Board adopt a later start time for all schools, including elementary schools. The Board voted to delay implementation of later start times to Fall 2018 to allow more advance notice and planning time for families and others who will be affected by the change. The Board also voted for no school to start before 8am.
- 4) The HC-SHC is tracking press reports of other school districts on this issue, which has become a hot issue around the country.

## 4.0 Recommendations

The HC-SHC is pleased to submit two main recommendations for consideration by the Interim Superintendent, Health Officer, Boards of Education and Health, as well as other interested parties in the County to further our common goal of improving student health, well-being and wellness in the context of broader population health improvement in the community-at-large.

### *Recommendations for SY 2017-2018 on Academic Stress, Anxiety and Depression:*

#### **Recommendation 1**

Include in the school budget sufficient funds to staff a team approach to addressing mental health in HCPSS schools, particularly high schools. Funding should meet staffing ratios recommended by professional associations. Specific ratios by category of staff include:

- School Counselors 1:250<sup>1</sup>
- School Psychologists 1:500-700<sup>2</sup>
- Pupil Personnel Workers 1:2,500<sup>3</sup>
- School Nurses 1:750 for healthy student population<sup>4</sup>  
1:225 for student populations requiring daily professional nursing services<sup>5</sup>  
1:125 for student populations with complex healthcare needs<sup>6</sup>

#### **Recommendation 2**

Act upon the recommendations of the September 27, 2016 Symposium participants, which include the following three priorities for action:

- Increasing mental health services in schools by having mental health clinicians provide on-site counseling and crisis intervention;
- Educating students and their parents about stress management; and
- Connecting community agencies to partners and sharing resources for providing education, prevention, and treatment services to students and their parents/guardians.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: American School Counselor Association (ASCA)

<sup>2</sup> Source: National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)

<sup>3</sup> Source: COMAR 13A.02.03.01.B.(2 and 3) organization and Administration

<sup>4</sup> Source: National Association of School Nurses (NASN)

<sup>5</sup> Source: National Association of School Nurses (NASN)

<sup>6</sup> Source: National Association of School Nurses (NASN)

*Recommendations for SY 2017-2018 on Later School Start Times:*

**Recommendation 1**

The Board, along with the Interim Superintendent and his staff, should determine as soon as possible a schedule for working sessions, reports and public hearings so that a timely decision can be made by Fall 2017 before contracts for busses are renewed for the following school year and to address all other logistical issues involved in making the transition with sufficient time before Fall 2018. The BOE/HCPSS should designate a “Champion” or focal point who can reach out to the various organizations/community members to ensure a successful outcome.

**Recommendation 2**

The Board, along with the Interim Superintendent and his staff, should plan a site visit to Henrico County, South of Richmond, Virginia, whose student population is the same size and has similar demographic characteristics as Howard County’s student body. Henrico County recently and successfully transitioned to later start times. We could learn from that school system’s experience.

*Recommendations for SY 2017-2018 from Public Input:*

**Recommendation 1**

Heightened awareness around hearing loss as a result of student attendance at school-sponsored events and recommendations for system-wide improvements are needed. As a first step, the HC-SHC recommends that HCPSS and HCHD conduct a pilot study that would examine recommended maximum decibels that are considered safe, HCPSS DJ’s vendor contracts and the provisions that address this issue, and collect a sample of decibel measures at actual events to establish how prevalent of a problem this is at Howard County school-sponsored events. The next steps would be based on the results from the pilot study. From the beginning, the community should be engaged in supporting the issue, the pilot study, and the next steps to be determined at a later time.



**Strengthening School Health and Wellness in Howard County:**  
*Recommendations from the Howard County School Health Council*  
(School Year 2016-2017)

PART TWO

Annual “Feedback” Report to the Howard County Board of Education

## PART TWO

### **FEEDBACK TO BOE ON WELLNESS POLICY 9090**

**Key Objective:** To continue observing the implementation of the wellness policy and looking for opportunities to strengthen the policy; to strengthen local school wellness champions and teams and to ensure that HCPSS is implementing the policy throughout the county, including the requirements to collect and report data from local schools to central office.

#### **Progress to Date:**

- 1) HC-SHC submitted an empty feedback report in the annual report for SY 2015-2016 filed on July 1, 2016 due to the inability to obtain information during that school year.
- 2) Ekere Olojola, Nutritionist, HCPSS presented an update of wellness activities reported by each school at the general meeting of the Council in April 2017. Slides are in Appendix 2.
- 3) Several members of the HC-SHC, including the Chair, one of the PTACHC representatives, and the Health Services Coordinator for HCPSS attended the annual wellness policy meeting organized by the University of Maryland and MSDE on December 19, 2016. The Chair was asked to facilitate a couple of roundtables on the Howard County experience with involving the community in the Council and the monitoring of the implementation of the wellness policy.

#### *Recommendations for SY 2017-2018:*

##### **Recommendation 1**

Maintain nutritional standards pre-2017 before the Trump administration issued notification to school districts that some can be relaxed.

##### **Recommendation 2**

Address a number of issues in the upcoming revision to Wellness Policy No. 9090, including the following:

- Mental health and well-being as well as substance addiction (referred to together as behavioral health) should be made an area of emphasis in the policy in addition to nutrition and physical education and activity. Wellness champions and teams at individual schools should incorporate mental health and substance addiction as priorities for focused activities (e.g., in the school improvement plan).
- The responsibility of the HC-SHC as delineated in the policy, which has not been functional so far despite efforts from the Council to make it work, needs to be adjusted. The HC-SHC requests either the removal of Council's obligation to provide annual feedback to the Board on the progress of implementation or the addition of a direct reporting duty from local wellness champions and teams to the Council (see St. Mary's county as an example of a county that has such a direct line of reporting in its policy).
- The evaluation and assessment of the effectiveness of the policy should be strengthened and better supported.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

This year was very productive as evidenced by the information summarized in this annual report. The HC-SHC looks forward to the next School Year and anticipates continuing to work on the issues highlighted in this report, as well as monitoring progress toward better health, well-being and wellness for all students in Howard County.

*Respectfully Submitted July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 on behalf of HC-SHC by Anne Rossier Markus, Chair, SY 2015-2017*

**Appendix 1. HC-SHC ROSTER, SY 2016-2017**

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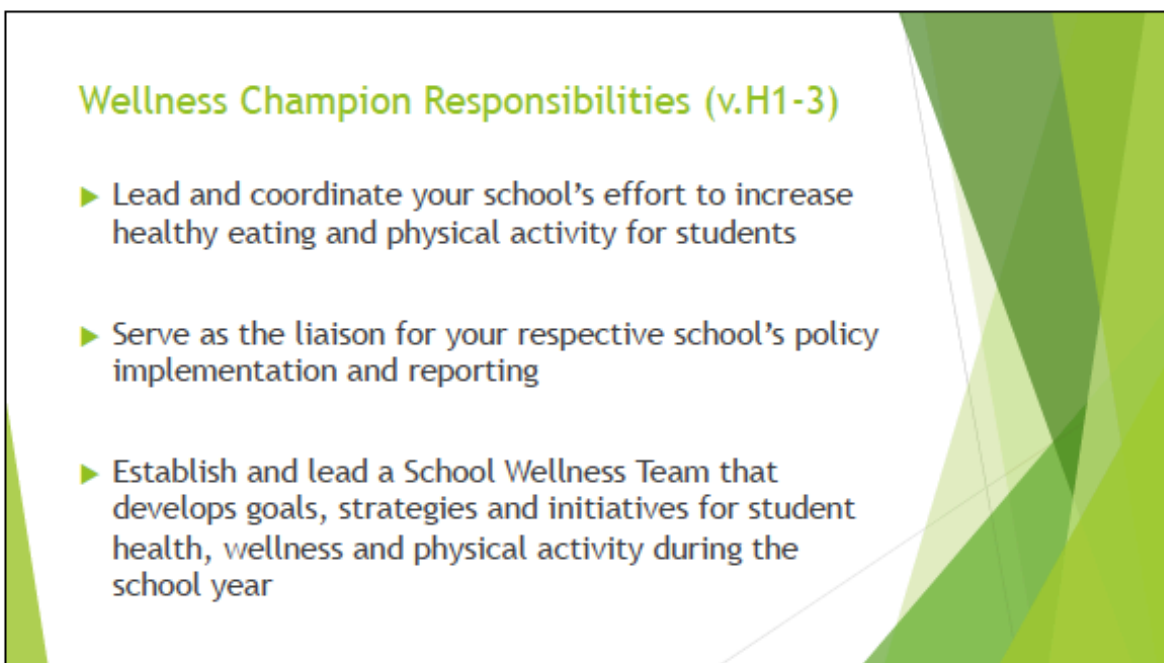
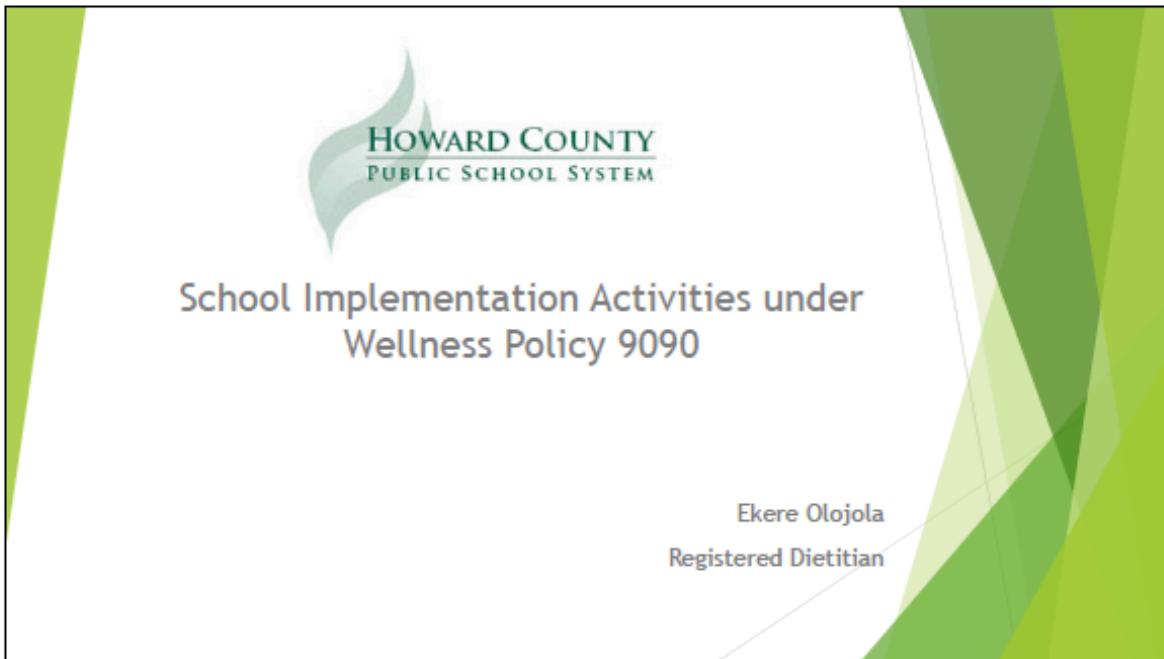
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**KEY**

**EB:** Executive Board (Note: Attendance at the EB meetings is not shown here and is in addition to the attendance at the general meetings)  
**EC:** Executive Committee (Elected Officers: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary)

Appendix 2. School Implementation Activities Under Wellness Policy 9090



## Wellness Activities- Best Practices in Howard County

- ▶ Girls on the Run-physical activity is woven into our program to inspire an appreciation of fitness and to build habits that lead to a lifetime of health
- ▶ Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart-to build healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke
- ▶ Turkey Trot-2 mile walk/run
- ▶ Amazing Race-based on the reality series where students/ staff compete in a series of challenges and when tasks are completed, the next location is revealed
- ▶ Let's Go HoCo 5k race-5krun/walk and 1 mile fun run

## Institutes of Medicine Tier I Standards

For All Students at All Times of Day (Tier 1) :

- ▶ Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, combination products, fat-free and low-fat milk and milk products, lactose-free and soy beverages, per portion as packaged:
- ▶ ≤200 calories
- ▶ ≤35% of total calories from fat
- ▶ <10% of calories from saturated fats
- ▶ Zero trans fat (≤0.5 per serving)
- ▶ ≤35% of calories from total sugars; and
- ▶ ≤200mg sodium

## Food Celebrations In Schools

- ▶ The revised Wellness Policy includes an exception of 12 school celebrations per year that involve foods that do not have to meet the Institutes of Medicine Standards Tier I



### Healthy Classroom Celebrations

Birthday parties and holiday celebrations provide a great opportunity for schools to make healthful eating fun and exciting for students. Schools can promote a positive learning environment by shifting the celebration from the food to the child. Celebrations can include a variety of activities, games and crafts and foods that taste good and are nutritious. An overall strategy to consider would be to have fewer parties and celebrate birthdays on a monthly basis.

#### Healthy Food Ideas

- Low-fat or nonfat plain or flavored milk, 100% juice, water, flavored/sparkling water (without added sugars or sweeteners), sparkling punch (seltzer and 100% fruit juice)
- Fruit smoothies (low-fat yogurt, fresh or frozen fruit, ice)
- Fresh fruit assortment, fruit and cheese kabobs, fruit salad, fruit with low-fat whipped topping or topped with yogurt
- Dried fruit, 100% fruit snacks
- Vegetable trays with low-fat dip, celery and carrots with peanut butter and raisins
- Whole-grain crackers with cheese cubes, string cheese or hummus
- Waffles or pancakes topped with fruit
- Pretzels, low-fat popcorn, rice cakes, bread sticks, graham crackers and animal crackers
- Angel food cake, plain or topped with fruit and low-fat whipped topping
- Bagel slices with peanut butter or jam, fruit or grain muffin (low-fat), whole wheat English muffin, hot pretzels
- Pizza with low-fat toppings (vegetables, lean ham, Canadian bacon), pizza dippers with marinara sauce
- Ham, cheese or turkey sandwiches or wraps
- Low-fat pudding, low-fat yogurt, squeezable yogurt, yogurt smoothies, yogurt parfaits or banana splits (yogurt and fruit topped with cereal, granola or crushed graham crackers)
- Quesadilla or bean burrito with salsa
- Low-fat breakfast or granola bars
- Low-fat tortilla chips with salsa or bean dip
- Trail/cereal mix (whole grain, low-sugar cereals mixed with dried fruit, pretzels, etc.)
- Nuts and seeds

There is nothing wrong with an occasional treat but unhealthy food and beverage choices have become the norm rather than the exception. Healthy foods chosen as part of the festivities can provide an opportunity to reinforce nutrition lessons.

Adapted from *Healthy Celebrations*, Connecticut State Department of Education

## Vending Machines

- ▶ Food items in the student's vending machines must be offered after school and follow the Institutes of Medicine Tier II standards
- ▶ After school is defined as 30 minutes after the last bell
- ▶ The Institutes of Medicine Tier II standards include:
  - ▶ Any foods or beverages from Tier 1
    - ▶ Snack foods that are  $\leq 200$  calories per portion as packaged, and
    - ▶  $\leq 35\%$  of total calories from fat
    - ▶  $< 10\%$  of calories from saturated fats
    - ▶ Zero trans fat ( $\leq 0.5$  g per serving)
    - ▶  $\leq 35\%$  of calories from total sugars; and
    - ▶  $\leq 200$  mg sodium
  - ▶ Sugar-free, caffeine-free beverages with
    - ▶ Nonnutritive sweeteners or Not vitamin- or nutrient-fortified and
    - ▶  $< 5\%$  calories per portion as packaged

## Salad Bar Initiative

- ▶ HCPSS Food and Nutrition Services in conjunction with the Horizon Foundation has implemented a salad bar initiative in three schools
- ▶ The three schools include Bollman Bridge ES, Laurel Woods ES, Talbott Springs ES
- ▶ The salad bar initiative was implemented to focus on promoting the link between nutrition, education, physical activity and living a healthy lifestyle
- ▶ Bollman Bridge collaborated with Days of Taste for hands on activities such as farm to table and teaching students about nutrition



## Days of Taste



Bollman Bridge ES visits Myrtle Woods Farm



### Alternatives to Food as a Reward

#### Rewarding Good Behavior

Food, beverages and candy are commonly used in schools to reward good behavior and academic performance. Often these foods have little or no nutritional value and are inconsistent with nutrition policies for foods sold on campus. Rewarding students with candy and sweets contradicts the teaching and modeling of behaviors and skills that promote student health.

#### Disadvantages to using food as a reward include:

- It undermines nutrition education taught in the classroom.
- It encourages overconsumption of foods high in sugar and fat.
- It teaches students to eat when they are not hungry as a reward to themselves.

#### Examples of Non-Food Rewards

##### Elementary School Students

- Make deliveries to the office
- Teach class
- Sit by friends
- Eat lunch with teacher or principal
- Eat lunch outdoors with the class
- Have lunch or breakfast in the classroom
- Be a helper in another classroom
- Play a favorite game or do puzzles
- Stickers, pencils, bookmarks

- Fun video
- Extra recess
- Walk with the principal or teacher
- Fun physical activity break (dance to music)
- School supplies
- Trip to treasure box filled with nonfood items (stickers, tattoos, pencils, erasers, bookmarks)

- Paperback book
- Show-and-tell
- Earn play money for privileges
- Teacher/volunteer read special book to class
- Teacher performs special skills (e.g., sing)
- Read outdoors or enjoy class outdoors
- Have extra art time
- Have "free choice" at end of the day or end of class period
- Listen with headset to an audio-book/music
- Items that can only be used on special occasions (special art supplies, toys)

##### Middle School Students

- Sit with friends
- Listen to music while working at desk
- Five-minute chat break at end of class
- Reduced homework or "no homework" pass

- Extra credit
- Fun video
- Fun brain teaser activities
- Computer time
- Assemblies
- Field trips

##### High School Students

- Extra credit
- Fun video
- Reduced homework
- Donated coupons to video stores, music stores or movies
- Drawings for donated prizes

Adapted from Alternative to Food as Reward, Connecticut Department of Education