
Peter L. Beilenson, M.D., M.P.H., Health Officer

October 2009

Dear Howard County Elementary School staff member:

Thank you for your interest in the Howard County Health Department's *Healthy Schools* program. In an effort to improve the health of those who live, work, learn, and play in Howard County, the Health Department has launched the Healthy Howard Initiative. Healthy Howard is a six phase initiative that uses accreditation and recognition programs to encourage institutions like schools to promote healthy activities and policies.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that healthier students are more productive and successful academically. The *Healthy Schools* program recognizes Howard County schools that are committed to advancing policies and procedures related to health and wellness in the following five areas: 1) Physical Activity; 2) Nutrition; 3) Mental Health; 4) Safety and 5) Environmental Health. These categories are identified as significant contributors to the growth of students both academically and personally. Your school may earn an *Innovation Award* for a program that has been shown to have a considerable positive impact on school health.

How will my school benefit from becoming a *Healthy School*?

Benefits of becoming a Healthy School include...

- Formal recognition from the Superintendent, County Executive, and Healthy Officer
- Eligibility for an Innovation Award which includes a monetary prize to help fund your school's program
- Potential for your school's program to be recognized by the Department of Education and prompt policy change throughout the county and state
- *Healthy Schools* decal to display at your school
- Recognition as a *Healthy School* on the HCPSS website
- Potential for your school's program to serve as a model for other schools in the county
- Technical assistance from the Health Department to support your current efforts as well as plan for future activities and program development
- Improved student health and well-being

How do I apply to become a *Healthy School*?

It is easy to apply. Just follow the steps listed below.

Step 1: Obtain a copy of the *Healthy Schools* application

- You may request an application from Takeshia Campbell at 410-313-6274 or tacampbell@howardcountymd.gov
- An electronic copy of the application is available online at the Health Department website: <http://www.howardcountymd.gov/Health/HealthMain/healthySchools.htm>

Step 2: Complete the entire application

- Detailed instructions are included with the application.
- Be sure to complete each section of the application and include any supporting documentation.

Step 3: Submit your completed application

- Applications are accepted via regular mail
- Mailing Address: Takeshia Campbell
Healthy Howard Coordinator
Howard County Health Department
7178 Columbia Gateway Dr.
Columbia, MD 21046
- You will be able to submit the *Healthy Schools* application online beginning January 2010

When is the deadline for applications?

Applications are due by Friday, February 26, 2010

- Mailed applications must be postmarked by this date
- Applications submitted online must be received by 5pm on this date

When will I know if my school has been designated as a *Healthy School*?

All schools will be notified by the Health Department in May 2010.

Who can I contact with questions about *Healthy Schools*?

For questions please contact Takeshia Campbell at 410-313-6274 or tacampbell@howardcountymd.gov.

Sincerely,



Peter L. Beilenson, M.D., M.P.H.
Health Officer
Howard County Health Department



Part I About Healthy Schools

Healthy Schools

In April 2007, Howard County launched the *Healthy Howard Initiative*, a six-phase initiative that encourages institutions including restaurants, **schools**, workplaces, and recreation programs to incorporate healthy activities and healthy products into the lives of County residents. Healthy Howard is strengthened by participation and collaboration with the public and private sectors.

Recognizing that schools are an integral part of our children's development as well as an invaluable asset to parents and the community, **Healthy Schools** was developed to recognize schools that have displayed extraordinary commitment in the areas of Nutrition, Physical Activity, Mental Health, Safety and Environmental Health. In May 2009, fourteen elementary schools were recognized as Healthy Schools, five of which were awarded innovation awards.

Elementary schools that are recognized as **Healthy Schools** have demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing policies and procedures related to health and wellness, fully engage students and parents, and have the potential to serve as models for others schools.

Healthy Schools was developed by the Howard County Health Department (HCHD) based on local and national best practices. In addition, HCHD has collaborated with the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS), School Health Council, Howard County Board of Education, PTA Council of Howard County, and the Howard County Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition to enhance the application.

Recognizing Innovation in Advancing Health and Wellness for Students and the School Community

Healthy Schools are recognized through **Innovation Awards** in the areas of Nutrition, Physical Activity, Mental Health, Safety, and Environmental Health. These four areas are identified as significant contributors to the growth of the student both academically and personally. To put it simply, if a student is healthier, he or she has the capability of being more productive and active. It is important that Howard County schools be recognized for innovation in the design and implementation of programs and activities that are **innovative**, **sustainable**, and **replicable**. Schools that meet the criteria in the attached application will be recognized as **Healthy School** honorees for the 2010 year. As honorees, schools are eligible to receive an **Innovation Award** for an original school-wide program that has been shown

to have a considerable positive impact on school health. Any elementary school can apply. One *Innovation Award* will be given per category each year. Applicants should focus their attention on the category they feel their strongest school program falls under.

Application Process

- Schools should assemble key staff members to work on the application, e.g. Principals; Teachers; Gifted and Talented Resource Staff; Cluster Nurses; Physical Education Staff; Counselors; PTA Members; Parents; etc.
- Schools submit the “Innovation Award” application accompanied with an essay and two letters of support describing how the program is innovative and what impact the program has made on the school community
- Schools **must submit** the Healthy Schools checklist which points to specific HCPSS policies and procedures that are put in place to build a healthier, safer school environment, and a strong foundation of education for students
- A school’s program must address one of the Healthy Schools categories of: 1) Nutrition; 2) Physical Activity/Health; 3) Mental Health; 4) Safety; or 5.)Environmental Health
- A school’s program must be sustainable and replicable
- The Awards Committee will also take into account partnerships fostered by the program between the school system and other entities in Howard County (e.g. local businesses, non-profit organizations)
- A synopsis of last year’s Innovation Award winners and their programs can be found on page 10

How are Healthy Schools and Innovation Award winners selected?

- **Deadline for application – February 26, 2010**
- An Awards Committee comprised of parents, teachers, community members, and health and nutrition professionals will review all applications and select awardees in each category
- **Awards Committee selects winners—April 2010**
- Schools will be notified if they have received and *Innovation Award* by May 2010 and will be recognized at a Healthy Schools Awards Ceremony with County Executive Ulman, Health Officer, Dr. Peter Beilenson, Dr. Sydney Cousin, elected officials, and the larger community.

Complete application found on pages 4-10



Part II

2010 Healthy Schools Innovation Award Application

This application format was adapted from the MD State Advisory Council on Physical Fitness Excellence Awards

Date: _____

Applicant Name: _____

Applicant Position: _____

Applicant Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Name of School: _____

School Address: _____

School Principal Name: _____

School Principal Signature: _____
(Required)

Please select the type of Healthy Schools Innovation Award for which your school is applying:

(Please check only one box)

Nutrition Physical Activityⁱ Mental Health Safety Environmental Health

PLEASE COMPLETE ITEMS A-C

This application requires a short essay and two letters of support.

A.) **Please submit an essay of no more than 1200 words** describing an implemented school program or activity that is innovative, sustainable, and replicable in the respective area of Nutrition, Physical Activity, Mental Health, Safety, or Environmental Health.

Your response must address the following items:

1. What was your goal in initiating this program as it relates to advancing health and wellness of your students?

ⁱ If available, please submit your school's FITNESSGRAM data from the previous *two* school years. This information will help to determine the impact of your program on student fitness.

2. What steps were taken to involve students, staff, and/or parents in the implementation of this program?
3. How long has this program existed and was any funding needed and/or acquired?
4. Describe the specific contributions this program has made to improving the overall health and well being of the school community; including *measurable* improvements (particularly over a 6-12 month period) you can cite as a result of these contributions, e.g. survey results, pre/post evaluation, etc.
5. Describe the nature of any partnerships brought about by this program between the school and other entities in the community, e.g. an agricultural exploration program brought about partnerships with farmers in the community which allowed for students to participate in agricultural activities for educational, extracurricular, and community service purposes.
6. Explain how this program is innovative. Do you believe this program has the potential to serve as a model for other HCPSS schools and beyond?
7. How does this program address larger school goals, e.g. has the program improved physical activity opportunities for students, created a safe school environment, enhanced peer to peer relationships, etc.?
8. Does this program address any of the other Healthy School categories (Nutrition, Physical Activity, Mental Health, Safety, Environmental Health)? If so, explain how this program has had a positive impact on school health in the other respective area(s).

B.) Provide two letters of support. Each letter should not exceed one page in length. Those who write a letter of support can be anyone who was positively affected by the program, including a student, parent, teacher, or community member. Applicants are also encouraged, but not required, to submit video testimonies or video of the program in action.

C.) Please complete the Healthy Schools Check List below. Current HCPSS policies and procedures are put in place to maintain and sustain the overall health of HCPSS teachers, staff, and students. The depth of these policies reflects a commitment to building a strong foundation of education for students. Please mark all boxes that are relevant to your school.

The goals of the Healthy Howard Initiative complement existing policies and procedures that are implemented throughout the school system. **The current HCPSS policies and procedures will give the Awards Committee a fuller picture of how HCPSS policies combined with an innovative program can lead to a positive effect on the entire school environment.** Also, if you feel there is an additional relevant policy or procedure that is important, please write it after “Other.”

Current HCPSS Policies, Procedures, and Best Practices

Nutrition

- Students are allowed a minimum of 30 minutes for lunchⁱ

- A la carte food items sold by the school may have no more than 9 grams of fat (excluding nuts and seeds), 2 grams of saturated fat, and 15 grams of sugar (excluding dried fruit)ⁱⁱ

- The school partners with community organizations and agencies to support the practice of healthy eating and nutrition educationⁱⁱⁱ

- Please list and briefly describe any additional activities/programs/opportunities offered either before, during, or after school that nutrition education is emphasized (You may attach additional pages if necessary)

Physical Activity

- Students are allowed at least 20 minutes daily of recess^{iv}

- Certified physical education teachers teach four quarters (36 weeks) of physical education for kindergarten through fifth grades per year^v

- The physical education curriculum combines meaningful content, opportunities to learn, and appropriate instruction^{vi}

- The school incorporates physical activity into the school day and works to limit extended periods of inactivity^{vii}

- Please list and briefly describe any additional activities/programs/opportunities for physical activity either before, during, or after school (You may attach additional pages if necessary)

Mental Health

- The school has a policy in place regarding school safety, civility, and bullying^{viii}

- The school communicates with parents, families, and the community about school policies, regulations, and other general information using various methods, media, resources, times, and languages^{ix}

- The school implements coordinated programs of Student Services for all students which include a School Counseling Program, Pupil Personnel Program, School Psychology Program, and School Health Services^x

- Participates in the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

- Please list and briefly describe any additional activities/programs/opportunities for emphasizing holistic and mental health activities (You may attach additional pages if necessary)

Safety

- The school implements appropriate visitor processes, maintain visitor log records, manage visitors on school grounds^{xi}

- The goal of the Health Education curriculum is for students to demonstrate the ability to utilize knowledge of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs to develop skills and attitudes that promote drug and violence-free living^{xii}

- The school has a policy in place that establishes expectations for behaviors that encourage safe and nurturing school environments and provides parameters for disciplinary and corrective responses to behavior that compromises the safety and well being of students, staff, and others^{xiii}

- Please list and briefly describe any additional activities/programs/opportunities for emphasizing safety for students and the school environment (You may attach additional pages if necessary)

Environmental Health

Participate in the School Environment Team (SET) Project to properly maintain school environments that enhance the ability of students to learn, and teachers and staff to perform their jobs

The school has a policy in place which helps to prevent the use of tobacco products by students, support cessation efforts, maintain a tobacco-free environment, and delineate the consequences for violations of the policy^{xiv}

Please list and briefly describe any additional activities/programs/opportunities where students are engaged in environmental health activities, e.g. student committees, on-going projects, green activities, etc. (You may attach additional pages if necessary)

D.) Mail this completed application form and check list, Innovation Award essay, and two letters of support to:

Takeshia Campbell
Healthy Howard Coordinator
Howard County Health Department
7178 Columbia Gateway Dr.
Columbia, MD 21046

For questions please contact Takeshia Campbell at 410.313.6274 or
tacampbell@howardcountymd.gov

DEADLINE TO APPLY: FEBRUARY 26, 2010
Awards Committee will make selections in APRIL 2010
Winners will be notified by MAY 2010

Thank you for your submission and your help to promote a healthy Howard County!

For complete policy and procedure details please visit
<http://www.hcpss.org/board/policies/>

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- ⁱ**Note:** Howard County Public School System Board of Education Policy 9090-PR, section IV B
- ⁱⁱHoward County Public School System Board of Education Policy 9090-PR, section IV B 1b
- ⁱⁱⁱHoward County Public School System Board of Education Policy 9090-PR, section V
- ^{iv}Howard County Public School System Board of Education Policy 9090-PR, section III A
- ^vHoward County Public School System Board of Education Policy 9090-PR, section II B 1
- ^{vi}Howard County Public School System Board of Education Policy 9090-PR, section II. Code of Maryland Regulations 13A.04.13.
- ^{vii}Howard County Public School System Board of Education Policy 9090-PR, section III
- ^{viii}Howard County Public School System Board of Education Policy 1040, "Safe School Environments," effective July 1, 2007. Howard County Public School System Board of Education Policy 1000, "Civility," effective January 23, 2007. Howard County Public School System Board of Education Policy 1060, "Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation"
- ^{ix}Howard County Public School System Board of Education Policy 10000, "Parent, Family, and Community Involvement," effective January 23, 2007.
- ^xCode of Maryland Regulations 13A.05.05.02-15
- ^{xi}Howard County Public School System Board of Education Policy 3020, "Trespassing or Willful Disturbance," effective July 1, 2006.
- ^{xii}Howard County Public School System Board of Education Policy 9230, "Alcohol, Other Drugs, Prescription Medication, and Over the Counter Medication," effective January 12, 2006.
- ^{xiii}Howard County Public School System Board of Education Policy 1040, "Safe School Environments," effective July 1, 2007.
- ^{xiv}Howard County Public School System Board of Education Policy 9240, "Student Use of and Possession of Tobacco Products," effective July 1, 2009 and Policy 1050, "Tobacco Free Environment," effective July 1, 2009.

2009 Healthy Elementary School Innovation Award Winners

Centennial Lane Elementary – Wellness Snack Pilot Program

In 2008, the PTA Wellness Committee launched the “Wellness Snack Pilot Program” (WSPP) to enable students to apply their health curriculum during lunchtime and contribute to the development of lifelong eating habits. The cafeteria snack bar is open daily after lunch for students to purchase snack foods. The “wellness snacks” (natural or organic products without additives, preservatives, chemicals, or artificial sweeteners) rank among the top purchases made by students.

Gorman Crossing Elementary – Family Fitness Program

Physical Education teachers have implemented a number of programs to improve health and well-being of students and their families. Now in its third year, between 45 & 60 families participate in the “Family Fitness Program” (FFP). FFP includes weekly 30 minute exercise sessions. Student participation is rewarded with school-wide recognition, certificates, & t-shirts.

Lisbon Elementary – Students for Safe Schools Program

The “Students for Safe Schools” initiative at Lisbon seeks to establish a healthy school environment, reduce bullying, and increase self-esteem and mutual respect throughout the community. Students review the school’s anti-bullying policy and participate in the Safe School Challenge poster contest. Also, the school’s Read to Me program uses books with anti-bullying themes.

St. John’s Lane Elementary – Mind & Muscles Program

The “Mind & Muscles” (or “M&M”) program seeks to promote a healthy balance between physical and mental activity among all students. Students record their physical activity and mental activity (reading) over a six month period. The “mind” goal is to read for 15-20 minutes, five times a week; and the “muscles” goal is to exercise for 15-20 minutes, three times a week. Students who successfully complete the M&M goals each month receive prizes donated by local business partners. Those completing M&M goals for five out of six months participate in the “M&M Ball” where they receive additional prizes. Over 300 students participated this year.

West Friendship Elementary – Waste Free Lunches Challenge

The “Waste-Free Lunches Challenge” is part of the school’s Green School re-certification effort. Developed by fifth grade students to reduce the impact of waste in landfills, this program persuades students and staff to pack waste-free lunches. The Waste-Free Lunches Challenge is currently in effect on Wednesdays, but students hope to have it every day of the week.