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Michigan School Wellness Awards Highlight Importance of Student Health

LANSING, Mich. – Michigan schools are taking the initiative to build healthier school environments as a part of the Michigan Health and Wellness 4 x 4 Plan. In recognition of these efforts, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and Governor Rick Snyder are recognizing 24 Michigan schools for fostering healthy eating, physical activity habits, and tobacco-free lifestyles among students.

"Throughout the 24 schools recognized today, more than 10,000 students have been impacted by the positive changes made in their school environments," said Nick Lyon, director of the MDHHS. "The effort put forth by these schools to promote healthy lifestyles has helped contribute to a decline in childhood obesity and is proof that Michigan is moving in the right direction."

The Michigan School Wellness Award program is part of the Governor's Health and Wellness 4 x 4 Plan. MDHHS, in collaboration with the Michigan Department of Education, the United Dairy Industry of Michigan, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Michigan Action for Healthy Kids, Healthy Kids Healthy Michigan and the Michigan Health and Wellness Education Workgroup today recognized Michigan's award-winning schools at a special ceremony at the State Capitol.

The Michigan School Wellness Award program aims to engage schools statewide in creating healthy school environments by establishing Coordinated School Health Teams, completing the Healthy School Action Tools and implementing sustainable policy and environmental changes. Schools that have achieved each of these elements are recognized with the top level Gold award.

This year's winners laud such achievements as no-cost physical activity opportunities before and after school, universal breakfast, alternative breakfast methods, school gardens, developing and implementing policies related to healthy eating, tobacco free environments, physical education; and promoting healthy habits to school staff members. The winners of this year's School Wellness Awards include:

Honorable Mention

- Barber Focus School of Math, Science and Technology in Highland Park
- Onaway Elementary School in Onaway

Bronze

- Akron-Fairgrove Elementary School in Akron
- Allendale Middle School in Allendale

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- Belding Middle School in Belding
- Fairview School in Lansing
- James T. Jones Elementary School in Gladstone
- Laker Middle/High School in Pigeon
- Monroe Co. Youth Center in Monroe
- Pullman Elementary School in Pullman
- Torrey Hill Intermediate School in Fenton
- Vista Charter Academy in Wyoming

Silver

- Cass Elementary School in Livonia
- R.W. Kidder Middle School in Jackson
- Fitzgerald Senior High School in Warren
- Three Lakes Academy in Curtis
- Universal Learning Academy in Westland
- William Beaumont Elementary School in Waterford
- Woodlands Developmental Center in Marysville

Gold

- Atherton Elementary School in Burton
- Carstens Elementary School in Detroit
- Mt. Clemens Montessori Academy in Mt. Clemons
- New Haven High School in New Haven
- NorthWest High School in Jackson

To apply for the program, schools provide information about nutrition, physical education/ activity, and tobacco-free practices and submit at least one success story.

To view school award winners and learn more about the School Wellness Award Program and other resources available for schools, please visit www.mihealthtools.org/healthyschools.asp. For more information about the Michigan Health and Wellness 4x4 Plan, visit www.michigan.gov/healthymichigan.

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