



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Office of the Governor

Mark R. Warner
Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 16, 2005

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GOVERNOR WARNER PRESENTS
HEALTHY VIRGINIANS AWARDS TO SIX SCHOOLS
~Mantua Elementary in Fairfax County Earns Gold Award ~

FAIRFAX COUNTY -- Governor Mark R. Warner today presented the Governor's Gold Award for Best Practices in Nutrition and Physical Activity to Mantua Elementary School in Fairfax County in recognition of the school's success in promoting good health and nutrition. Five schools earned Bronze or Silver Awards. The Nutrition and Physical Activity Awards Program is part of Governor Warner's *Healthy Virginians* Initiative and is designed to encourage policies and practices that promote good nutrition and regular physical activity.

"What we learned when we kicked off Healthy Virginians last year was that some Virginia schools were doing well on healthy lunches and breakfasts, some on good vending options, and some on physical exercise," said Governor Warner. "The Governor's Gold Award encourages schools to track all three categories and try to do their best all around. By taking on healthy lifestyles, the schools are combating childhood obesity, hypertension, and other preventable diseases. And healthy kids are always better learners. It's my hope principals and parents will demand better menus and more exercise in every Virginia school."

Governor Warner presented a Gold Award banner and a resolution to Mantua Elementary School and congratulated the school for promoting healthy foods, drinks, and snacks and encouraging regular physical activity during and outside of the school day. The five Silver and Bronze Award winners also received banners and resolutions of commendation for their success in promoting student health.

Silver Award winners include:

- Madison Heights Elementary, Amherst County Public Schools
- Walker Upper Elementary, Charlottesville Public Schools

Bronze Award winners are:

- Carver Elementary, Henrico County Public Schools
- Ladysmith Primary, Caroline County Public Schools
- Lyles Crouch Elementary, Alexandria City Public Schools.

Schools participate in the Healthy Virginians Initiative by recording data and information pertaining to nutrition and physical activity on an interactive online scorecard. The scorecard, which went online February 1, 2005, was developed by the Virginia Department of Education in collaboration with the Virginia Information Providers Network, also known as VIPNet.

Schools earn points based on their implementation of best practices such as the integration of health and physical education concepts across the curriculum, providing adequate time for physical education and recess, encouraging the participation of students and families in healthy activities, and offering meals and food items that are low-fat and meet nutritional standards. After receiving feedback from the scorecard, schools are able to adjust or change their policies and practices and resubmit data.

The best practices measured by the scorecard are based on the recommendations of national and state organizations, including the Joint Committee of the Board of Education and Board of Health and Virginia Action for Healthy Kids, whose honorary chairman is Virginia First Lady Lisa Collis.

Recognizing the important role schools can play in combating problems associated with poor nutrition and inactivity in children, Congress adopted a provision requiring school divisions to establish local wellness policies by the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year. These local wellness policies must address nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. Schools that have implemented the nutrition and physical activity standards addressed in the Governor's Nutrition and Physical Activity Award scorecard are well on their way to meeting Congress' local wellness policy requirement.

In addition, Governor Warner applauded the 2005 General Assembly for its approval of his proposal to increase the availability of school breakfast programs through a \$1.2 million state budget amendment.

"This is the first time that the state has stepped up to the plate to help fund this important program," Governor Warner said. "We can receive even more money from the federal government for this program, because for every dollar we spend the federal government provides up to six dollars."

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