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Sixty-six Indiana schools receive Healthy Hoosier School Award

Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Suellen Reed today announced that 66 Indiana schools received the 2007-08 Healthy Hoosier School Award sponsored by the Indiana Department of Education, the Indiana Dairy & Nutrition Council and Clarian Health Partners.

“Healthy students make better learners, and this award is a great opportunity to recognize the steps Indiana schools are taking to improve student health and to combat childhood obesity,” said Reed.

About the award

Since 2004, the Healthy Hoosier School Award has honored Indiana schools that have policies and educational programs in place to promote good nutrition and increased physical activity among their students. Nine schools received the Gold Level Award, 35 schools received the Silver Level Award and 22 received the Bronze Level Award this year. The top point winning school in the elementary division and middle/high school division will each receive \$500. All Gold Level schools receive \$200.

“We are extremely pleased with this year’s results. The application process itself requires committed leadership, so for 66 schools to receive awards represents a significant trend,” said Beth Foland, a Registered Dietitian with the Indiana Department of Education and Indiana Action for Healthy Kids liaison. “We applaud these schools for placing a high priority on teaching children healthy habits that will last a lifetime.”

Indiana Action for Healthy Kids

The Healthy Hoosier School Award was developed by Indiana Action for Healthy Kids, an affiliate of the national nonprofit organization, Action for Healthy Kids. Action for Healthy Kids is the only nonprofit organization formed specifically to address the epidemic of overweight, undernourished and sedentary youth by focusing on changes at school. Schools play a critical role in addressing childhood nutrition and obesity as roughly half of a child’s daily food intake is consumed at school.

The top five leading causes of death – heart disease, cancer, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and diabetes – are directly linked to unhealthy lifestyles. Poor nutrition and a lack of physical activity are major contributors to unhealthy lifestyles. Unfortunately, such habits are often established during youth and extend into adulthood.

Learn more about the Healthy Hoosier School Award, the Indiana Action for Healthy Kids coalition and related efforts at www.indianaactionforhealthykids.org and www.doe.in.gov/food.

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