



School Wellness Newsletter

spring
into
action
2009

and the award goes to...

The Oregon Department of Education is proud to announce the winners of the second annual School Wellness Awards. Three schools were selected to receive the award, based on their exemplary school wellness policy implementation. Each winning school receives \$2,500 and a banner of recognition, thanks to generous sponsorship by the Oregon Dairy Council. Congratulations to Blossom Gulch Elementary (Coos Bay), Centennial Learning Center (Portland), and Mosier Community School!

summer food programs

Are there children in your community who will go hungry this summer? Children in low-income communities are eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals during the school year through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. But those programs end when school ends for the summer. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Summer Food Service Program helps fill the hunger gap. Children don't need to go hungry in the summer. For more information, see the **Additional Resources** section.



spring into action

Welcome to the *Spring 2009* edition of the *School Wellness Newsletter*. In this issue you will find articles to help school staff, parents, and students **spring into action** and support nutrition and physical activity at school. This newsletter focuses on successes shared by schools around the state – from walking and biking activities to planning a school garden. This issue also provides nutrition resources to help students and their families during difficult economic times. With hunger and food insecurity on the rise, an increasing number of students are eating less at home and counting more on the meals they receive at school. Read *Eating School Lunch: The Best Deal in Town* for insight into the value of the school lunch program - both nutritionally and economically.

With this edition of the School Wellness Newsletter we are asking our readers to complete a survey. The survey will take about five minutes and will provide us, the writers, with valuable information on how schools use the newsletter and how it can be improved. Complete the survey at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=XbsrzksIQTHHvCpVU7pg_3d_3d

Your comments about this newsletter are welcome year-round. We invite you to share stories, ideas and activities from your own efforts in promoting nutrition and physical activity at school. Send comments to Jeri Greenberg at jerig@oregondairyCouncil.org



let's get movin'!

In an effort to improve fitness and sustain walking and biking efforts, many Oregon schools provide walk and bike activities throughout the school year. Here are some suggested activities from schools around the state:

- * Bike safety classes
- * Bike Rodeo
- * Walking school buses
- * Afternoon bike ride program
- * Walk/Bike Fridays
- * Pedestrian safety classes
- * Bike repair workshops
- * Kids use bikes for nearby field trips
- * "Golden Sneaker" award for the classroom with the most walkers and bikers each month

ready for it?

The get movin' challenge. Walk + Bike Challenge Month is coming in May. Portland State University and Portland area elementary schools will face off for the greatest number of students walking and biking to school. Registration opens soon at <http://www.walknbike.org/site/>

TV Turnoff Week is April 20th-26th. Take part and take a break from screen time. Contact Robin Stanton at robin.w.stanton@state.or.us to order materials to use with your students.

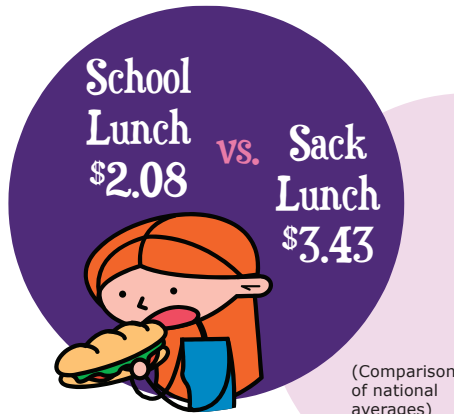
healthy schools for kids.

eating school lunch: The Best Deal in Town

Many families are discovering that school meals are a great value! Nationwide, school nutrition programs serve as safety nets for families facing financial difficulties as the economy falters. For a national average price of \$2.08, children can purchase healthy, high quality lunches at a lower cost than bringing food from home. In addition, students who eat school lunches consume fewer calories from fat.

Every school lunch includes five great choices:

- Milk** fat free or 1% - flavored or regular
- Vegetables** from jicama sticks to baby carrots and broccoli
- Fruit** everything from kiwi to locally grown apples
- Grains** more whole grain items like rolls, sandwich breads and pizza crusts
- Meat or meat alternate** white meat chicken, bean chili, lean beef



In comparison, the estimated national average of a sack lunch from home was \$3.43 last school year.¹

Sack lunches from home often contain:

- Higher fat lunch meats on white bread
- Salty snacks are included more often than vegetables and fruit
- Sweet snacks and juice drinks

Both nutritionally and economically school lunch is an incredible bargain!

¹ According to a meal cost analysis by Alice Jo Rainville, PhD, RD, CHE, SNS of Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI

school garden SUCCESS

A school garden begins with a supportive and committed team. Organize a “vision meeting” to put together a garden plan. Invite your food service manager, parents, teachers, and someone from the maintenance staff. Also consider a master gardener from your local extension program or a community garden organization. For more ideas and assistance contact Joan Ottinger, the ODE Farm to School and School Garden Coordinator at joan.ottinger@state.or.us or visit the School Garden Wizard at <http://www.schoolgardenwizard.org/>.

additional resources

USDA Summer Food Service Program. Call Barbara Cracknell at 503-947-5911 to learn more or visit: ODE Summer Food Service Program <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=208>

USDA Summer Food Page <http://www.summerfood.usda.gov/> Beginning in June, call 1-800-SAFENET to find meal sites in your community

Healthy Recipes. Nutritious, low-cost recipes from Oregon State University Extension Service. <http://healthyrecipes.oregonstate.edu>

Eat Well for Less. Plan healthful meals, prepare tasty low-cost foods, and stretch food dollars. <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/fcd/nutrition/ewfl/index.php>

Finding Help in Tough Times, OSU Extension Service. http://extension.oregonstate.edu/emergency/tough_times.php

View the **2008-09 ODE School Wellness Award application** at <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=270>

beans

A Healthy Addition on Any Budget

Beans are a quick and nutrient-rich addition to your diet that won't break the bank. With many varieties to choose from, and well under a dollar per serving, you can't lose. Beans provide many nutrients, including fiber, protein and iron. Enjoy beans without paying for it later by following these tips:

- * start with small portions and gradually add more beans to your plate
- * rinse canned beans before using
- * discard water used to soak dried beans and rinse beans before cooking
- * try over the counter gas-reducing products, like Beano

bean dip athenos

Ingredients

- * 2 15-oz cans, or 3 1/2 cups cooked dried garbanzo or navy beans
- * 2/3 cup sour cream
- * 2 tsp minced garlic
- * 4 tsp balsamic vinegar
- * 1/4 cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes
- * 1/4 cup finely chopped parsley
- * 2 Tbsp chopped olives
- * Assorted vegetables and crackers

Preparation

In a food processor blend beans, sour cream, garlic, and vinegar until smooth; stir in sun-dried tomatoes, parsley, and chopped olives. Place mix in bowl; serve with assorted vegetables and crackers.

For more tips and recipes on preparing dried beans visit the U.S. Dry Bean Council: <http://www.usdrybeans.com/consumers/prePrep.aspx>