

## Community Partnerships Support and Strengthen Franklin School

Franklin School in Corvallis continues to promote healthy student behavior with fun and creative programs after winning a 2008 Oregon School Wellness Award. Franklin promotes nutrition education in the classroom, cafeteria, at staff meetings and in the community.

They have used their \$2,500 prize to contribute to the purchase of a climbing structure for the playground. Students were involved in the equipment decision process and are enjoying their new structure.

A favorite nutrition education activity at Franklin is Mix It Up, which occurs during lunch four times a year. Last spring, Mix It Up focused on fruit and dairy. Students identified these two food groups in their own lunch and listed ways fruit and dairy could be “mixed up” and enjoyed during the summer. Students were also able to sample organic strawberries and ice cream with the support from partners; Corvallis School District Food Services and Fred Meyer.

Franklin also incorporates nutrition education into the classroom using age-appropriate curricula for its K-8 students. *Start Smart Eating and Reading* teaches kindergarten students about the importance of nutrition and breakfast through fun lessons, children’s stories and simple food activities. Older students learn about nutrition and physical activity with *Calcium: Got It? Get It!* and *Exercise Your Options*.

Walk + Bike to School was originally a one-time event in the fall and has become a monthly activity for Franklin students and families. Students who participate are served a free, healthy breakfast to fuel their day on Walk + Bike to School mornings. Franklin’s menus feature dairy, whole grains and locally grown produce.

Community partnerships are a large component of the successful health and wellness programs at Franklin. Some of Franklin’s partners include: Jamba Juice, First Alternative Food Co-op, Corvallis School District Food Service, OSU Athletics, Fred Meyer and Play It Again Sports. Many of Franklin’s community partners have also become active on Franklin’s School Wellness Team.

Gigi Sims, Healthy Kids Learn Better Grant Coordinator and Health Education Specialist, shares her thoughts on developing and sustaining relationships with community partners, “Prompt thank you notes from the students and staff with photos of school-wide events, media coverage, and inviting them to school-year events are important.”

The Oregon Department of Education launched the Oregon School Wellness Awards in 2007-08 to recognize schools that went beyond their USDA required policy to further improve student health and wellness. Three schools were awarded a banner, certificate of recognition and a cash prize.

Nutrition Education Services/Oregon Dairy Council is the title sponsor of this award. Visit [www.oregondairycouncil.org](http://www.oregondairycouncil.org) to find free downloadable resources and an online catalog.

