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FLORIDA SCHOOLS EARN NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT FOR EXCELLENCE IN HEALTH



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Tallahassee, Fla. —Two Florida schools are making national headlines for their efforts in moving health forward. Recently, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation recognized the nation's leading schools, industry leaders, corporate partners and out-of-school time programs at its annual Leader's Summit in Washington, D.C. The two Florida schools chosen received Gold-level recognition. Only 10 schools nationwide achieved the Gold-level.

"This is a time to celebrate Florida's excellence in school health programs," said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. "We are helping students to stay well in school and develop healthy habits for a lifetime."

The two Florida schools achieving Gold-level recognition are DeSoto Trail Elementary School in Tallahassee and John M. Sexton Elementary School in St. Petersburg.

The 376 schools recognized at the 2015 Leader's Summit have distinguished themselves with healthy eating and physical activity programs and policies that meet or exceed stringent standards set by the Healthy Schools Program. Schools are eligible for National Healthy Schools Awards at the Bronze, Silver, or Gold level, based on the standards they achieve, and all recognized schools also achieve national recognition with Let's Move! Active Schools.

Education Commissioner Pam Stewart said, "We know that a healthy lifestyle is linked to academic achievement. I applaud the educators at DeSoto Trail and John M. Sexton Elementary Schools for making the connection between mind and body, and improving the wellness of their students."

The Florida Department of Health and the Florida Department of Education have partnered for more than 20 years to promote implementation of a Coordinated School Health (CSH) approach in all Florida Schools. CSH is an effective strategy to assist in the development and enhancement of state, district and school-based infrastructures that protect and maintain student and staff health and support academic achievement.

The eight-component CSH model has been shown to be highly effective in facilitating the creation of policies and environments that provide students and staff the opportunity

to reach their full potential by removing health-related barriers to academic success.

The components are:

- Health Education;
- Physical Education;
- Health Services;
- Nutrition Services;
- Counseling, Psychological and Social Services;
- Healthy School Environment;
- Health Promotion for Staff; and
- Parent and Community Involvement.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website has more information about the [Coordinated School Health model](#).

For more information about the innovative efforts the 10 Gold-level schools initiated and the full list of the 376 awardees [see the Alliance's website](#).

About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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About Healthiest Weight Florida

Healthiest Weight Florida is a public-private collaboration bringing together state agencies, not-for-profit organizations, businesses and entire communities to help Florida's children and adults make consistent, informed choices about healthy eating and active living. To learn more about how to be active and make nutritious food choices, visit www.healthiestweightflorida.com.