



Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

200 West Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • 410-767-0100 • 410-333-6442 TTY/TDD

TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*
DATE: February 23, 2010
SUBJECT: Recognition of the Take 15 for Physical Activity Poster Contest Winners

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to recognize the winners of the *Take 15 for Physical Activity* Poster Contest winners.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The topic of children's health and wellness has become a major focal point in the news media, as well as in local school systems. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is committed to addressing the educational needs of children in Maryland's public schools. These educational needs also include the health and wellness of all children.

In 2006, MSDE created as a statewide initiative a campaign entitled *Take 15 for the Health of It*. It was designed to help Maryland families develop strategies for healthy living. The campaign provided practical tools families can use to help their children develop good eating habits, enjoy physical activity, and talk about sensitive issues like substance abuse. By exploring health issues with their children, parents will be able to reinforce the importance of making good choices about food, physical activity, drug and alcohol use, and more. Parents and educators were able to visit the MSDE Web site at www.marylandpublicschools.org for information and resources for children from birth through age 18 and links to valuable resources for the family. Materials were also distributed through schools and public libraries.

The *Take 15 for Physical Activity* website provided practical tools that families, children, daycare providers, and educators could use to help children talk about sensitive issues like substance abuse and body image and how to make exercise and physical activity fun. A popular component of the website is a monthly calendar of suggested activities. The calendars are available from early childhood through the secondary school level. Additional initiatives also connected to the *Take 15 for Physical Activity* included:



- Development of a tri-fold brochure that spotlights, “Top 100 Ways to Increase Physical Activity for Parents.”
- Distribution of Take 15 Bookmarks and Flyers to principals and school nurses. The bookmark and flyer explain some of the elements of the website and were available (via download) on the website.
- Development and distribution of a handout/poster on "Ten Ways to Increase Physical Activity". Posters were also distributed to various pediatric offices throughout the State.
- Maryland Parent Teachers Association and the Maryland Academy of Pediatricians have partnered with MSDE on this physical activity initiative and have shared information with parents through workshops, conventions, public libraries, pediatricians’ offices and the State Fair.

SUMMARY:

The *Take 15 for Physical Activity* Poster Contest was held during the fall of 2009 to create awareness about the benefits of physical activity. School health nurses, physical education and art teachers collaborated in this effort. It is significant to note that the contest was open to students in grades 3, 4, and 5 and over 900 posters were submitted. We are pleased to present the winners of the contest to the State Board, along with the sponsoring organizations that included the Maryland PTA, the State School Nurses Association, and the Maryland Association for Health Physical Education Recreation and Dance.

ACTION:

This item is for recognition and information only

NSG/mwm