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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RECEIVES GRANT TO IMPROVE SCHOOL NUTRITION

FUNDS TO SUPPORT HEALTH, WELLNESS IN SCHOOLS

BALTIMORE (September 30, 2013) – The Maryland State Department of Education’s (MSDE) School and Community Nutrition Programs Branch has been awarded \$30,000 in Team Nutrition Grant funding by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

MSDE will issue sub-grants to three Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to support their application for the HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC). The HUSSC is a voluntary certification initiative that recognizes schools that have created healthier school environments through promotion of nutrition and physical activity. Schools apply for and are awarded either Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Gold of Distinction status, with the criteria becoming more rigorous with each level.

The grant will assist the schools in: modifying menus to meet HUSSC standards; evaluating a la carte offerings; involving principals and wellness policy committees to develop wellness policies that meet HUSSC requirements; implementing nutrition and physical education requirements; and, designating staff time for training and completion of the HUSSC applications.

The grant will accomplish *two goals*:

1. Promote the creation of healthy school environments in Maryland schools through participation in the HUSSC.
2. Discern lessons learned and promising practices from the experiences of LEAs involved in the grant training.

“It is important for Maryland schools to reach their full potential for excellence in providing nutritious meals, as well as promoting the total well-being of children through nutrition and physical activity,” said Dr. Lillian Lowery, State Superintendent of Schools.

For more information on this Team Nutrition Grant, please contact Ameer Madura, Staff Specialist, at MSDE’s School and Community Nutrition Programs Branch, at 410-767-0208 or amadura@msde.state.md.us.

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