



CALIFORNIA TASK FORCE
ON
Youth and Workplace Wellness

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 25, 2006

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DALY CITY –Schools are increasingly asked to not only teach basic academic skills, but to encourage students to take better care of their health. For the third year, State Superintendent Jack O’Connell and Senator Tom Torlakson are awarding the Superintendents’ Challenge to three California schools for their innovative approach to youth wellness. The Superintendents’ Challenge is a unique public-private initiative that encourages innovative nutrition and physical activity policies in California schools.

“These three extraordinary, winning school districts rose to the challenge aimed at increasing the health and well-being of their students,” said O’Connell. “The real winners today are the students who will reap the benefits of developing healthy habits at an early age.” Though districts are already teeming with work and academic requirements, California schools have taken the federal challenge to develop wellness policies seriously.

The winners of this year’s Superintendents’ Challenge are:

- Kernville Union School District, Kern County, Wellness Policy and Implementation of Policy
- Jefferson Union High School District, Exemplary Wellness Policy
- Stanislaus Union School District, Exemplary Wellness Policy

In an era when 1 out of 3 youth are expected to contract diabetes, with even higher rates suggested for people of color, the school is a natural place to begin combating this epidemic. “We know our children are not as healthy as they have been in the past. In fact, this may be the first generation where parents outlive their children,” said Senator Tom Torlakson (D-Antioch). “We need to reverse that trend, and our schools are helping by providing healthy food choices and appropriate physical activity.”

Winning policies demonstrated an innovative and integrated approach to youth wellness. It’s important to see the school campus as a whole entity, where advertising on the football field is as influential as is the food served in the a la carte line. This year, physical activity and nutrition policies walk in concert with one another, noting the importance of a combined approach to youth wellness.

“This is not a competition between physical health and intellectual strength. Every study shows that children who are healthier do better in school academically,” said Senator Torlakson.

- **WHAT:** Superintendents’ Challenge Award Ceremony: California Task Force on Youth and Workplace Wellness and the office of State Superintendent, Jack O’Connell
- **WHEN:** 9:00 a.m. Monday, June 6, 2006 – Award Ceremony and tour of Jefferson High School’s nutrition program
- **WHERE:** Jefferson High School, 6996 Mission Street, Daly City, CA.

A project of the
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