



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Norwalk School Awarded HealthierUS School Challenge Bronze Level Distinction

Brookside Elementary School at Norwalk Public Schools joins an elite group of over 1500 schools certified as HUSSC schools. These schools are committed to promoting healthy lifestyles choices and creating a wholesome school environment.

The USDA established the HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC) to recognize schools participating in the National School Lunch Program that create healthier school environments by providing nutrition education, nutritious food and beverage choices, physical education and opportunities for physical activity. This initiative is a main component in First Lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move!" campaign, an effort to end the childhood obesity epidemic.

This recognition is the product of a joint effort between Brookside Elementary School and Whitsons School Nutrition, food service providers at Norwalk Public Schools. Lisa Cantor, Food Service Director and Dr. Angela Vicenzi, Brookside School Nurse, were the main drivers of this initiative along with a review team composed of a cross section of the Norwalk school community: members of the Parent Teacher Organization, Brookside teachers, principal and administrators.

In order to qualify for the Bronze award, Brookside Elementary had to demonstrate the school meets all the HUSSC nutritional requirements on an on-going basis, serving a variety of healthier food that appeal to the students, planning meals that emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products; and that include lean proteins and foods low in saturated fats, *trans* fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars. Furthermore, the school was required to prove its compliance with the physical activity criteria of the HUSSC according to age group.

In the award ceremony, John Magnarelli, Director of Special Nutrition Programs - USDA, presented a HealthierUS Bronze School banner, a commemorative plaque and a check for \$500 to the school.

With this award, Norwalk Public Schools reiterates its commitment to promoting a healthy school environment for its students. Currently, eight schools in the district are working towards earning this Bronze Award recognition. According to Lisa Cantor, "Our objective is for all the schools in the district to become HUSSC schools!"