



# AACPS Wellness School of Distinction Award Application

**DEADLINE TO SUBMIT APPLICATION: June 26, 2014**

*The Anne Arundel County Public Schools Wellness School of Distinction Award recognizes schools that demonstrate a high priority for the health and well being of students, staff, and school supporters through the implementation of or improvement of practices that have produced positive outcomes for the entire school community.*

*With a resolution to cultivate a culture of wellness throughout school system facilities, AACPS has made a firm commitment to this goal through the development of a wellness policy and committee focused on important initiatives to infuse wellness in every aspect of the public education environment: the provision of a nutritious school lunch program; the implementation of a focused health, FACS, and physical education curriculum; the promotion of staff wellness programs; and the augmentation of resources to support employee wellness concerns. Anne Arundel County Public Schools seeks to recognize those school communities that have made efforts beyond the programs and resources already established by the school system.*

## GUIDELINES & INSTRUCTIONS

### Preparing Your Application

The application should provide the award selection panel with detailed information that will demonstrate why your school should be recognized as a leader in wellness initiatives for its entire school community. As such, completion of the application by a school nominating committee that includes students, staff, parents, and other community members is a wise strategy. The selection committee will give special attention to applications that prove students have been actively involved in implementing and participating in the school's wellness initiatives.

**Designation Renewal:** 2011 award winners are now eligible to renew their award status. Completion of the this application should reflect expansion and/or improvement of wellness initiatives at your school.

The examples documented in this application describe activities and initiatives that go beyond AACPS programs and resources within a prescribed timeframe: **August 1, 2012 – May 31, 2014.**

The AACPS Wellness School of Distinction Award application can only be accessed and submitted via the school system Intranet. A link to the application will be provided to principals in a separate e-mail message inviting schools to apply for the award. To be considered for review, your application package must contain all of the following information:

### Part I Cover Sheet

This form must be completed with final approval by principal signature. The names of the required members of the school's nominating committee must also be included in order to proceed with the application. Schools that show diverse participation by students, staff, parents, and community members will be evaluated favorably.

### Part II A Summary of Your School's Wellness Culture

This one-page summary should describe your school's commitment to the wellness of students, staff, and overall community.

## **Part III** Documentation of Required Criteria

To be eligible for the AACPS Wellness School of Distinction Award, your school must demonstrate that it meets the following eight criteria, which are inspired by the eight components of a coordinated school health program as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control.

***Remember, descriptions should detail efforts made by your school that go beyond the scope of curriculum and system-wide programs.***

A written description, in the space provided in this application, must be submitted for each criterion that details what your school has accomplished or how it has improved upon a practice/activity in that criterion. In addition, supporting documentation may be uploaded to enhance your application, e.g. a letter from a supporting community group/member, a portfolio of photos from a wellness event, etc., to verify that these achievements have been accomplished. Please note that you do not have to simply write narratives to demonstrate that your school has met a specific requirement. As long as your description does not exceed the space provided, you may detail your school initiatives in the manner you deem most successful.

### **Health education initiatives:**

Explain how your school has communicated relevant health topics to students, e.g., health fair during the school day, assembly on a health topic.

### **Physical activity initiatives:**

Explain how your school has incorporated physical activity into the school day or conducted events for students beyond the school day with a focus on fitness, e.g., yoga during morning announcements, movement during class time for the purpose of energizing students and emphasizing fitness.

### **Allied health personnel partnerships/initiatives:**

Explain how your school has optimized a relationship with an allied health professional to promote relevant health topics with students and/or the school community, e.g., school nurse conducts hygiene workshops, local doctor visits classes to speak about injury prevention.

### **Nutrition initiatives:**

Explain how your school brings awareness to students regarding healthy food choices, e.g., Tasting of the Greens, creating a school garden, FACS competitions, health-focused fundraisers and celebrations.

### **Mental wellness initiatives:**

Explain how your school addresses pertinent social, emotional, and/or mental issues relevant to your student needs, e.g., creation of a club or program due to a particular student concern, prevention campaigns initiated by students or the school.

### **School environment initiatives:**

Explain how your school encourages environmental literacy and addresses a healthy physical climate, e.g., recognition as a green school, making recycling a community activity, electricity conservation campaign.

### **Staff health initiatives:**

Explain how your school promotes mental wellness and healthy lifestyle choices, as well as addresses staff wellness needs, e.g., before- or after-school wellness activities with staff, Biggest Loser competitions.

**Family/community involvement initiatives:** Explain how your school involves parents, businesses, and community members in the school's wellness goals, e.g., wellness activities at back-to-school night, Tasting of the Greens.



## APPLICATION REVIEW AND EVALUATION

The award selection panel is made up of members of the school system School Health Advisory Council, a fair cross section of health- and wellness-focused education professionals, students, and community members who possess strong knowledge of the overall wellness goals of AACPS and represent the eight components of a coordinated school health program.

Each application is thoroughly assessed by the panel to decide whether the school was successful in meeting the AACPS Wellness School of Distinction Award criteria. If the review panel has any questions about the application, the representatives from the panel may conduct a site visit or an interview.

Schools will be notified of their status via the contact person listed on the application cover sheet, with a subsequent celebration and recognition to occur during the school year. Each winning school receives a banner to display and a myriad of gifts donated by supporting sponsors.





School Name

## Part II – A Summary of Your School's Wellness Culture

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