



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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HEALTHY SCHOOLS DAY AT CAPITOL ENGAGES POLICYMAKERS IN HANDS-ON STUDENT WELLNESS ACTIVITIES

HONOLULU – As part of Education Week, the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Education (DOE) will conduct interactive demonstrations for legislators at this year's Healthy Schools Day on Wednesday, March 19, 2014, in the Capitol Rotunda from 9 to 11 a.m. Policymakers will meet student gardeners, experience a fitness assessment that DOE students receive in PE class, and compete in a fitness relay race. Students in grades K-12 will assist and cheer on legislators. Demonstrations will showcase policies and programs in Hawaii schools that support healthy students, including school gardening and promising practices for health and physical education (PE).

“Our successful DOH-DOE partnership has led to exceptional policies and programs for Hawaii public schools,” said Health Director Dr. Linda Rosen. “We want our senators and representatives to know about these initiatives so that we can continue to provide a healthy environment for our keiki and expand offerings statewide.”

The event will also celebrate DOE schools receiving the 2014 Excellence in Wellness Awards. The awards are presented annually to schools that have reached high levels of achievement on the DOE Wellness Guidelines, a set of standards for schools that includes benchmarks for foods and beverages offered to students, health education, physical education, and other activities that support a healthy school environment. The Excellence in Wellness Awards are given to schools that score 90 percent or above on the state's annual Safety and Wellness Survey. A total of 55 schools are receiving awards in 2014, up from 50 schools last year.

“We recognize the accomplishments of our school administrators who emphasize health and wellness,” said Superintendent Kathryn Matayoshi. “We commend them for promoting student health as it contributes to enhanced academic achievement and better learning.”

Hawaii public schools have direct contact with more than 80 percent of the state's children ages five to seventeen. School settings are an ideal location to nourish children's minds and bodies when they align classroom instruction with foods and beverages sold and offered on campus and support regular physical activity. For more information about wellness in schools, please visit:

<http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/BeyondTheClassroom/HealthAndNutrition/WellnessGuidelines/Pages/home.aspx> or <http://health.hawaii.gov/school-health/>.

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