

The seventh annual Nebraska Kids Fitness and Nutrition Day (NKFND) was held Wednesday, Oct. 10, at McCook High School, Junior High and YMCA. Four hundred twenty-seven fourth grade students from across the Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) eight-county health district participated in the one day fitness and nutrition event. Schools participating include:

Arapahoe, Cambridge, Chase County, Dundy County, Eustis-Farnam, Hayes Center, Hitchcock County, Maywood, McCook Central Elementary, McCook St. Patrick's, Medicine Valley, Perkins County, Southern Valley, Southwest and Wauneta/Palisade.

"Once again NKFND was a huge success, and the majority of that success is due to the outstanding students and excellent community volunteers that assist with the instruction of the students throughout the day!" states Carrie Goltl, McCook Public Schools and co-chairman of the event.

NKFND was developed and funded, in part, by the Nebraska Beef Council and the University of Nebraska at Kearney. SWNPHD and McCook Public Schools co-chair the event with the strong partnership of McCook YMCA, McCook Lettering, and McCook Optimist Club.

"Our community partnerships are so valuable to the success of this event," explains Myra Stoney, director at Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department. "Whether it is a financial sponsorship or manpower, it is great to see so much support, from numerous businesses and communities in southwest Nebraska. At this point, we have been able to provide this educational experience to well over 3000 students and look forward to continued support for this excellent hands-on learning opportunity."

This one day event includes six nutrition stations and 16 fitness stations. Students rotate through each highly focused station: 18 minutes at nutrition stations and seven minutes at fitness stations.

Nutrition stations include information on proper hand washing, label reading, my plate food guide, healthy snacks, proper portion sizes and energy balance. Fitness stations offer an obstacle course, parachute, scooters, stackers, bean bag toss, hurdle hopscotch, jump rope, dance twister, kick boxing, bosu balls, over/under medicine balls, disc Frisbee, chair basketball, bouncy balls, fitness Tic Tac Toe and boot camp.

"This is a fun filled day, focused on teaching youth healthy choices." states Helena T. Janousek, NKFND Coordinator at SWNPHD. "One easy choice was the healthy lunch from Sodexo that had a delicious homemade whole wheat roll with beef slices and Land of Lakes donated milk for the event. We know this can make a difference in the lives of our youth."

Over 135 volunteers were utilized teaching and assisting at each of the fitness and nutrition stations.