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ECSD NEWS RELEASE

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State Certifies Additional Schools in Healthier US School Challenge *Six ECSD Schools Attain Bronze Designation*

Pensacola, FL: The Escambia County School District is pleased to share the news that the Florida Commissioner of Agriculture, Adam H. Putnam, announced that six ECSD schools have earned Healthier US School Challenge designations. Under Commissioner Putnam's leadership, the number of certified HUSSC schools has increased from 27 schools in 2012 to a current total of 249.

In a release from the Commissioner's office, it is explained that the HealthierUS School Challenge, a joint effort with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the United States Department of Agriculture, is a voluntary certification initiative that recognizes schools' efforts to improve food and beverage options, offer nutrition education and promote physical activity. Schools must meet specific criteria, such as providing smarter snacks and opportunities for physical activity.

"It's great that these schools are providing their students the nutrition and physical activity needed for academic success," said Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam. "Our goal is to continue working with schools to increase the amount healthy choices offered to Florida's students."

In an effort to expand the program, the department offers many resources to help school districts earn HUSSC certification, including specialists throughout the state to provide personal, hands-on support. The department continually works to certify and recertify schools, as schools must re-apply for their HUSSC status every four years.

Schools can apply for different levels of designation: Bronze, Silver, Gold and Gold Award of Distinction. The following ECSD schools were recently awarded the Bronze HUSSC designation in December:

CA Weis Elementary School

Ferry Pass Elementary School

Holm Elementary School

Molino Park Elementary School

Myrtle Grove Elementary School

O.J. Semmes Elementary School

For more information about the HealthierUS School Challenge Initiative and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, visit FreshFromFlorida.com.

Media queries about Escambia County School District topics should be directed to Kim Stefansson, at 850-469-6219 or kstefansson@escambia.k12.fl.us. Like ECSD on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ecsdfl

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