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Maryland State Department of Education Awards Over \$4 Million to Maryland Schools to Provide Fresh Fruits and Vegetables to Students

Program Expands Student Access to Fresh Fruit and Vegetables; Funds Distributed to More than 180 Elementary Schools Across Maryland

BALTIMORE (September 21, 2021) – The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has awarded more than \$4.2 million in federal funds to more than 180 Maryland elementary schools across the State to help children build lifelong healthy eating habits. The funds, made available by the U. S. Department of Agriculture’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), expand student access to fresh fruits and vegetables in participating schools. School participation data for the FFVP can be found [here](#).

“Fresh fruits and vegetables are an essential part of basic nutrition that every child deserves access to,” said State Superintendent of Schools Mohammed Choudhury. “This critical federal, state and local partnership enables schools to provide students with healthy food options that help fuel overall student success and achievement.”

The FFVP supports schools with a high percentage of low-income students, who often have limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Selected schools provide students with a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, at no charge. The FFVP teaches students that fresh produce can be a healthy and delicious snack. Additionally, the Program provides an opportunity for teachers and school administrators to provide experiential nutrition education.

In order to facilitate participation for schools serving non-congregate meals, the MSDE has requested, and been approved for, a statewide waiver. The waiver allows FFVP foods to be provided to parents or guardians when they are picking up meals for their children.

For more information on Maryland’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, please contact Jill Hann of the Office of School and Community Nutrition Programs of the MSDE at Jill.Hann@Maryland.gov.

The Maryland State Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are equal opportunity employers and providers.

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