



The eighth annual Nebraska Kids Fitness and Nutrition Day (NKFND) was held Wednesday, Oct. 2 at McCook High School, Junior High and Ed Thomas YMCA with 412 fourth grade students. These students come from across the Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) eight-county health district and participated in the one-day fitness and nutrition event.

Schools participating include: Arapahoe, Cambridge, Chase County, Dundy County, Eustis-Farnam, Hayes Center, Hitchcock County, 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!" said Carrie Goltl, McCook Public Schools, one of the event chairs. "I appreciate the time dedicated by Matt Wiemers, Central Elementary PE teacher and Helena Janousek, SWNPHD in preparing the overall 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 Ed Thomas YMCA, McCook Lettering, McCook Optimist Club, Land of Lakes and the Nebraska Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

"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 3,500 students and look forward to continued support for this excellent hands-on learning opportunity."

This one-day event includes nutrition and fitness stations. Dietician Susan Hardin from McCook coordinates the instructors for the nutrition stations which present information on proper hand washing, label reading, My Plate food guidelines, healthy snacks, proper portion sizes and energy balance. They included: Kim Peters, Traci Stevens, Marti Siebrandt, Megan Taylor, Jerda Garey Vickers, Susan Harris-Broomfield, Sharlyn Coleman, Katie Graham, Lorinda Elson, Adrienne Randel and Donna Kircher.

Michelle Gonzales, Ed Thomas YMCA instructor coordinates the fitness stations and the YMCA instructors. They offered an obstacle course, parachute, scooters, stackers, hurdle hopscotch, jump rope, Kid's Zone, kick boxing, bosu balls, over/under medicine balls, disc Frisbee, chair basketball, bouncy balls, fitness Tic Tac Toe and boot camp.

Over 100 volunteers were utilized teaching and assisting at each of the fitness and nutrition stations. "Our thanks to the great volunteers," expressed Janousek. "We are very lucky to have involved dieticians, extension educators, YMCA staff members, McCook Optimists members, parents of fourth grade students and many more that make this event so fun."

To learn more about the event, call SWNPHD at 308-345-4223, view photo albums of the event at www.swhealth.ne.gov and review our list of NKFND sponsors. For additional information, contact Helena at respice@swhealth.ne.gov