

Ossining's Wellness Efforts tie for best in state

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The Ossining school district tied for first place in the New York State Education Department 2006-07 Best Practices Awards in the "Promoting Healthy Choices/Nutrition Education" category.

The district's Wellness Committee created a mission statement and goals to teach children to eat well and be physically active, create a healthy school environment; help prevent diet-related chronic diseases; increase awareness of the importance of good nutrition, physical activity and other health/wellness issues; and interact with the community regarding health, nutrition and fitness.

The award will be presented in Saratoga Springs Oct. 26 at the New York School Nutrition Association Conference.

I remember visiting one of the district's elementary schools about a year or so ago, for a project in which the kids were counting how many steps they took in a day using special odometers. The cafeteria also had just replaced a lot of the junk food with fresh fruits and a salad bar.

I swear I'll never forget how excited the kids were about counting their steps. The project encouraged them to be extra active, running around the gymnasium just for the fun of it to try to boost their step count.

When I spoke to the kids about the newly revamped cafeteria, they were absolutely ecstatic. I got one of the all-time cutest quotes, something to the effect of: "I like the salad bar because it helps me to run faster." I loved it. Great to see the kids eating healthy, exercising and feeling great.

My congratulations go out to all those in Ossining who helped to make this happen. Keep up the good work.

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