

Iowa is on the Move to Become the Healthiest State!
Christie Vilsack tours PE4life Model Site Hanawalt Elementary

(Kansas City, MO) April 23, 2010 – Iowa stakeholders have ambition to become the healthiest state in the country and they're enlisting support and gaining attention in their momentum. As part of regional expansion efforts, a PE4life Summit was held last week in Des Moines, with the support of the Iowa Business Council and the Department of Education.



Today, former Governor and current United States Secretary of Agriculture's wife, Mrs. Vilsack toured the Healthy Schools Partnership (HSP), a program designed to create a wellness culture throughout the school by teaching how activity and diet matters to the wellness of the whole person, at the newly identified PE4life Model Site Hanawalt Elementary School. Here she observed the HSP in action plus received feedback on the project from two local fourth graders. Professionals from Hanawalt Elementary, plus 150 others representing 40 school districts in Iowa attended the PE4life Summit last week.

During the course of Vilsack's tour today she observed the HSP in both, the classroom and the gym. She participated in an energy balance Physical Education (PE) game and Registered Dietician (RD) Nutrition coaching to a fourth grade class. Vilsack heard feedback from two students from Hanawalt on the HSP's effect on their lives. In a recent article published by the Des Moines Register, a fourth grade student at Lakewood Elementary School, another Iowa school selected as a PE4life Model Site, shared how the HSP is influencing his food choices, "I used to barely pick any vegetables. So I would pick, like, a cookie. But now I eat fruits and vegetables and it tastes as good."

Because PE4life strongly believes in the importance of nutrition in a healthy child, they are consistently seeking out quality partnerships that allow them to expand their mission of improving the health and wellbeing of children. PE4life partnered with the American Dietetic Association Foundation (ADAF) and the American Council for Fitness and Nutrition Foundation (ACFN) to form the HSP in the fall of 2007. The HSP is an innovative school-based program, designed to integrate nutrition education into physical education. The HSP teams a RD nutrition coach with the PE teacher, showing children that the calories they eat and the calories expend must be in balance and is funded by the Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation.

Another initiative taking place in Iowa currently is a Challenge to spread PE4life Core Principles to 50 schools throughout the state, with the support of area stakeholders. The IBC expressed the desire to make Iowa the healthiest state in the country and have asked PE4life to help them by working with schools to integrate PE4life's Core Principles. Through the PE4life/IBC partnership, they've created the Adopt-a-School Challenge. This Challenge seeks to develop an enriched culture of active, healthy lifestyles in elementary and secondary school children through Iowa. This partnership provides select schools the opportunity to directly enhance their physical education programs through professional development, training and ongoing support, and equipment grants. Summit attendees were introduced to the scholarship application process and given instructions on how to apply.

On hand at the PE4life Summit last week to show support for the PE4life project were representatives from the Challenge's lead funders including members from Hy-Vee, Inc., The Wellmark Foundation and Iowa Health Systems.

Playing the role of keynote speaker at the event was one of the nation's leading K-12 physical education experts, Artie Kamiya. Artie engaged the crowd in an interactive presentation titled "Helping Physical Education Finish Strong in the Race for the Top." Attendees also participated in several high-energy breakout sessions on topics including obtaining funding and community support, quality assessment and feedback tools used in PE and a number of activity sessions targeting fitness-related topics and ideas for maximizing physical activity time. As it's widely known that attention spans generally wane after 17 minutes of inactivity, the presenters and emcee of the event were sure to keep people on their feet, active and moving throughout the day.

About PE4life®:

PE4life is a national non-profit organization dedicated to developing a country of active and healthy children and youth by increasing access to quality physical education solutions by engaging them in a fun and interactive way. Headquartered in Kansas City,



Contact:
Shanna Goodman, PE4life
816-472-7345

Missouri, PE4life is strong in advocacy with a step-by-step integration program in place. To learn more about PE4life visit www.pe4life.org.