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**RECOGNITION AWARD TOOLKIT: NEWSLETTER ARTICLE TEMPLATE**

***[SFA/District Name]* Receives Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Award**

We proudly announce that ***[SFA/District Name]*** has received a Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Award for making improvements to the nutritional quality of our district’s school meals.

Awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) in collaboration with Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK), ***[SFA/District name]*** received the ***[Category/Award\*]***for our work in ***[insert a 2-3 sentence summary of the work that earned you the recognition award, including any measurable outcomes***. ***Example: ABC School District hosted student focus groups to help the school nutrition team develop new, healthier lunch menu items. The team introduced several new pizza menu items that use a whole grain crust, offering a delicious lunch makeover with lower sodium.]***

As an award recipient, we are also receiving national and local recognition and travel stipends to attend a national Healthy Meals Summit.

***[\*Choose ONE of the following descriptions, based on your applicable award to use as part of your summary in the above paragraph:***

**Lunch Trailblazer Award** winners improved the nutritional quality of school lunches by meeting weekly sodium guidelines and implementing student engagement and/or nutrition education.

**Breakfast Trailblazer Award** winners improved the nutritional quality of their school breakfast menus by meeting specific criteria including limiting added sugars and implementing student engagement and/or nutrition education.

**Innovative School Lunch Makeover Award** winners have given a makeover to a popular school lunch meal that meets all meal pattern requirements, specific dietary specifications, and incorporated student engagement.

**Innovation in the Cultural Diversity of School Meals Award** winners offered nutritious school menu options that reflect global flavors, facilitated student/community menu collaboration, and provided nutrition education.

**Innovation in the Preparation of School Meals Award** winners incorporated new menu items that are prepared from scratch using a local agricultural product or USDA food in accordance with the USDA recipe standardization process and incorporated student engagement.

**Innovation in Nutrition Education Award** winners implemented nutrition education activities that made classroom, cafeteria, community, and home connections for students and parents/guardians.***]***

“We congratulate ***[SFA/District name]*** on this important achievement,” said Rob Bisceglie, Executive Officer & President for Action for Healthy Kids. “The HMI Recognition Awards are an opportunity to showcase innovative school nutrition practices that provide children with access to nutritious school meals,” he added.

***[Personalized quote and add what this award means to your staff and students].***

AFHK is recognizing school districts to spotlight innovative practices, student and community engagement activities, and strategies schools have used to provide meals that are consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans – all as part of a cooperative agreement to develop and implement the USDA FNS’s Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative. Learn more about the Healthy Meals Incentives at [www.healthymealsincentives.org.](http://www.healthymealsincentives.org.)

Healthy school meals are an essential part of the school environment and a proven tool for improving a child’s health, growth, development, and educational outcomes. AFHK and USDA are committed to working together to strengthen school meals and investment in a bright future for our children.