

Florida Schools Get Healthy with HUSSC: SL!

Division of Food, Nutrition, and Wellness
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services



THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA) established the HealthierUS School Challenge: Smarter Lunchrooms (HUSSC: SL) voluntary certification initiative in 2004 to recognize and commend schools that go above and beyond in creating healthier school environments. There are four certification levels for the HUSSC: SL awards, which are given based on the exemplary promotion of balanced meals, physical activity, and nutrition education. Florida is currently ranked third in the nation for the number of schools awarded HUSSC: SL awards. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) has set a goal to have the healthiest schools in the nation by certifying all schools statewide. Let's rise to the occasion and get certified!



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services



Why should your school become HUSSC: SL certified?

In addition to state and national recognition, HUSSC: SL certified schools receive monetary incentives ranging from \$500 to \$2,000, depending on which award level is achieved. Certified schools are listed on the Team Nutrition website and are considered the leaders and innovators in creating and maintaining the precedent for healthier school environments. The schools are also presented with a certificate, plaque, and banner from the USDA commending and recognizing their outstanding efforts in promoting a healthful lifestyle. Displaying HUSSC: SL banners and promoting the certification to parents and the community are great ways to boost school spirit and celebrate being one of the healthiest schools in the nation!

How does it work?

Schools can apply for different HUSSC: SL certification levels, including: Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Gold Award of Distinction. The school must meet or exceed the specific criteria established below. Schools that become certified maintain certification for four years from the date they receive the award. Before the certification expires, schools may reapply for the same level or try for a higher award level. Often, schools already meet the basic criteria, which include the following:

- Schools must be enrolled as a Team Nutrition school and participate in both the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program.
- Schools must meet “Smart Snacks in School” nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold to students during the school day.
- Schools must provide students with nutrition education, physical education, and opportunities for physical activity.

- Schools must maintain required levels of Average Daily Participation for lunch and breakfast (not required for Bronze award level).
- Schools must implement the Smarter Lunchrooms techniques, meet the “Smart Snacks in Schools” nutrition standards, and reach the goals of their local school wellness policy.
- Schools must be able to meet the minimum number of options for the Other Criteria for Excellence Checklist depending on the level they are applying for.

Schools can submit an application to FDACS at any time during the year for a Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Gold Award of Distinction award. Schools may submit applications for HUSSC: SL by mail or online. Recipients of the Alliance for a Healthier Generations Healthy School Program’s National Recognition Award may also be eligible for a streamlined application process.

How is FDACS helping schools become HUSSC: SL certified?

FDACS supports schools and school districts in becoming certified. FDACS is available to assist with the application process and has trainings and resources available online at FreshFromFlorida.com/HUSSC.

To learn how FDACS can assist with the application process, contact the Division of Food, Nutrition and Wellness at infoFNW@FreshFromFlorida.com or call 1-800-504-6609.

HUSSC: SL Certification Levels

HUSSC: SL schools will receive the following monetary incentive awards based on the certification level:

- Gold Award of Distinction - \$2,000
- Gold - \$1,500
- Silver - \$1,000
- Bronze - \$500