



Office of the State  
Superintendent of Education



**GROWING  
HEALTHY  
SCHOOLS  
MONTH**

**RESOURCE GUIDE**

## Happy Growing Healthy Schools Month!

Throughout the month of April, Growing Healthy Schools Month (GHSM) celebrates how schools across the District of Columbia are creating healthy places for all students. This year the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is highlighting five aspects of overall health, with each week centering around a specific theme. The five aspects of health will be the following:

**Week 1:** April 1 – 4: Food and Nutrition

**Week 2:** April 7 – 11: Mental Health & Social and Emotional Learning

**Week 3:** April 14 – 18: Movement and Physical Activity

**Week 4:** April 21 – 25: Outdoor Learning & Environmental Literacy

**Week 5:** April 28 – May 2: Community Health

### How to Use This Guide:

Local education agencies (LEAs) are encouraged to use the linked resources and information in this **GHSM Resource Guide** to support their existing GHSM planning. Resources are organized by weekly theme, with categories for each of the five aspects of health.

- LEAs are also encouraged to take the [Growing Healthy Schools Month Participation Pledge](#). LEAs can share photos of their school site(s)' GHSM activities by uploading .jpeg or .png file format photos or other .docx file format materials within their **Growing Healthy Schools Month Participation Pledge** responses. Information collected in the pledge form will be used to highlight the work of District schools working to create healthy places for all students. Additionally, there are opportunities for District students to win awards for original artwork, written essays, and other activities that highlight health and wellness, through **the Student Awards Categories** highlighted in the [Growing Healthy Schools Month Student Contests Submission Form](#).

Finally, LEAs are also encouraged to use this month as an opportunity to revisit and review existing legislation around health and wellness that impacts their schools, via the resources available on the [OSSE website](#).

Thank you, LEAs for the year-round work you do to create healthy places for all students!



## General GHSM Resources

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#"><u>Growing Healthy Schools Month Webpage</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>Participation Pledge Form</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>Growing Healthy Schools Month Student Contests Submission Form</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>OSSE Health and Physical Education Book List</u></a></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#"><u>@OSSEDC on Twitter</u></a></li> <li><a href="#"><u>@osse.dc on Instagram</u></a></li> </ul> |
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## Food and Nutrition

### ACTIVITIES & AWARDS

- Help students write thank you notes or draw pictures for staff who prepare meals at their school! Teachers can submit student work for a [School Meals Team Appreciation Award](#).
- Organize “lunch bunches” for small groups of students and school staff with similar interests to connect during school meals.
- Expand your knowledge of [Opportunities for Nutrition Education in Schools](#) with this Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) resource.
- Check out events happening for students and adults during [DMV Food Waste Prevention Week](#).

### RESOURCES

- Learn more about operating US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs in Washington, DC by visiting the [OSSE Nutrition Services Trainings and Resources](#) webpage.
- Find a location near you where Washington, DC youth have access to [no cost summer meals](#).
- Expand your knowledge about purchasing local foods for school meals by reviewing the [OSSE Toolkit for Procuring Local Foods](#).

## Mental Health & Social Emotional Learning

### ACTIVITIES & AWARDS

- School teachers/staff and students can nominate anyone at their school who develops a culture of mental wellness and wellbeing for the [Wellness Warrior Award](#).
- Lead students in a daily mindfulness exercise.
- Lead a [guided discussion](#) about [mental health stigma](#) and its impacts with students.

### RESOURCES

- Stay up to date on upcoming OSSE mental health and wellbeing events by visiting the [OSSE Healthy Schools and Wellness Programs Team Event Page](#).
- Learn more about other on-demand trainings and available curriculum by visiting the [OSSE Supporting Mental Health in Schools](#) webpage.
- Find out information about school-based behavioral health partners by visiting the [OSSE List of DC School Based Behavioral Health Partners](#).

## Movement & Physical Activity

### ACTIVITIES & AWARDS

- Take a creative classroom brain break! School staff can submit a description or video to the [Classroom Brain Boost Award](#).
- Take 1- to 5-minute activity breaks two to three times per day for at least one week.
- Complete at least one physical activity with students that falls into one of the categories listed under key terms and examples provided on page 3 of the Physical Education Standards.

### RESOURCES

- Read the [DC Physical Education Standards](#) and learn more about the revisions being made during the 2024-25 school year on this webpage.
- [OSSE SY 2024-2025 Health and PE Annual Notification](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC'S) Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programs (CSPAP) E-Learning Module
- [What is the Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program?](#)
- Learn from the CDC how [School Physical Education and Physical Activity Policies Can Support the Social and Emotional Climate Learning](#)

## Outdoor Learning & Environmental Literacy

### ACTIVITIES & AWARDS

- Help students write about their school garden! School staff can submit student writing to the [Gilda Allen School Garden Steward Award](#)
- Learn more about [Green Careers](#) in the DC area through this webinar series for students and adults.
- Celebrate [Earth Day](#) on April 22!
- Encourage students to recycle/clean up around their school.
- Spend outdoor time with your students in a school garden or other outdoor space.
- Subscribe to the [Sprout it Out Discussion Group](#).
- Read students a book about environmental literacy.

### RESOURCES

- Find [Outdoor Learning Funding Resources](#) on this regularly updated webpage.
- Subscribe to the [Sprout it Out Discussion Group](#) to connect with peers in the field, share resources, best practices, and find out about upcoming opportunities in the DC area.
- [Friends of the National Arboretum \(FONA\) Virtual Classroom Resources](#)
- [OSSE School Garden Guide](#)
- [OSSE School Gardens Activity Resource Sheet](#)
- [Capital LEAF program](#)
- [List of Recyclables and Compostable Items in DC](#)
- [Cafeteria Sorting Cheat Sheet](#)
- [OSSE Virtual Field Trip Ideas](#)
- [OSSE In-Person Field Trip Ideas](#)
- [OSSE Outdoor Learning Resources](#)
- [DC Community Gardens](#)

## Community Health

### ACTIVITIES & AWARDS

- Help students take a photograph or draw a portrait of someone in their school (or broader community) who makes their community a healthier place to live. School staff can submit student portraits or photos to the [Community Health Hero Award and Portrait Contest](#).
- Review guidelines for your school's Local Wellness Policy (LWP).
- Brainstorm with students the different people and places outside of school that are important to their health and wellness.
- Read a book from the [OSSE Health and Physical Education Book List](#).

### RESOURCES

- [DC Youth Meals Program](#) landing page.
- [DC Summer Meals Five W's](#) explains the Who, What, Where, When, and Why of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).
- 2025 Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) [OSSE Information Sessions](#).
- Learn more about the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) on the [OSSE CACFP Training Resources](#) webpage
- [OSSE CACFP Landing Page](#)
- [Local Wellness Policy \(LWP\) Implementation Resources](#)
- Find mental and behavioral health resources across Washington DC by visiting the [Network of Care for Behavioral Health Resource Link](#)
- Learn about the [DC ReEngagement Collaborative's](#) resources to reduce and prevent youth disengagement from education, reduce chronic absenteeism and support reengagement in education.
- [DC ReEngagement Collaborative School Partner List](#)



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