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## **FUEL UP TO PLAY 60 HELPS STUDENTS IN NEARLY THREE FOURTHS OF U.S. SCHOOL DISTRICTS IMPROVE NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

*Data Indicates Program a “Game Changer” in Creating Healthier Schools*

ROSEMONT, IL, Feb. 13, 2012 – The national dialogue on improving child health and wellness took center stage last week as *Let’s Move!*, First Lady Michelle Obama’s initiative dedicated to solving childhood obesity in a generation, celebrated its second anniversary amidst thousands of energized school children.

A proof point within this backdrop, Fuel Up to Play 60 is proving to be a program that can help schools create a healthier environment for students. Founded by the National Dairy Council (NDC) and the National Football League (NFL) in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Fuel Up to Play 60 provides students and schools with resources they can use to develop a plan that best fits their school. Since launching nationally in 2009, data shows that schools are making progress in promoting healthier eating habits and increasing physical activity among students. With more than 70,000 schools now enrolled in the program, Fuel Up to Play 60 provides a free “Playbook” of tools, resources, rewards and engagement activities to empower youth to work with adults in their school community to make healthy changes.

Among enrolled schools:

- Nearly 7.5 million students nationwide are actively involved in the program by helping to plan, lead, implement or participate in peer-to-peer promotions, events and in-school change strategies.
- Nearly two-thirds of enrolled adults say the program is helping students make healthier food choices.
- More than half (56 percent) say the program is helping to increase opportunities for students to be physically active before, during and after school; 58 percent say it is helping to increase the amount of time students are physically active.

Schools across the nation are taking real action. Harding Elementary School in Erie, Pennsylvania created a healthy snack cart carrying low-fat yogurt, granola bars and fruit that roamed the halls during class breaks. Some schools have started walking clubs, while others have conducted “taste tests” of foods like whole grains, fruit and reduced-fat cheese. Students then vote on which ones they would like to see in the school cafeteria – working with school nutrition professionals in the process to secure these healthier food options.

“These are the kind of results we were hoping for. Our goal from the onset was to help empower schools and students to identify and implement strategies that can help students make healthier choices when it comes to eating and physical activity,” said Jean H. Ragalie, RD, president of the National Dairy Council. “In this time of economic challenges and time constraints, it is even more important to create an environment that makes eating healthy and staying active attainable, within any type of budget, in any school district.”

Fuel Up to Play 60 addresses real-world circumstances of resource-strapped schools by offering funding opportunities to help schools make strides in meeting wellness goals. (Approximately 60 percent of funded schools serve a largely low-income student body.) As a result, Fuel Up to Play 60, supported in part by U.S. dairy farmer families, has given a combined total of over \$20 million in funds and rewards to help participating schools increase access to nutrient-rich foods and physical activity. Beyond dollars, Fuel Up to Play 60 also encourages and recognizes schools and students with tangible rewards and resources such as participation in a Student Ambassador summit, a trip to the Super Bowl, official NFL gear and NFL player appearances.

Former U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D. says Fuel Up to Play 60 is the kind of initiative needed to promote better health for America’s youth because it allows schools to customize solutions that best meet the needs of their students and community.

“Schools are one of the biggest battlegrounds in tackling the childhood obesity epidemic,” said Satcher. “We know there is no silver bullet available to combat this problem, but it is clear that programs like Fuel Up to Play 60 can produce small ‘wins’ by motivating kids to make better healthy eating and physical activity choices.”

The commitment to Fuel Up to Play 60 is extensive. In addition to a network of more than 90,000 adults enrolled in the program, the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services co-signed an agreement to support Fuel Up

to Play 60 earlier last year. Supported by health and nutrition organizations like the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the School Nutrition Association, the program now involves schools that serve more than 36 million students nationwide. In February 2011, GENYOUth Foundation was launched to raise funds for Fuel Up to Play 60 and other in-school programs of its kind, and to give leaders in health, business, government and communities nationwide the opportunity to be a part of a movement that relies on participation, collaboration and action to help reverse childhood obesity rates.

“The NFL is proud to be a partner in Fuel Up to Play 60, which is making a real and lasting impact in schools and communities across the country. The program is an important part of encouraging our youngest fans to stay active and eat healthy,” said NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell.

Schools, parents and students can learn more about Fuel Up to Play 60 at [www.FuelUpToPlay60.com](http://www.FuelUpToPlay60.com). Eat Healthy. Get Active. Make a Difference.

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#### **About Fuel Up to Play 60**

Fuel Up to Play 60 is an in-school nutrition and physical activity program launched by National Dairy Council (NDC) and National Football League (NFL), with additional partnership support from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The program encourages youth to consume nutrient-rich foods (low-fat and fat-free dairy, fruits, vegetables and whole grains) and achieve at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

Fuel Up to Play 60 is designed to engage and empower youth to take action for their own health by implementing long-term, positive changes for themselves and their schools. Customizable and non-prescriptive program components are grounded in research with youth, including tools and resources, in-school promotional materials, a website and student challenges. Fuel Up to Play 60 is further supported by several health and nutrition organizations: Action for Healthy Kids, American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, National Hispanic Medical Association, National Medical Association and School Nutrition Association. Visit [FuelUpToPlay60.com](http://FuelUpToPlay60.com) to learn more.

#### **About National Dairy Council**

National Dairy Council® (NDC) is the nutrition research, education and communications arm of Dairy Management Inc™. NDC provides science-based nutrition information to, and in collaboration with, a variety of stakeholders committed to fostering a healthier society, including health professionals, educators, school nutrition directors, academia, industry, consumers and media. Established in 1915, NDC is dedicated to educating the public on the health benefits of consuming milk and milk products throughout a person's lifespan. For more information, visit [NationalDairyCouncil.org](http://NationalDairyCouncil.org).

#### **About NFL PLAY 60**

Designed to help tackle childhood obesity, NFL PLAY 60 brings together the NFL's long-standing commitment to health and fitness with partner organizations like the National Dairy Council. NFLPLAY 60 is also implemented locally, as part of the NFL's in-school, after-school and team-based programs. For more information, visit [NFLRush.com](http://NFLRush.com). © 2012 NFL Properties LLC. All NFL-related trademarks are trademarks of the National Football League.

#### **About GENYOUth**

Today, over one-third of American children are either overweight or obese. If the trend continues, today's children may be the first generation with shorter life expectancies than their parents. In response to this epidemic, GENYOUth Foundation was founded to inspire youth behavior change. GENYOUth Foundation is launched with initial funding from four founding partners: Domino's Pizza®, Kraft Foods, LALA USA and Leprino Foods, with additional funding from dairy farmers through NDC. It invites business and philanthropic partners who share in its mission to join its efforts in pursuing a sustainable solution to the childhood obesity epidemic and help ensure that America's children have access to the health and wellness information that will help them succeed. GENYOUth Foundation will demonstrate that when youth are given a voice, change can happen. For more information, visit [www.genyouthfoundation.org](http://www.genyouthfoundation.org). Media resources, including press conference video footage and photos are available at [www.FuelUpToPlay60MediaResources.com](http://www.FuelUpToPlay60MediaResources.com).