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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# USDA Names Eleven Lamar County Schools with Top Honors in the Healthier U.S. School Challenge



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**LAMAR COUNTY, MISS., Wednesday, December 1, 2010**— The Lamar County School District (LCSD) is being recognized nationally as having the highest number of schools in the state with **Gold Award of Distinction** and **Gold** award-winning schools, as part of the USDA Food & Nutrition Service's "Healthier U.S. School Challenge" program. LCSD Child Nutrition Department will join national and state leaders in an **Awards Celebration** at campuses across the district on **Thursday, December 9**.

To meet the Healthier U.S. School Challenge requirements for **Gold Award of Distinction** and **Gold** awards, Child Nutrition had to meet a number of stringent guidelines, including fortifying menus with whole grains and fruits/vegetables selections.

Child Nutrition Director Becke Bounds said the School Challenge guidelines did not end at the cafeteria doors. "Along with a lot of hard work by the Nutrition staff at each campus, students were given detailed instruction in the classroom and during P.E. periods, so that the physical and health education could be enhanced at all grade levels," said Bounds. "This national honor is given to the entire Lamar County School District because all school departments showed a commitment to this effort."

Eleven LCSD schools have been recognized as **Gold Award of Distinction** and **Gold** award winners:

- Oak Grove Primary School - Gold Award of Distinction
- Purvis Lower Elementary School - Gold Award of Distinction
- Purvis Upper Elementary School - Gold Award of Distinction
- Purvis Middle School - Gold Award of Distinction
- Purvis High School - Gold Award of Distinction
- Baxterville Attendance Center – Gold Award of Distinction
- Sumrall Elementary School – Gold
- Sumrall Middle School – Gold
- Oak Grove Lower Elementary School – Gold
- Oak Grove Upper Elementary School – Gold
- Oak Grove Middle School – Gold

The Healthier School Challenge, sponsored by the USDA Foods and Nutrition Service, is a voluntary national certification initiative for schools participating in the National School Lunch Program. It supports First Lady Michelle Obama's 'Let's Move' campaign by recognizing schools that are creating healthier environments through their promotion of good nutrition and physical activity, and encourages schools to take a leadership role in helping students make healthier eating and physical activity choices which will last a lifetime.

Deputy Undersecretary of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, Dr. Janey Thornton, will be coming from Washington, D.C. to attend the December 9 event, along with other USDA officials and national, state and local leaders. Media is encouraged to attend events which will begin at **8:30 a.m.**, with the Celebration for Baxterville Attendance and Purvis, Glenn Swan Performing Arts Center, 220 School St., Purvis. The next event begins at **10:30 a.m.**, Celebration of Oak Grove Schools, Multipurpose Building, 1760 Old Highway 24, followed by a **1 p.m.** Celebration of Sumrall Schools at the Sumrall Elementary Courtyard, 198 Todd Rd. in Sumrall. For more information contact Marcelle Todd, LCSD at 601.764.8994.