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Health Department of Northwest Michigan News Release

**2 Health Department school-based health centers
awarded grants to enhance access to healthy foods**

Two school-based health centers operated by the Health Department of Northwest Michigan are launching programs to help address food access for their students and families.

The Alanson Wellness Program, located within Alanson Public Schools, and the Hornet Health Center, serving Pellston Public Schools, were among 16 programs nationwide awarded grants from a joint program through Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry Campaign and the School-Based Health Alliance. Health Department of Northwest Michigan dietitians Lynne DeMoor and Judi Marlin will participate in a nationwide learning collaborative and facilitate the projects in these two school-based health centers.

Thanks to these grants from No Kid Hungry, access to healthy foods as well as nutrition and cooking education will be expanded at both districts.

"We are thrilled to have been awarded the Share Our Strength No Kid Hungry grant in partnership with the Health Department of Northwest Michigan," said Stephen C. Seelye, Superintendent of Pellston Public Schools. "Our duty is to educate the whole child. Ensuring our students have access to healthy foods and learn skills and habits that will ensure they live a healthy and active lifestyle is as essential as their academic success," he added.

Rachelle Cook, Alanson Public Schools Superintendent, expressed her appreciation for the grant and work by the health department. "We are excited to have a school-based pantry and increase the access that our students have to healthy and nutritious food," she said.

School-based food pantries for students will be established at both locations. Funding from No Kid Hungry will help purchase refrigeration units for safe storage of fresh fruits and vegetables. In addition, through community partnerships, cooking and nutrition classes are being offered to teach students basic cooking skills with an emphasis on including vegetables and fruits and low-cost protein sources.

"Through these grants and learning network, school-based health centers will work to provide tested food access interventions that can be integrated in preventative care to address food needs of families before hunger becomes a crisis," said Sarah Mills, Health Strategies Manager for Share Our Strength. "We're excited to work with the Health Department of Northwest Michigan, as well as the Alanson Wellness Program, Hornet Health Center, and other school-based health centers throughout the country to help ensure more kids can learn, thrive and grow."

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About the School-Based Health Alliance: All children and adolescents deserve to thrive. But too many struggle because they lack access to health care services. School-based health care is the solution, bringing health care to where students already spend the majority of their time:

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit nwhealth.org.

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in school. Since 1995, the national School-Based Health Alliance (SBHA), has supported and advocated for high-quality healthcare in schools for the nation's most vulnerable children. Working at the intersection of healthcare and education, SBHA is recognized as a leader in the field and a source for information on best practices by philanthropic, federal, state, and local partners and policymakers.

About No Kid Hungry: No child should go hungry in America. But in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, 1 in 6 kids could face hunger this year. No Kid Hungry is working to end childhood hunger by helping launch and improve programs that give all kids the healthy food they need to thrive. This is a problem we know how to solve. No Kid Hungry is a campaign of Share Our Strength, an organization committed to ending hunger and poverty.



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