

ECSD NEWSletter

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Florida's Top Elementary and Middle School Physical Education Programs are in ECSD Schools

Beulah Elementary and Ferry Pass Middle School have been named SHAPE (Society of Health and Physical Education) Florida's top Elementary and Middle School Physical Education (PE) programs for the state. Beulah Elementary has Todd Aulger, Whitney Voeltz, and Karen Sawyers serving as their PE Teachers. Ferry Pass Middle School has Dustin Brenton, Kris Lapata, and Candy Prince serving as their PE Teachers.

This prestigious award is only given to one school at each level in the state each year. A program is selected based on the quality of instruction, adherence to a rigorous and well-rounded curriculum aligned to state and national standards, implementation of special health and wellness events and programs, family and community relationships, and student/teacher interactions.

Cassandra Waller, ECSD Specialist for Physical Education Health, Wellness and Driver Education said, "We have many schools with incredible programs that are raising the bar and changing the perception of Physical Education. This is not your old-school PE anymore, and these two programs in particular are amazing examples of what the new Physical Education looks like. On behalf of our entire district and community, we are proud and thankful for what the Physical Education teachers have done to provide optimal experiences for our students."

It is quite an honor to have one program win a state award, but for a school district to have two programs selected as the best in their category in the same year is exciting, "We are beyond words," Waller added.

"Exercise has proven to increase memory, lengthen attention span, boost decision making skills, improve multi-tasking and planning. Our coaches do an excellent job at planning structured games that challenge students athletic ability while motivating them to learn how to persevere when unable to do something," said Matthew Taylor, Assistant Principal at Beulah Elementary School. "All these skills help our children become better students and more productive citizens of our community."

Just last year Escambia County celebrated when Samantha Harrison at Booker T. Washington High School was named as the SHAPE Florida High School Physical Education Teacher of the Year. "As a district and department we are pushing the envelope in Physical Education. Our Physical Education teachers are stepping out of their comfort zones daily to implement new activities, incorporate technology, and get all

students involved in learning how to live a healthy lifestyle. The state is watching Escambia County School District as we continue to blaze the path for what quality physical education should look like," said Waller.

Photo info:

IMG_9928: Beulah Photo: (left to right) Rodd Aulger, Karen Sawyers and Whitney Voeltz. As summer break approaches, the physical Education team at Beulah Elementary looked for ways to s how kids ideas for ways to stay active with their family and friends this summer. They do this by adapting games they know are popular, like bottle flipping, or teaching students new ones using items they make have at home, such as playing cards or even swim noodles.

IMG_9830: Taken at Beulah Elementary, coaches show students ways to adopt games they like into physical challenges. For example, bottle flipping is a current popular challenge. They adapted this game involves two students and two cones. They each flip the cones and race to find out whose cone flips and lands flat last. That player then has to complete a set of jumping jacks. The winner then rotates to challenge another player to keep the engagement level high.

IMG_9883: Students at Beulah Elementary School also learn about the value of trial and error as they attempted to perfect their flip as well as learning about different strategies.

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Ferry Pass MS: Left to Right Kris Lapata, Candy Prince, and Dustin Brenton pose with a special visitor, the Blue Wahoos' mascot, Kazoo. The coaches at Ferry Pass Middle School periodically reach out into the community for additional support and involvement. Their goal is to make physical education fun so students will want to take their class and then they can teach them lessons about the importance of fitness and proper nutrition (disguised as fun).

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