

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**5-2-1-0 Health Message Incorporated into Local School Wellness Policy**

Small School in South Portland has made some significant policy changes that will support and enhance the health of its students. Principal Bonnie Hicks and Physical Education teacher Phil Conley began the Let's Go! 5-2-1-0 Goes to School program in 2008. Together, with the help of the newly formed 5-2-1-0 Team, it was decided that creating a Small School Wellness Policy was the way to make the 5-2-1-0 message an integral and sustainable part of the school.

Student celebrations and rewards can be a large part of the school day. If most of these rewards and celebrations are made up of candy, cookies and cupcakes, the calories from high fat, sugary foods can really add up! Principal Hicks and her staff felt ready to tackle this issue. Now, written as part of their school policy, student birthdays at Small School will be recognized with non-food celebrations. Instead, the birthday child may be recognized by wearing a special birthday sash or by being the class leader or by getting to take a special walk around the school with the principal! Additionally, students will no longer be given lollipops or other food treats as a reward. Other rewards, such as extra recess or gym time, will be encouraged.

To learn more about Let's Go! contact the United Way of Greater Portland at 874-1000 or visit [www.lets-go.org](http://www.lets-go.org).

*Let's Go! promotes healthy lifestyle choices for children, youth, and families in 12 Greater Portland communities by focusing on physical activity and healthy eating. The multi-year project is funded by Let's Go Founding Partners Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation, TD Bank, Hannaford, MaineHealth, Maine Medical Center, Unum, and United Way of Greater Portland. The program also receives significant support from the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation. Let's Go! works collaboratively with the public health professionals, community based organizations and programs working to increase physical activity and improve nutrition among children and families in the Portland area. Let's Go! was created in direct response to a doubling in the rate of obesity in Maine's children over the past three decades.*