

Brevard Public Schools Honored with the Florida Head Start Association Oral Health Award for the Second Consecutive Year



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TALLAHASSEE, FL – September 18, 2018 - Brevard Public Schools (BPS) Head Start program receives the Oral Health Award given to Head Start grantees by the *Florida Head Start Association* for outstanding demonstration of support for oral health outreach and education initiatives in the community for the second consecutive year. BPS Head Start parents participate in school-based activities, receive dental hygiene education, and learn how healthy eating and healthy snack choices support and maintain strong teeth and gums and lead to broader academic gains.

The program organizes and implements annual dental field trip experiences that provide free transportation for children to area health departments to receive dental screenings. By partnering with the health departments, the program eliminates the cost to families. The program also maintains a presence on the *Space Coast Health Foundation Dental Task Force* to build a community presence that includes Dental Days offering free dental services. This collaboration has also established a \$10,000.00 grant through *Delta Dental* that supports families requiring extensive dental procedures.

Debra Crannell, Executive Director of BPS Head Start believes focusing on oral health early in the lives of students pays off in numerous ways, including uplifting skills in the academic arena. “By supporting families and students with strong oral health we also give them a firm foundation for school performance and overall success.”

The 2019 awards were selected by a panel and recipients will be honored during FHSA annual awards luncheon in West Palm Beach attended by Head Start/Early Head Start Directors, Staff, Parents and early childhood education leaders.

The Florida Head Start Association is a nonprofit organization working on behalf of the 41,000 children and families Head Start Programs serve in Florida. FHSA has been the voice for Florida's most vulnerable children and families since 1999 and is committed to enhancing and supporting the capability of local Head Start program in the delivery of high quality services for our children and families.

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