

MEMORANDUM

To: All District and School-Level Administrators and Teachers
From: Dr. Marcia Oglesby, *Director, DCSD Grants & Partnerships*
Through: Dr. Cherisse M. Campbell, *Chief, Community Engagement & Innovative Partnerships*
Date: May 15, 2026
Subject: *Funding Focus Friday: A Healthy Opportunity from the American Heart Association*

The [American Heart Challenge](#), sponsored by the American Heart Association (AHA), gives middle and high school students a meaningful way to strengthen wellness, leadership, service, and school engagement while supporting the fight against heart disease and stroke. This service-learning program helps students “*feel good by doing good*” through activities that promote physical wellness, mental well-being, health equity, and meaningful social responsibility.

High schools that participate can access leadership and volunteer opportunities, and eligible juniors and seniors can apply for a \$1,000 scholarship. All participating middle and high schools are eligible to apply for grant funding of up to \$2,500. Additionally, middle schools can earn give-back incentives, which include [US Games certificates](#), discounted certificate usage, free shipping, and direct contributions to the school.

This opportunity aligns well with [DCSD’s Strategic Plan priorities](#) by supporting student engagement, family and community partnerships, wellness-focused learning environments, and meaningful collaboration between schools and external partners. The program also provides practical resources for physical education teachers, coaches, classroom teachers, and school leaders.

Through the [American Heart Challenge](#), students and teachers can benefit from:

- **Student leadership and service-learning:** Students have the opportunity to lead awareness campaigns, volunteer, and link service activities to real health issues in their communities.
- **Wellness-centered instruction:** Teachers can use [OPEN curriculum resources](#), activity breaks, fitness modules, and whole-body wellness lessons.
- **Health awareness and prevention:** Schools can encourage [Hands-Only CPR](#), advocate for physical activity and healthy eating, and promote anti-vaping and anti-smoking messages.
- **Family and community engagement:** Schools can use AHA family engagement tools to maintain wellness conversations beyond the classroom.
- **Potential school funding:** Participating schools can submit applications for grants to fund health, fitness, and student engagement programs.

American Heart Association staff and volunteers are available to help schools implement the [American Heart Challenge](#) program. For questions, please contact AHA directly at 877-824-8531.

The Department of Grants and Partnerships encourages DCSD educators to pursue this opportunity and bring bold, student-centered ideas to life. Remember to follow the [DCSD Grant Guidelines](#) and coordinate with the [Department of Grants and Partnerships](#) on next steps. To begin your

application, have questions answered, or get experienced advice, feel free to email us at grantsandpartnerships@dekalbschoolsga.org.

[Dr. Marcia Oglesby](#), *Director*

[Ms. Tanya Arrington](#), *Strategic Partners Manager*

[Dr. Donald Porter](#), *Lead Grant Strategist*

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Looking for more grant inspiration and options? The latest, fully searchable issue of the Monthly Education Grants Alert (MEGA) is available [HERE](#).

Good luck!