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MID COAST HEALTH SERVICES

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FRUITS AND VEGETABLES FEATURED ON AREA SCHOOL MENUS

Brunswick, ME—Mid Coast Hospital and Access Health recently teamed up with MSAD #75, RSU 1, Brunswick School System, and St. Johns Catholic School to celebrate "Colors Week", an annual initiative that focuses on the importance of eating fruits and vegetables every day. Each year, this event serves to highlight the *Let's Go! 5-2-1-0* program, offered in partnership by the two organizations at local schools, day care centers, and community sites. This year, more than 4,600 students participated.

Throughout the weeklong event, a daily fruit or vegetable was featured and made available to sample during lunch. To increase awareness and engagement, students were encouraged to wear the featured color of the day that matched the food sample.

Mary Booth, MS, RD/LD, School Health Coordinator at MSAD 75, said that in a brief survey of students from Mount Ararat Middle School, "by far the Kale Chips were the most popular, winning out over root vegetables and golden raisins."

Nutrition education continued outside of the classroom as well. At the start of the week, students were given five multicolored bracelets to wear throughout the week. The "5 A Day" bracelets acted as a visual tool to remind kids to eat the recommended five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Each time a serving was eaten, the student moved a bracelet from one arm to the other.

Area schools have been promoting the 5-2-1-0 message for more than five years when Mid Coast Hospital began collaborating with them to create healthier environments for students. 5-2-1-0 focuses on four positive health behaviors: eating **five** fruits and vegetables per day, limiting screen time to **two** hours per day, engaging in **one** hour or more of physical activity per day, and limiting sugar sweetened beverages to **zero**.

Mid Coast Hospital and Access Health provide technical assistance and grant support to community partners who wish to participate in the *Let's Go! 5-2-1-0* program. For more information about the *Let's Go! 5-2-1-0* initiative within the Midcoast area, contact Trent Giles at (207) 373-6928, or tgiles@midcoasthealth.com.