



# PRESS RELEASE

**Stafford County Public Schools**  
Dr. Thomas W. Taylor, Superintendent  
31 Stafford Ave, Stafford, VA 22554  
[www.staffordschools.net](http://www.staffordschools.net)

July 12, 2023  
**For Immediate Release**

**Contact:**  
Sandra Osborn | Chief Communications Officer  
540-310-8002 | [osbornsk@staffordschools.net](mailto:osbornsk@staffordschools.net)

## **Stafford Schools Earns American Heart Association's Heart of Gold Award** *School Division is Largest District in Virginia with 100% Participation in Kids Heart Challenge Program*

**STAFFORD, VA** – The American Heart Association presented Stafford County Public Schools with the Heart of Gold School District award for its participation in the school-based Kids Heart Challenge program. The division is the largest in Virginia with 100 percent participation in the program.

“I am so proud to partner with the American Heart Association and help lead the state in offering lifesaving programs to every student and every family in our community,” said Dr. Thomas W. Taylor, Stafford Schools Superintendent. The Kids Heart Challenge & American Heart Challenge programs provide instruction in the Warning Signs of Stroke and the Steps to Hands-Only CPR; two critical skills that absolutely save lives.”

Each school building and the administrative complex participated in the Kids Heart Challenge in 2023. In addition to providing lifesaving instruction, more than 2,000 students elected to participate in the challenge to be kind to their hearts and each other. More than 300 of these families completed “Finn’s Mission” as part of the Challenge, learning the critical warning signs and the steps to Hands-Only CPR. Many of our students, staff, and families also chose to donate or fundraise to help fund the Association’s life-saving mission. Donations help fund scientific research and educational programs that continue the fight against heart disease and stroke. In return, the Association, along with their partner-company, US Games, were able to award about \$7,600 to Stafford Schools, for the purchase of new physical education equipment and wellness supplies that allow Stafford students and families to live heart-healthy lives.



“I am so honored and grateful to work with Dr. Taylor and his staff, who truly lead by example,” said Marjorie ChurchBourne, School Engagement Director for the American Heart Association. “Through his example, every school administrator chose a heart challenge and shared this opportunity with Stafford families. I am so proud of every Heart Hero in Stafford County, and thank them for their commitment to saving lives. By partnering with us in every school, they are absolutely leading the way in helping us turn bystanders into Lifesavers.”

To learn more about the American Heart Association’s Kids Heart Challenge and American Heart Challenge, visit [www.heart.org/getstarted](http://www.heart.org/getstarted). To learn more about Stafford Schools, visit [www.staffordschools.net](http://www.staffordschools.net).