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**Wenatchee 5<sup>th</sup> graders *Move It* to get fit and win cash for district**

5<sup>th</sup> graders from Wenatchee School District can be seen around town wearing pedometers and stepping up their physical activity, as part of a fitness program the district is participating in, called *Move It* for schools.

This is the second year Wenatchee schools have participated in *Move It*, and nearly 500 Wenatchee students are entering their third week of the six-week program. When students successfully complete the program, the district will receive a cash award of up to \$4,000 to be used for health-related purposes.

*Move It* is offered to select school districts by Asuris Northwest Health, in an effort to help combat childhood obesity in Washington state. Childhood obesity is now recognized as a national problem, and Washington is no exception, with more than 10 percent of children in the state overweight, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2005. As a leading health insurer in the state, Asuris is concerned about this trend impacting not only our children's current health and learning abilities, but their social and economic futures as well.

*Move It* aims to reverse that trend by motivating children to be active every day by walking.

“If we give children the skills and tools they need to take charge of their own health at an early age, we can help them develop healthy habits that will last a lifetime,” Asuris President Mary McWilliams said.

Motivators include personal and team challenges, as well as role models – historical explorers from the U.S. Westward Expansion. A brief outline of the program:

- Each 5th grader receives a water bottle, pedometer and other materials. They use the pedometer to count all of their daily steps for six weeks.
- Students form two or more teams per classroom. A designated student from each team records their weekly steps on a log sheet.

### **About Asuris Northwest Health**

Based in Spokane, Asuris Northwest Health offers a full range of health care coverage options, including dental and vision coverage, for Eastern Washington employers and individuals. Asuris also offers Medicare supplemental plans and Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage, and provides member access to more than 19,000 health care providers. For more information, visit the company’s Web site at [www.asuris.com](http://www.asuris.com). Asuris Northwest Health, a not-for-profit health plan, is a subsidiary of Regence BlueShield, a leading health plan in Washington.