A FRONT-BURNER PRIORITY

HEALTHY FOOD for the LUNCH TRAY

LivWell@SCHOOL
Food Initiative
Rules of Engagement: Increasing Meal Participation with Parent and Student Champions

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Introductions

- Rainey Wikstrom, LiveWell Colorado Consultant
- Venita Currie, Program Director, LiveWell Colorado
- Steven Rastrelli, Student, Centennial High School
- LiveWell@School Food Initiative Food Service Directors:
  - Adam Merlino, Cañon City School District
  - Cindy Veney, Adams 14 School District
Webinar Objectives

• To provide guidance on how to utilize the LiveWell@School Food Initiative’s Parent and Student Toolkits to engage and create school meal champions

• To share experiences and garner advice and tips for using the Food Service Director Toolkit, from fellow food service directors

• To create a food service director network for sharing great ideas to increase school meal participation
Benefits of Engaging Parents

- Parents can:
  - Support the LiveWell@School Food Initiative process
  - Provide meaningful feedback along the way
  - Promote school meals to their children and others in the community
  - Support a healthy food culture in schools

- All of this leads to increased meal participation
Benefits of Engaging Students

• **Students can:**
  – Join in and be a valued part of the process
  – Provide meaningful feedback along the way
  – Promote the positive school meal changes to peers
  – Support a healthy food culture in schools

• **All of this leads to increased meal participation**
The Parent Toolkit

- Created for Food Service Directors to enlist and empower parent champions

- Provides ready-made tools for parents to support your work
Parent Tools
The Student Toolkit

• Created for Food Service Directors to enlist and empower student champions

• Provides ready-made tools for students to support your work
Available Tools

Parent Toolkit
- Parent Advisor Recruitment Ad
- Taste Testing Event Tips
- Talking Points

Student Toolkit
- Student Advisor Recruitment Ad
- Sample Survey Questionnaire
- Action Plan

and many more.....
Parent Advisor Ad

- Recruit parents who are passionate about healthy food
- Send out through various channels
- Hold a meeting to gather interested parents

Calling All Food Champions!
Help Us Transform School School Meals.

Would you like to see more fresh fruits and veggies on your kids’ lunch trays? How about delicious and nutritious entrees that leave students satisfied and energized for the classroom and athletic fields? Share your insights and provide input on this exciting, multi-phase school meal transformation process, which is beginning this year. Together, we will work to create a culture of healthy food, both in and out of the cafeteria. No experience needed.

**PARENT ADVISORS NEED ONLY BE COMMITTED TO:**
- Supporting food service staff during the transition to better, healthier school food — both in and out of the cafeteria
- Having your voice heard
- Advocating for healthy foods for kids in school

For more information about how to join the parent advisory team, please contact:

[Parent Advisory Team Leader]
[Phone • Email Address]
Taste Testing
Event Tips

• Tips to hold a successful event to engage your community

TASTE TESTING TIPS

Few things will have a greater impact on perceptions of your school meal program than offering opportunities for parents, students and staff to get a fresh taste of school lunch. This allows people to taste the difference for themselves. Before you get started, make sure you contact your food service director and ask him/her to partner with you to coordinate your taste tests and share with them your results.

Make it fun and inviting
Make taste tests fun and inviting by setting a special table in the lunchroom with a tablecloth, silverware and dinnerware and invite a team of tasters to sample the new food offerings.

Include everyone
Offer tastings to parents, students, staff, administrators and community members.

Taste a variety of foods
Offer tasters a chance to sample the infusion of new foods into the school meal program: breakfast items, fresh salad bars, scratch-made bread or tortillas, entrée items, infused waters, etc.

Consider placement
Taste tests may be offered both in and out of the cafeteria, such as in school hallways, classrooms or in staff lounges. Be sure to get proper approval for using a specific space.

Ensure appropriate quantities
Make sure you have enough food for everyone.

Solicit input
Taste tests are a perfect time to ask for feedback from students, parents or staff to find out what they like and what might be improved.

Keep it safe
Make sure that all food safety standards are followed when setting up a taste testing.

Adapted from “Fuel Up to Play 60 Taste Testing Tips”
Sample Survey Questionnaire

- Inform your community
- Gather meaningful feedback
- Garner buy-in
How to Use the Toolkits

- Identify recruitment and engagement opportunities
- Select the appropriate tool
- Download the tool
- Choose a communication channel appropriate for the audience
Easy Recruitment Opportunities

- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- School Accountability Meetings
- District or School Board Meetings
- School Newsletter
- School Menus
- School Events
Key Engagement Strategies

• Food Tastings
• Chef Demos
• Student Chef Competitions
• Rainbow Days
• Student Feedback
Student Leader

• Background:
  – Steven Rastrelli
    • Sophomore, Centennial High School
    • Member, FRESH Club
    • Student Leader, CHAT
      – Kaiser Permanente and Colorado Legacy Foundation

• Tips for engaging students teams:
  1. Empower students to be part of the solution!
  2. Personal interaction...come present to the student team! We want to hear from you.
  3. Engage the entire student body using social media.
Students as Champions

• Why Engage Students?
  – We can help!
  – We have innovative and cost-effective ideas

• How Students Can Help!
  – Your very own spokespeople
  – Pack your lunch lines!
Using LiveWell@School Food Initiative Tools

• **Student Survey (page 16)**
  – Familiar tool
  – Solicits honest feedback
  – Students will take it more seriously if administered in school on paper/pencil

• **Student Advisory Team Action Planning Tool (page 30)**
  – Guides face to face interaction between students and Food Service Director
  – Organizes ideas
  – Student representatives know next steps to take to their school
Tales from the Field

• Cañon City Schools
• Located in Cañon City, Colorado
• Approximately 3,665 students
• 50.75% Free and Reduced Lunch Rate

Adam Merlino
Food Service Director
Cañon City Successes

• We connected!
• We engaged!
• We piggy-back promoted!
• We built relationships!
A Special Blend: Students get taste of Cañon City School District's new, homemade ranch dressing

By Carie Canterbury

Cañon City High School students were invited Tuesday to be official taste testers of a new, homemade ranch dressing that soon will be served in Cañon City schools.

Adam Merlino, manager of the district's Nutrition Services department, and Jessica Wright, a chef with LiveWell Colorado, hosted the Ranchapalooza during the school's lunch period to find out how students liked Merlino's own creation of homemade ranch dressing.
Example Tools

Ranchapaloosa!
Canon City Schools Nutrition Services will be rolling out their new homemade ranch dressing, complete with free samples, and even a recipe to take home. Plus...IT'S PIZZA DAY!!!
Example Tools

Canon City's Own Ranch Dressing

Ingredients: Makes about 1 quart

- Buttermilk—1 1/2 cups
- Yogurt, Plain—1/2 cup
- Lemon Juice—1 tsp.
- Garlic Powder—1 tsp.
- Parsley, dried—1 tsp.
- Black Pepper—1 tsp.
- Tarragon, dry—1 tsp.
- Dill, dry—1 tsp.
- Low Fat Mayo—1 3/4 cups
- Sour Cream—1/4 cup
- Apple Cider Vinegar—2 Tbl.
- Onion Powder—1 tsp.
- Kosher Salt—1 tsp.

Combine all ingredients in a quart-sized container. Stir well with a whisk or a fork.

What I’m not eating when I have homemade Ranch:

- Corn syrup, modified food starch, phosphoric acid, monosodium glutamate, xanthan gum, artificial color, polysorbate 60, potassium sorbate and calcium disodium edta...Any of those sound good?
Tips and Advice

- Listen to your students, parents, school faculty and staff
- Be meticulous in your calculation of risk vs. reward
- Use the resources that are already available to you
- Find your champions
Tales from the Field

- Adams 14 School District
- Located in Commerce City, Colorado
- Approximately 7,400 students
- 86% Free and Reduced Lunch Rate

Cindy Veney
Food Service Pioneer
Adams 14 Successes

Engaged parents /school community by:

- Catering district meetings
- Surveying community about the meals
- Providing parent cooking classes
- Presenting at parent meetings and working with parent liaisons
Adams 14 Successes

Engaged **students** by:

- Working with existing student groups; e.g., Voices Group
- Surveying the students on meal items
- Responding to student requests and asking them to help promote the changes
- Supporting student cooking classes
Adams 14 Successes

Adams 14 Nutrition Services
Catering Menu

Staff Meetings and Parent Meetings

**Breakfast**
- **$5 per person**
  - Choice of:
    - Granola and fresh fruit yogurt parfait
    - Bagels with cream cheese
    - Breakfast burrito
    - Fruit option
    - Coffee and water

**Lunch**
- **$8 per person**
  - Assorted sandwiches with lettuce and tomato and cold cuts on whole grain with condiments
  - Fresh fruit tray or fruit salad
  - Fresh-cut vegetable or mixed green salad
  - Dessert item
  - Iced tea or lemonade

Party Trays for School Classrooms Parties and School Events

- **$9 each (one tray serves 30 students)**
  - Fresh Fruit Tray
  - Fresh Veggie Tray with dip
  - Mixture of half fruit and half veggie

Snack Trays for Staff Meetings and Parent Meetings

- **$18 each (one tray serves 30 adults)**
  - Fruit Tray
  - Vegetable Tray

*Paper plates, napkins and plastic ware provided
Orders require 14 days notice
Place orders with Nutrition Services:
- Cindy Veney
  - 303-833-7950
  - cveney@adams14.org

LiveWell @School
Food Initiative

ADAMS 14
Inspire. Educate. Empower.
**Example Tools**

**Parent School Meal Survey**

Did you like the meal you just ate?

___ Yes
___ No

Did your impression of school lunch improve after consuming this meal?

___ Yes
___ No

Other:

Would you encourage your child to choose this meal?

___ Yes
___ No

Would you be interested in joining a Parent Nutrition Services Committee to support our healthy changes?

Name:

Email:

Phone number:

**Student Breakfast Survey**

*Your opinion matters! What should we add to the breakfast options?*

We are working to bring you delicious and nutritious, easy to eat breakfast items that can be served in the classroom. Please rank the following:

___ Breakfast burrito
___ Yogurt
___ Whole grain turkey sausage breakfast sandwich
___ Whole grain sausage pancake
___ Whole grain cereal bars
___ Egg and cheese frittata
___ Whole grain French toast
___ Ultimate Breakfast Round bar

Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to offer your feedback.

The Adams 14 Nutrition Services Department
Tips and Advice

• Get parents, students and staff tasting your food!
• Piggy back on events already happening in schools as opportunities to showcase meals
• Ask the right questions on surveys
• Ask for help from parents and students (and partners) to spread the news
• Staff can help the cause so make sure they are on board
Q&A
The goal of the LiveWell@School Food Initiative is to ensure all children in Colorado have access to and choose healthy food at school by 2022. The LiveWell@School Food Initiative program is generously supported by our partner, the Colorado Health Foundation, and further advanced by a transformational leadership gift of $1 million from Rob Katz, CEO of Vail Resorts, Inc., and his wife, Elana Amsterdam. No investment is necessary by participating school districts other than a desire to create positive change.