Harrison School District 2's journey to better school food began in 2012. Even in this short time, Food Service Director Tammy Brunnar and her staff have experienced several “Ah-ha!” moments. “We were spending money unnecessarily,” notes Brunnar. The chef consultant hired by LiveWell Colorado recommended ways to save money like eliminating individual plastic cups for condiments and placing food directly on students’ trays instead of wrapping items in plastic wrap or serving in paper boats. This alone saved tens of thousands dollars annually. The kitchen staff also learned that it’s just as efficient to open a bag of fresh chicken legs as it is to open a bag of chicken nuggets. “Their ideas are just phenomenal,” Brunnar says.

Epiphany followed epiphany as she and her staff went through culinary training and realized that scratch cooking was a definite change from old habits, but clearly it was a change for the better. In another move to elevate the nutrition of student meals, Brunnar eliminated the almost daily serving of dessert. Now, cake and pie only appear on the line three or four times during the school year, showing students that sweets are a special treat available only at holidays or other celebrations.

On her team, Brunnar sees a positive boost in morale. Employees are excited and truly want to give students a better product. She recommends that others who are considering participating be open to what she describes as “totally in-tune” suggestions from LiveWell Colorado chef consultants. “One of the first things I learned was to get over myself, open my mind and remember why we’re all really here.”

**District Goals & Vision**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Streamline costs, operational efficiency</th>
<th><strong>Strategic Action Plan Tactics</strong></th>
<th><strong>Results</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eliminate disposable containers and individually wrapped items.</td>
<td>Saved $24,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Increase minimally or unprocessed proteins served**

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<th>Eliminate canned goods and reallocate budget to proteins</th>
<th>$0 canned goods purchased (2013)</th>
</tr>
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<td>Approximately $165,000 from above diverted to “brown box” proteins</td>
<td></td>
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**Reduce sugar consumption**

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<td>Reduce dessert offering from 3-4 times per week to 3-4 times per year</td>
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<td>Diverted dessert labor to fruit &amp; vegetable prep</td>
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**Harrison School District 2**

**District Goals & Vision**

- **Strategic Action Plan Tactics**
  - Eliminate disposable containers and individually wrapped items.
  - Eliminate canned goods and reallocate budget to proteins.
  - Eliminate flavored milk.
  - Reduce dessert offering from 3-4 times per week to 3-4 times per year.

- **Results**
  - Saved $24,000
  - $0 canned goods purchased (2013)
  - Approximately $165,000 from above diverted to “brown box” proteins
  - Reduced sugar consumption by about 4 lbs./per student annually
  - Diverted dessert labor to fruit & vegetable prep

**Tammy Brunnar**

*Supervisor, Nutrition Services*

**Location:** Colorado Springs, CO

**Schools:** 20

**Students:** 10,694

**Food Service Team Members:** 113

**Kitchens:** 20

**Website:** [www.livewellcolorado.org](http://www.livewellcolorado.org)

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