Food Service Director ‘Points of Pride’ Tool

After all of the hard work you’ve put into improving food at your school, you want the world to know about it. As the saying goes, “If a tree falls in the middle of the forest, and no one is around is to hear it, did it make a sound?” Ensure that your hard work makes a LOUD sound by spreading the word! Be sure to spread the word about your efforts as widely as possible. When students, parents, and teachers know how delicious and healthy your meals are, they’ll highlight the wonderful meal program as another Point of Pride in their school community. This Point of Pride Tool was designed to help you identify clever and easy promotional campaign ideas to draw attention to and celebrate the important steps you are taking to improve your meals.

Bragging Rights

You work with school meals day in and day out. You are very familiar with the great changes you’ve been making – but others in your community may not ever know unless you tell them. Review this list and circle things you might feature or brag about this year. **Grab your pen and circle all that apply:**

**Better Meals**

- Introduction or expansion of a salad bar
- Transition to more fresh produce
- An increase in the amount of fresh produce ordered (or served) each week
- New scratch-made recipe testing
- New “student-approved” menu items
- The addition of locally-sourced foods
- Garden-to-cafeteria efforts
- Use of seasonal ingredients in school meals
- Improvements to meal presentation
- An increase in the number of scratch-made menu items by X%
- Greater access to unsweetened beverages

**Exciting News**

- The partnership with the LiveWell@School Food Initiative
- New kitchen equipment
- A cafeteria renovation
- The receipt of grant funding to support healthy meals
- Any media attention around your new, healthy meals
- New website or online features for parents and students
- Your plans, dreams, and vision for a healthy school food future
- New catering menu offerings
- An upcoming visit from your LiveWell Colorado Chef Consultant

**Human Interest**

- Fun facts about your food service staff
- A regular “Meet Our” feature, including new school district chef, local producers and gardeners

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• Taste- testing results
• School garden updates
• Meet our gardeners
• Healthy School Food Hero Highlights (students, teachers, parents, community members)
• Eco-friendly practices (i.e., waste reduction, composting)
• Successful partnerships with student, community or parent groups
• Highlighting positive student behavior
• Positive comments from kids and staff about school lunches

Events

• Colorado Proud Day
• School/community events catered by your team
• Taste-testing opportunity
• Garden work days
• Holiday meal event
• School wellness events

Fun Facts

• Pounds of fruit and veggies eaten by students
• Pounds of food composted
• Pounds of food utilized from the school garden
• Increases in school meal participation
• Increases in local procurement
• Number of meals served annually
• Nutrition facts for students, staff and families

Miscellaneous

• Healthy catering options
• Highlight of Fresh Fruit and Vegetable or DOD programs
• Highlight of breakfast, after-school snack, supper, and summer-meal programs
• Trainings completed by food-service staff
Three Steps for Promoting School Meals

Step 1: Ask for help!
Whenever you have news to share, write a short article about it - or ask for help from someone who is invested in your fresh, healthy changes (parent, student, teacher, secretary, assistant, kitchen manager, communications specialist, an intern or a volunteer from a community group).

Step 2: Document digitally!
Take photos to accompany your article. Pictures will always grab more attention than words alone.

Step 3: Submit your ideas!
Once your article and pictures are ready, remember to submit them to one or more communication platforms. Your school newsletter is a great place to start. Other ideas: your school- or district-level website, blog, and social media, the neighborhood newspaper, and – if your news is exciting enough – local media (TV, radio, newspapers). You can also easily share updates by creating a small “news” space on your monthly menus.

Share your ‘Points of Pride’ using the following Food Service Director Tools:

- Back-to-School Letter--Families
- Back-to-School Letter--Staff
- Invitations to school meal or tasting events (Invitations for parents, students, staff, School Board and community members)
- Newsletter Article (for your school newspaper)
- Press Release (for your local newspaper or media outlet)
- Planning Checklist

As an example, here is a Sample Newsletter Article. Use your points of pride to create short promotional pieces such as this one. This article would be a great announcement on your website, in a school newsletter, on the back of a school menu, on social media, or in a letter home to parents.

Meet Our New Chef [PHOTO]
We are pleased to announce the addition of Chef Marie Marquez to our food services team. Chef Marie will be assisting our school teams in the development of freshly prepared meals for our students. Marie received her culinary training from Johnshon and Wales and said that she has “always wanted to work with schools.” Chef Marie has some great ideas for increasing the number of fresh sauces and homemade whole grain breads we offer daily. Please join us in welcoming the newest member of our growing team committed to cooking up fresh, delicious and nutritious meals for our school community.

For more ideas on promoting your school meals, visit the LiveWell@School Food Initiative website: http://livewellcolorado.org/healthy-schools

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