

FIRST HAND News

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

SPRING 2023

Welcome!

School Nutrition "Magicians"



INSIDE:

2023 AREA 3 CONFERENCE
E-STAR HIGHLIGHTS
AND MORE!





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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Mary Darnton • SNAM President
Jenison and Hudsonville Schools



Hello Friends!

Nominate your staff!

Keep an eye out for communication coming from SNAM about Award Nominations! Each year SNAM solicits nominations for statewide Child Nutrition Awards for Employee of the Year, Manager of the Year, and Director of the Year. We have over 1500 SNAM members in the state of Michigan and there are amazing people who deserve to be recognized and honored for their work. Now is a great time to review the performance and dedication of your staff members and submit their names and accomplishments for consideration. Awards will be presented at our November 2023 SNAM/MDE

Conference in Grand Rapids. These winners' names are also submitted to SNA for consideration for Regional and National Awards.

Advocacy Never Stops!

Before I got involved with SNAM, I felt like regulations and rules made by USDA or the State of Michigan with regards to Child Nutrition were made arbitrarily and without thought to the actual impact it would have on Child Nutrition programs. I was WRONG! It wasn't that they didn't want to hear my "voice" but that I didn't know how or where to speak up! I learned from SNA and SNAM that our voices need to be heard and we have to keep sharing our stories over and over again. I saw the power of advocacy on March 7, 2022 when attending the SNA's Legislative Action Conference when it was announced that the pandemic waivers would not be renewed because of opposition in Congress. Through SNA's Action Network, 800 fired-up attendees sent out a rallying cry to their contacts, and 24 hours later, over 130,000 messages were sent to Congress! Sadly, the waivers were not renewed, but suddenly every Congressperson and Senator knew that Child Nutrition professionals were not afraid to speak up and advocate.

The power of collective advocacy is remarkable. As of this writing, Michigan's Governor Whitmer and both the Michigan House and Senate have included language in their versions of the 2023-24 budget to offer free Healthy School Meals for All in Michigan. We are thankful for partner organizations like the American Heart Association and No Kid Hungry for their hard work, support, and outreach. We can do hard things and together we can shape the future of Child Nutrition in Michigan.

Finish Strong!

As another school year winds down, I want to thank each of you for your work and dedication to feeding kids. Please take time to celebrate your wins, reflect upon your successes, and think about the direction you want your program to go. I hope you each have an opportunity over the summer months to rest and recharge.

Mary

School Meals Program

Marketing is the Key to Success!

Order a **FREE** marketing kit for K-12 schools from Milk Means More to spread the word about the largest restaurant in the community – your school meals program!

PROMOTING MEALS



Better with Breakfast



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MARKETING MENU ITEMS



Milk, it's spot on.



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**Smoothies
in School**



**Coming Soon:
Bubble Tea**

Each kit includes instruction booklets, banners, posters and stickers to start and promote programs. Additional resources can be downloaded for immediate use – social media toolkit, digital menu board slides, graphics for newsletters, menus and more.

Visit bit.ly/marketing-school-meals for access and ordering!



MILK MEANS MORE
United Dairy Industry of Michigan

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Missy Elliott • Supervisor of Food Services
Armada Area Schools



Wow, it's spring—where has the school year gone? I know I say this every year; the school year flew by. I hope you had a chance to attend the Industry Conference in March at Eagle Eye Golf Course in Bath, Michigan. It was very informational, and to our Industry partners, thank you! The exhibit and Food Show was top notch and gave School Nutrition Professionals from all over the State the opportunity to see new products and innovations, as well as the opportunity to network and connect with our members. Thank you again to our industry partners. Your support of School Nutrition is vital to our success.

Looking ahead: SNAM's Annual Conference will be held November 2-5, 2023 at the Amway Grand Plaza in Grand Rapids, MI. As you look through this edition, the pages are filled with so much information. It is remarkable how much this publication is growing, and really neat to see what our School Nutrition Professionals are accomplishing across this great State of Michigan. From Lake Michigan to Lake Huron, Lake Superior to Lake Erie, the passion, the dedication and creativity is amazing.

Enjoy the summer, get some down time, see you all soon!

Missy

SAVE THE DATE!

2023 MDE-SNAM ANNUAL CONFERENCE

NOV 2-5, 2023

Amway Grand Plaza / DeVos Place

REGISTRATION OPEN SOON!

FROM THE OFFICE

Scott Little • Executive Director
School Nutrition Association of Michigan



Happy Spring!

I hope this finds you and your families well.

Michigan students are fortunate to have so many dedicated food service professionals making sure they get fed – no matter what the food supply looks like.

Thank you for your professionalism and dedication.

SNAM continues to look at ways to provide support. We continue to keep training materials up to date and offer classes both virtually and in person.

We held our Industry Conference on March 16, 2023 at Eagle Eye Golf Club in Bath, MI. We had a full complement of Industry Partners and 136 directors from around the state. It was a great day to reconnect, learn and grow with friends and colleagues. Much of our day was spent not only visiting with our Industry partners, but also having lots of discussion on how all kids can eat free and proposed rules from USDA that may make your jobs more difficult.

We had a great conference last November in Kalamazoo and are currently planning our next Annual Conference in Grand Rapids November 2-5, 2023. We're excited to be back in beautiful Grand Rapids, staying at the Amway Grand Plaza. It is a beautiful hotel and will be a great place to have the conference. Mark your calendars now!

I hope you're able to find time to relax and refresh this summer. Thanks again for all you do!

Scott



Why you should attend the School Nutrition Association's Legislative Action Conference

— *A story from two first timers!*

Heather Holland, Departmental Analyst,
Michigan Department of Education, SNAM
Secretary/Treasurer

Dawn Pully, Food Service Director,
Bendle Public Schools, SNAM Area 5
Representative

The School Nutrition Association's (SNA) Annual Legislative Action Conference (LAC) was held March 5-7, 2023, in Washington D.C. This conference allows attendees to experience firsthand the inner workings of the democratic process, learn about current legislative and regulatory challenges facing school nutrition, and advocate directly with their legislators.

It was the evening of March 4, and the snow was falling steadily (imagine that!). Our flight to Washington D.C. was at 2:00 pm on Saturday, March 5, and we were nervous that we would not make it. The airport had shut down Friday night and with our suitcases packed, we feared the worst. We were anxious and excited to get to D.C. to advocate for our Child Nutrition Programs! Saturday morning, news that flights were delayed or cancelled started coming in from other Michigan friends attending the conference. Luckily for us, our flight was a go and we departed on time!

We joined 22 passionate Michigan School Nutrition Professionals to advocate for our child nutrition programs and students. The conference started on Sunday with breakout sessions for state agencies, industry partners, and food service directors. These breakout sessions not only prepared us to meet with our legislators, but also prepared us to continue this important advocacy work once we returned home. We also had the opportunity to hear an update directly from our United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) representatives and attend the opening keynote with Charlie Cook, one of Washington's highly respected political analysts



and commentators. When we first walked into the Grand Ballroom and saw over 800 food service professionals, from all sides of the industry and from all over the United States, with the same goals and energy as us, it was empowering and invigorating!

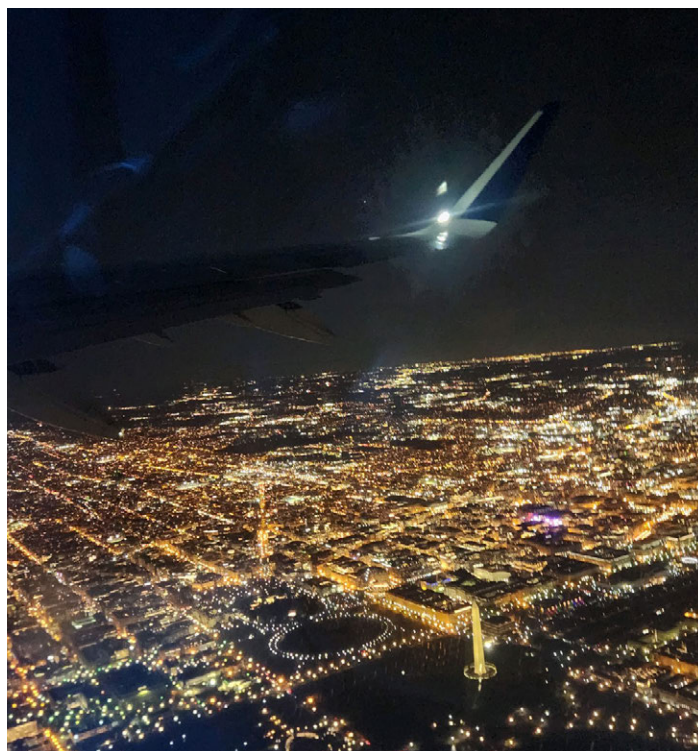
The conference continued Monday with two fabulous general sessions from USDA and an SNA update from our own Lori Adkins, SNA President. We also heard from states that have passed free meals for all and how they got there! These two days of informational sessions prepared us for Tuesday - Hill Visit Day! On Tuesday, we had the opportunity to visit Capitol Hill, visit with our Michigan legislators and their staff, tell our stories, and get our message across that school meals are necessary and important. This may sound scary, but our legislative chairs at the School Nutrition Association of Michigan (SNAM) did an excellent job pairing us “first-timers” with SNAM members that have many years of experience doing these Hill visits. We learned from the best and this experience reminded us of the awesome, passionate, and knowledgeable people we work alongside each day. We would welcome the opportunity to do these visits again. The legislative teams were so interested in our perspectives and were genuinely supportive of our end goal. We were in one meeting with a legislative team, when the bells went off for a vote, and it reassured us that our voices are heard and all the stress and anxiety preparing for this day was worth it!

Outside of the packed conference schedule, there were many opportunities for networking and sightseeing. Neither of us had ever been to Washington D.C., so in our downtime we got some steps in (about 8 miles!) to tour the monuments and sites. Everything was within walking distance, and the cherry blossoms were so beautiful. We also attended a SNAM networking dinner with our Michigan friends, which was a nice opportunity to relax, catch-up, and share stories.



Above: Representatives from SNAM pose next to the office of John James, US Representative for Michigan's 10th congressional district

Below: The view from Heather and Dawn's flight leaving Washington D.C.



Our first LAC conference was amazing, and we highly recommend everyone pursue the opportunity to attend this at least once. We were both so thankful for the opportunity to attend. The conference prepared us on how to advocate, not only for the Hill visits, but how to continue this advocacy back in our hometowns. ★

GET YOUR GROOVE ON FOR CHILD NUTRITION

Oakland County 42nd Annual Area 2 Workshop



Lori Adkins

*Child Nutrition Consultant, Oakland Schools
President, School Nutrition Association*



SNAM of Oakland County hosted the 42nd Annual Area 2 Workshop at Oakland Schools on Wednesday March 22nd. Get your Groove on for Child Nutrition provided a groovy backdrop for the 70's themed workshop where over 250 attendees gathered together for the first time since 2019. The highlights of the day included a culinary demonstration by JTM Foods, an inspirational message delivered by keynote JoAnne Robinette as well as a mini-food show where attendees sampled new and trending food items specifically for school nutrition programs. The afternoon was capped off by a special guest visit from none-other than USDA Deputy Under Secretary Stacy Dean and her team from the Mid-West Regional office! Undersecretary Dean delivered a special address to all Oakland County Child Nutrition professionals to express her appreciation of their extraordinary work and dedication over the past 3 years feeding and nourishing the students in Oakland County.



The following morning after the workshop, Stacey Dean & her team participated in a round-table discussion with 12 county food service directors to learn more about local initiatives happening in Area 2 including the Oakland County's Better with Breakfast program and the Oakland County Elimination of Reduced-Price meal fees project. The group also engaged in a thoughtful discussion

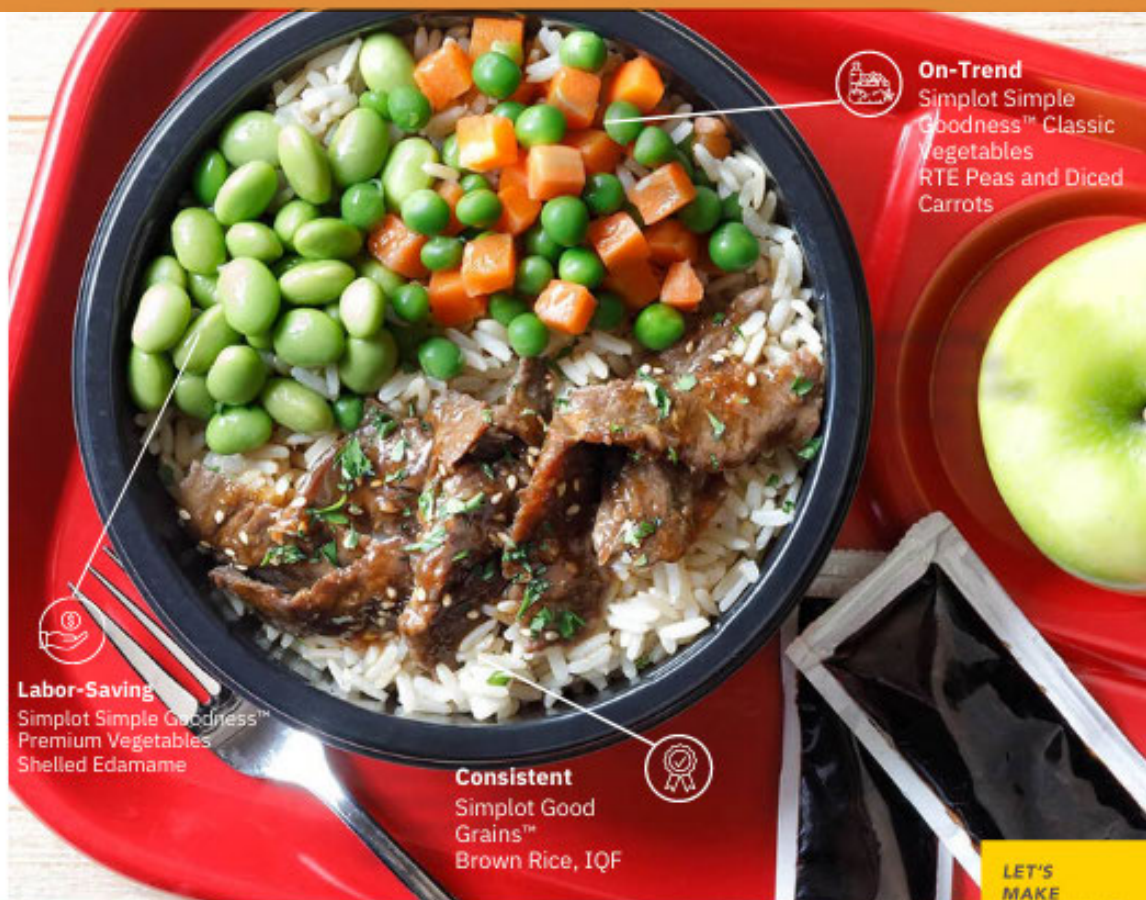
surrounding the USDA Proposed Rule on future nutrition standards for school meal programs. Following the meeting the group made a site visit to Waterford Kettering High School for early lunch service where we talked with students and met with school administrators who couldn't agree more that hungry children don't learn well & that school meals are critical to student success!

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Carrots



Good citations and breakfast were served at New Buffalo Elementary School during National School Breakfast Week. Students were excited to dig into breakfast with spoons that looked like mini shovels and delicious breakfast food. Different activities took place throughout the week and special visitors joined our students during breakfast. Our staff is proud to help students build healthy habits!

Submitted by Patty Iazzetto - New Buffalo Area Schools - Food Service Director

2023 SNAM INDUSTRY CONFERENCE



My name is Nancy LaFave, Food Service Director at Escanaba Area Public Schools, I am also the Industry Chair for Michigan's School Nutrition Association. This is my second term, as SNAM Industry Chair, and I was so excited to accept the position again. It has been a great learning experience while working with our Industry Partners.



March was our annual Industry Conference at Eagle Eye Golf Course in Bath, Michigan. We were so excited to see so many people. We had a record number of attendees that included Directors, Cooks, Cafeteria Workers, Michigan Department of Ed, School nutrition employees, Manufacturers, Brokers, and Distributors. This year we also had the most Industry Members join SNAM. Bravo!!!

To start our show off, we had the latest updates and information from MDE and how it impacts our programs. MDE is always

so willing to be there for ever group in our business. We appreciate the challenging work and dedication that they all have to make our programs great. Just before the Industry Conference a group of SNAM members went to LAC. We were lucky enough to have Xavier Jaramillo and Shanna Williams, SNAM Legislative Chair and Vice Chair give an update on what is going in in Washington DC.

One of the highlights of the show this year was a segment titled, "Steal this Idea!" We had two directors Justin King from Chippewa



THIS YEAR'S THEME: STEAL THIS IDEA!



Hills and George Siedis from Bangor share very innovative ideas that they do in their districts. Our very own President of SNAM Mary Darnton was the moderator and keep things fun and remarkably interesting. Everyone loves to see, hear, and “steal” the ideas that are happening in other districts. To close out the day we had two guest speakers Collin McDonough from the American Heart Association and Mindy Grant from No Kids Hungry spoke to the group with an overview of the basic school nutrition policy at both the federal and state levels. They also gave a look at what may be on the horizon with all of the purposed changes.

In addition to the great presenters, the conference allotted time for our Food Service directors to mingle and talk to our Industry Partners, see their new products,

ask questions. SNAM had an amazing group of brokers, manufactures and distributors showing and demonstrating their products. We had multiple opportunities to visit the vendor/food show, this was extremely helpful for everyone, so much going on in the field, so many new products, so thankful to have our Industry partners. We could not do the business we do without them.

The Industry Conference would not be the event it is without the help of the Industry Committee, SNAM Board, Scott Little and Erin Rommeck. They all deserve a big thank you!! The biggest THANK YOU to all of our Industry Partners for all of their help through the entire year. We all appreciate the work you do for Child Nutrition in Michigan.

As Industry Chair for SNAM, In January I was able to go to the National Industry Conference in San Diego, CA. I was able to sit in on breakout sessions with Manufactures, Brokers, Child Nutrition Directors, State Representatives and USDA personnel. The sessions had a wide range of topics from perspectives on supply chain, sustainability solutions to minimize food waste, increase participation for school meals to employee well-being. It was a great conference, I learned so much, and was able to bring that information back to our Michigan group.

STATE BUDGET PROPOSAL AIMS TO FILL KIDS' HUNGER GAP

By SOPHIA BRANDT

Capital News Service

LANSING – Michigan school children may be at risk of going hungry due to the federal government eliminating funding for free meals in public schools after the pandemic.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer is now pushing a new \$160 million proposal to close the hunger gap created when federal funding ended. If passed, Michigan would be the fourth state to offer free meals to all public-school students.

“Regardless of the community, there are always hungry kids,” said Daniel Connors, the director of food and nutrition services at Chippewa Valley Schools in Macomb County.

In July 2022, statewide free meals were no longer federally funded in Michigan. This school year, free and reduced meals programs are limited to families who cannot cover the costs.

The previous funding was provided through COVID-19 relief from the federal government. The U.S. Department of Agriculture says families have to go back to the way things were pre-pandemic.

According to the Michigan League for Public Policy, around 715,000 kids in the K-12 public school system qualified for free and reduced meals in 2021, based on household income.

Overall, about 1,443,456 children were enrolled in public schools in the 2021-22 school year, according to Michigan School Data.

Offering free meals for all students “removes the burden of worrying about paying for school meals, both for students and families. It also removes the stigma that may be associated with

eating school-provided meals and removes the stress of filling out paperwork from parents,” said Mary Darnton, the food service director for Jenison & Hudsonville Schools in Georgetown Township, between Grand Rapids and Holland.

Darnton is also the president of the executive board of the School Nutrition Association of Michigan.

Connors said children who cannot afford a meal and don't receive benefits may be given an alternative meal in some districts. When that happens, it may add to the stigma surrounding free and reduced meals.

According to the Michigan League for Public Policy, around 715,000 kids in the K-12 public school system qualified for free and reduced meals in 2021, based on household income.

“It is comforting at every level for teachers, parents, administrators and lunch workers. We just want to be able to feed our students and have that be the focus without worrying about paperwork and signatures,” Darnton said.



Connors said a lot of teachers keep snacks in their classroom cabinets. If children are getting school-provided meals, that weight is lifted off of teachers.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's guidelines use household size and gross income to determine eligibility.

Darnton said, "The thing with the guidelines is that they are set at the federal level. If a family is \$1 over the income limit, we can't extend the benefits. On paper, it may look as though the family does not qualify, but in real life the money for school meals may not be in that family's budget."

Whitmer has proposed that the state spend \$160 million, which will cover free breakfast and lunch for 1.4 million students at K-12 schools, in the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1.

If free meals become available to all public-school students again, Darnton said the main challenge will be learning how to work within the new system.

Darnton said that providing free meals during the pandemic helped prepare school districts to do so again.

"Challenges for food service directors, like me, will be knowing participation will rise and making sure we can get supplies, staffing and training. We will have to learn how to feed students for free," she said.

California, Maine and Colorado have moved away from traditional eligibility-based free and reduced meal programs and now offer free meals to all students.

According to the Food Research and Action Center, located in Washington, D.C., California and Maine passed legislation in 2021 to continue providing free meals even after the federal support ended.

In 2022, Colorado voters passed a proposal that raised taxes for incomes over \$300,000. The added revenue will fund the Healthy School Meals for All Program to offer free lunch in public schools, said the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Michigan would become the fourth state with free school meals for all students if lawmakers adopt Whitmer's proposal.

With rising inflation, grocery bills have been adding up, Darnton said, and enabling kids to eat breakfast and lunch at school five days a week will ultimately improve household financial situations.

Darnton said, "This is money that gets to stay at home and in the household."

That means families can use that money for things like rent, utilities and everyday necessities, Darnton said.

"No matter what socioeconomic background, if it means smoother mornings, kids who are ready to learn and fewer discipline issues, schools are here and ready to feed those kids," she said.

Reprinted with permission



TURNIP THE BEET

with high quality summer meals!

The Turnip the Beet award, by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), recognizes outstanding Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors who work hard to offer high quality meals that are appetizing, appealing, and nutritious.

All Meet Up and Eat Up SFSP sponsors were eligible to apply! The criteria for this award included serving local foods, a variety of vegetables and fruit, whole grains, and low-fat and fat-free milk.

There were three award levels granted to selected sponsors.

The Michigan Department of Education is excited to congratulate the following award winners in the State of Michigan:



Congratulations and thank you for creating healthy, nutritious meals for Michigan's children. You are an inspiration, and we can't wait to see what the future holds for your programs!



MAKING LUNCHTIME THEIR FAVORITE TIME OF DAY

When it comes to bringing smiles and helping students grow, Nina Capizzi and Heidi Allensworth in the Hiller Elementary (Lamphere Schools - Madison Heights, Michigan) cafeteria make it happen. Each day students are served healthy meals, given a place to recharge, and treated to some fun entertainment.

“Our favorite thing about working at Hiller is being able to interact with the kids and see them smile,” said Capizzi. “We want lunch to be the best part of the day so we try to make it a fun and memorable experience every day for all of our Wildcats.”



Using simple materials like paper, markers, glue and scissors, season after season, Capizzi and Allensworth transform the cafeteria with fun, inspiring scenes engaging students every day. This school year we’ve found our superstar lunch ladies hiding in a tree, floating in a hot air balloon, hunting for shamrocks at the end of the rainbow and staying warm in an igloo. Turn up the music and dancing cereal boxes appear, and on Tuesday’s you’ll know what’s for lunch when you hear students singing “It’s Raining Tacos” and looking for Miss Nina or Miss Heidi to dance with.

Along with the fun, healthy food and smiles at lunchtime, Capizzi and Allensworth start their day packing coolers for Lamphere’s Breakfast in the Classroom program. Student leaders from each class visit the cafeteria each morning to pick up coolers filled with milk, breakfast items and fresh fruits and vegetables from the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant.

“Our Average Daily Participation (ADP) has definitely grown because of Nina and Heidi’s creativity,” said Katie McConkie, Lamphere Schools Director of Nutrition Services. “Lunchtime has become something our students look forward to every day.”



HILLER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
LAMPHERE SCHOOLS
MADISON HEIGHTS, MICHIGAN

“

Heidi and Nina make going to the lunchroom so much fun. They add an extra energy to our lunchroom which promotes kindness and creates a positive culture. When our Hiller Wildcats get to interact with Heidi and Nina they get treated with nothing but respect, and shown empathy. They go above and beyond everyday to help our students have a successful lunchtime experience that is also enjoyable. Our Hiller students look forward to seeing their smiling faces everyday, and I do as well. I can’t thank them enough for what they have brought to our school.”

Lindsay Staskowski
Principal, Hiller Elementary

EMMALYNN RAVENSCROFT

"Ms. Heidi and Ms. Nina always have a smiling face everyday which makes me feel happy about coming to lunch."

EVELYN DENNIS

"Ms. Nina and Ms. Heidi are always so nice and are always giving people compliments."

KAYLEE DAGHLIAN CARDENAS

"I am always so happy to come to lunch because they remind me of strawberries; nice and sweet."

In the words of our students:

TRISTAN MCCLAIN

"Ms. Nina and Ms. Heidi are always so nice. If they are ever absent from Hiller, it makes me not want to go to lunch as much. They are just so nice!"

JERMAINE WALKER

"Ms. Heidi and Ms. Nina make me feel so special. It helps me to want to come to school everyday."

DIANA HO

"Ms. Heidi and Ms. Nina work so hard to make us yummy food and the decorations they have in the lunchroom."





IT'S A MATTER OF TASTE

Ever wonder how items get picked for the consortiums to offer? Student panel taste testing! Recently the MOR Consortium Co-Op featured numerous items for a group of students from Stevenson High School's Manufacturing, Automation and Design Engineering (MADE) program. They tried everything from fruit cups, burger patties, beef crumble, Asian chicken and more!

"It was fun," Stevenson MADE junior, Lucas Timbuc said. "Trying everything was pretty cool and knowing that you're influencing a lot of what might happen in the future is a nice feeling."

Just like food service directors, the MOR Co-Op Executive Board wants to provide food that students will eat, not things we think they will eat. Students' cultural, socioeconomic, and home life experiences influence a lot of what they will or will not eat. By sampling various students from different areas, we can accomplish this.

"We had a large, diverse group of people," Stevenson MADE junior, Sara Musa said. "I'm a picky eater and others in the group were not as picky, so I think it's good since we have such different palates."

Since the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act was enacted in 2012, research published by the School Nutrition Association, shows that the Healthy Eating Index-2015 (HEI) score for children 2-17 years old is 53.9/100, which the report explains should be improved. By implementing Child Nutrition Programs, HEI scores increased by 54.5%.

Present at the taste testing was Lori Adkins, child nutrition consultant for Oakland Schools and President of the National School Nutrition Association. "School meals for a hungry child is an academic intervention. We know that not all students qualify for free or reduced meals, but 100% of our students will experience hunger at some point during the school day, so that is what our school meal programs are here for."

So be on the lookout this Fall for some new options that are yummy as well as student approved. We hope that they help drive your bottom line sales as well as fill those tummies!

Unintended Benefits of 10 Cents a Meal

by Melanie Wong, MA, RDN -- Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities

Unintended benefits. That's how Brent Bishop, Food and Nutrition Services Supervisor at Charlotte Public Schools, views the multiple unexpected positive outcomes his district has received by participating in 10 Cents a Meal. 10 Cents a Meal is Michigan's state-funded program that provides matching grant funds for Michigan-grown vegetables, fruits, and dry beans served to children in school and childcare settings. Last year, when Brent joined the food service team at Charlotte Public Schools, applying for 10 Cents a Meal for his district was one of the first things that he did. With an appreciation for using quality ingredients when preparing food, Brent knew that the program could help him afford those ingredients—and save money in his district's food service budget.

Leaning on his kitchen team for support, he tasked key members of his staff to support the program and challenged them to seek out partnerships with local farms and partners. One of those partnerships was with Kalamazoo Valley Community College's Food Hub, ValleyHUB. A food hub is “a centrally located facility with a business management structure facilitating the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and/or marketing of locally/regionally produced food products,” according to the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service's working definition.

“We really love partnering with school districts because the way we see it, schools are the biggest restaurant in any community,” said Josh Bartz, Food Hub Outreach & Communications Coordinator at ValleyHUB. “So, for us to play the matchmaking role for schools is a really great win to get that locally grown food on our kids' plates and money to our farmers as they work to scale up. It also helps us with our mission to simplify our complex local food system and to pull some of those roadblocks out of their [schools] way to use funding for Michigan's 10 Cents a Meal program.”



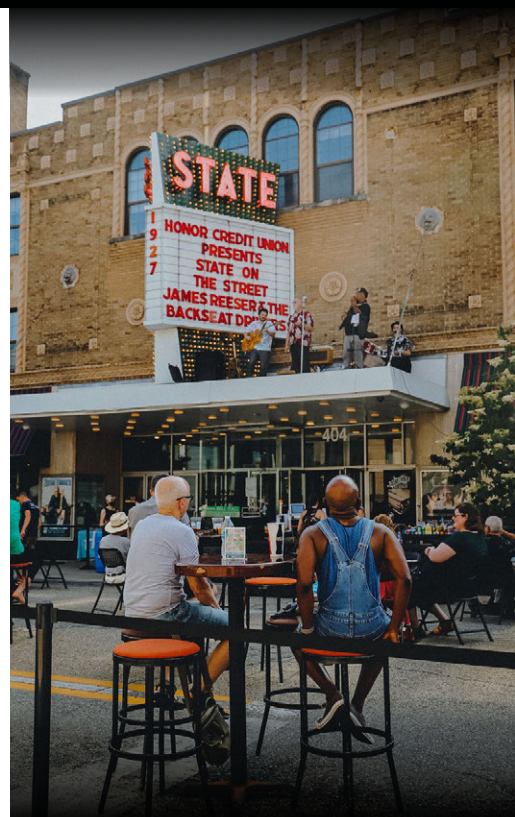
By partnering with ValleyHUB, Brent and his team have been able to introduce new varieties of lettuce to the children that make it into salads, and Michigan-grown carrots processed by ValleyHUB into carrot sticks that go into vegetable trays. And those unintended benefits? Not only are the children enjoying their food more, but teachers and school staff have also taken notice and are buying those same salads being served to children. Those extra purchases have been bringing in additional revenue to the food service department.

Another unintended benefit came from partnering with Country Mill Orchard—a local orchard and favorite spot of the community—to provide local apples for school cafeterias and at school events like the district’s “Back-to-School Bash.” “With Country Mill it creates that picture in their mind ‘oh yeah, I’ve been to that apple orchard,’ it gives you good feelings, good vibes,” said Brent. Those positive perceptions help connect the community together and allow children to see their community reflected back to them through their food. That connection supports the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model that the Michigan Department of Education believes in for nourishing and educating the whole child.

All of that adds more fuel to motivate Brent’s staff. “This team takes a lot of pride in what they do, so they see that better quality product, and they’re willing to put a little extra time into it because they know they see it on the plate.” While 10 Cents a Meal provides a financial incentive for using Michigan-grown vegetables, fruits, and dry beans, it’s certainly not the only way participating in the program pays off. “Don’t be afraid to try it. You’re going to get a ton of support and you’re going to get paid back in ways that you wouldn’t have thought about... from the community, from the staff, from the teachers—it’s just been awesome,” Brent says.

Charlotte Public Schools will be participating in 10 Cents a Meal for the 2022-2023 program year with a grant award of \$15,000.

There’s so much to **discover!**



Discover! **KALAMAZOO**

Welcome!

School Nutrition “Magicians”



School Nutrition Association of
Michigan's Area Three Workshop
– *We Make the Magic Happen!*

By Emiona Kreste
Supervisor of Food & Nutrition, L'Anse Creuse Public School

Our Area 3 Workshop provided valuable insights into the importance of school nutrition in schools and how it can positively impact the academic performance and overall health of students. An impressive 400 attendees from multiple districts in Macomb, St Clair, Lapeer and Sanilac Counties were decked out in the Harry Potter inspired theme t-shirts that were custom designed for the event with the message: “We make the Magic Happen”. A special Thank you to Scott Little, SNAM Executive Director, Lori Adkins, School Nutrition Association President, and Michael DeVault, Superintendent Macomb County ISD for their attendance, we are grateful and honored they joined our group for this annual workshop, March 29, 2023, held at the Macomb County ISD. Special thanks also to Carolyn Thomas, Macomb County ISD Child Nutrition Consultant, the Area 3 Board, and Katie Hofford, Carolyn's Assistant, Macomb County ISD, who worked hard to coordinate this event.

The workshop kicked off with a welcome to everyone from Carolyn and her Superintendent, and a brief presentation on the current state of School Nutrition. Mandy Sosnowski, Director of Food Services, Utica Community Schools, emphasized to the group to give their input, fill out the survey on the proposed nutrition standards, we all have a voice in the future.





Next up, Special Guest Speaker, Dr. Robert Livernois, Ph.D. Superintendent of Warren Consolidated Schools emphasized that improper nutrition can have a detrimental effect on students' academic performance, mental and overall health. His message was powerful and he spoke from personal and professional experience, and emphasized, that this is the time, K-12 years, when all the memories are created- why not make them memorable in a positive way!

Dr. Livernois presentation was followed by Special guest speaker- Danielle Bock, Food Service Director from Greenville, Colorado. This was not just a presentation- this was a performance! Danielle has a passion for her profession and a vast knowledge in School Nutrition. Her presentation was both fun and engaging. Danielle encouraged everyone to turn the work place into a fun place, and give the school kitchen a personality. Playing "dress up" at work, having fun with the students and your Food Service team mates, creates bonds and opens communication with students that lasts a lifetime.

The VanEerden sponsored Food show boasted over 60 vendors. Our Industry partners presented their products, school nutrition compliant items, ready to be added to our menus. All attendees

had a chance to sample new items, take a sample home, and even vote on their favorites so Directors could consider adding them to the menu.

Finally, the raffle... There were about 30 gift baskets, donated by multiple Area 3 districts. Attendees purchased tickets and had the opportunity to win by random draw. This was a huge hit, the baskets had multiple themes, something for everyone, and many happy winners. Area 3 Board received positive feedback, as the attendees filled out a survey, and collected the professional development hours certificate when exiting.

The Area 3 workshop was a success. It gave us all an understanding of the importance of good nutrition in schools and the impact it can have on students' academic performance and overall health. There are challenges that school cafeteria staff face in providing healthy meals on a limited budget, and it is clear that more needs to be done to ensure that all students have access to healthy and nutritious food in school.

Attending the Area 3 workshop on School Nutrition was an eye-opening experience that left a lasting impression on me, as a first-time participant, I enjoyed every minute of it.

CREATING COMPOST

by Doni Westfall, Intern from GVSU Coordinated Graduate Program

Reducing wastefulness from the start is the first line of defense in food waste. Still, not all food can be consumed: produce or meat scraps from meal preparation, leftovers go uneaten, a can in the pantry is badly dented. Roughly one-third of the food produced in the United States ends up in a landfill and an average school throws away roughly 30 pounds of food daily. Organic materials such as food waste, food-soiled paper products, leaves, and grass clippings make up over 60% of the waste stream, yet all are 100% recyclable. This is where composting comes in.

Compost is a collection of decomposed organic material, such as leftover food scraps or yard waste, and may also sometimes be referred to as humus, a dark brown component of soil which is rich in plant nutrients. Composting is the management of the decomposition process, during which naturally occurring soil organisms will recycle nitrogen, potash, phosphorus, and other plant nutrients as the material is converted into humus.

Composting at schools offers many rewards. Not only does it greatly reduce the amount of organic material winding up in landfills or incinerators, but it can also help students understand concepts like decomposition, energy cycles, resource conservation, and sustainability. Not only can conservation in the schools be educational, but economical when considering the immense reduction in long-term garbage costs as well.

Did you know?

Composting bins are on the pre-approved Food Service Equipment list and could be purchased as part of a spend-down plan.

There are several composting systems to choose between for a school setting. For instance:



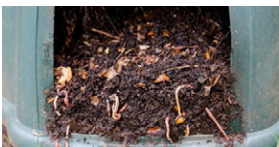
BIN SYSTEM - This may vary from plastic domes to multi-bin wood and wire units where the units rotate in having an active bin, a resting bin, and a bin with finished compost. These systems are customizable to their areas of usage, can handle large volumes of food waste, and cost \$400-700 to start up depending on the price of materials. This system can also be created for little to no cost with reused materials like reclaimed pallets.



STATIONARY COMPOST BIN - This rectangular unit comes with two doors--one at the top for adding new food waste, the other at the bottom for removal of compost. Being a closed system, it does have a limited waste capacity, thus large schools may require multiple units. Depending on size needed, costs range between \$200-400.



DOUBLE-SIDED TUMBLER - A barrel with two halves, one for new food waste, the other for resting compost. This can handle only a small amount and is more a 'teaching tool.' Cost is dependent on size but estimated around \$500.



WORM BIN - Vermicomposting or worm composting is a simple technology for converting biodegradable waste into organic manure with the help of earthworms. These bins are smaller and better suited for smaller areas, such as individual classrooms, and cost \$80-120 each.



OFF-SITE COMPOSTING - Much like garbage and recycling services, this system involves receiving a food waste cart which will be collected by the waste hauler and taken to an industrial facility for composting. This system can only be utilized in areas offering such facilities, and costs vary according to the waste hauler's pricing.

The incentives are there, now here are some key steps to getting an organic compost program started at your school:



CREATE A COMPOST COMMITTEE: Input from the key stakeholders within the school is an important component. When starting this or any new program, recruit a team of individuals such as students, teachers, parents, custodial and kitchen staff, waste management, etc. This team should work together to set goals, create a timeline, monitor the program, provide enthusiasm, and offer interventions as necessary to improve and promote the program. Many resources are available at www.michigan.gov/eglecompost.

CONDUCT A WASTE AUDIT: A crucial step is to determine what percent of your school's overall waste is organic and compostable. This information is vital for choosing your composting containers and at an appropriate size which will meet capacity needs. This audit will also help to determine what areas of the school campus collect the most compostable waste.

CHECK WITH YOUR WASTE HAULER: Determine if your waste hauler has the proper equipment to accommodate your newly added compost stream. Alternatively, the campus may wish to contract directly with a commercial composter or organics waste hauler.

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE SUSTAINABLE SUPPLIERS: Working with the school's kitchen and cafeteria staff, identify any products or items currently being purchased and determine if there might be a compostable alternative available, such as biodegradable plates and cutlery. Starting at the supply chain gives you control over what enters the school in the first place, which is an added diversion from landfill.

BUY YOUR COMPOST AND COLLECTION BINS: The waste audit results will determine your compost bins' quantity and size/capacity needed for your new compost stations. Other details to keep in mind include: determining whether to include a lid; keeping your waste streams together (i.e., garbage, recycling, and compost); and, using clear graphics on collection bins which tell people what is organic/compostable.

EDUCATE AND COMMUNICATE: Your new program is in place (hurray!), now let's engage both students and faculty to the organic component of your recycling program. Education is crucial for engagement, and thus critically important to involve teachers and parents at the elementary and secondary schools to introduce and familiarize the program with students. Beginning at the school year's start helps to set clear expectations and form new habits. Promotion via staff meetings, assemblies, posters, student fairs, newsletters, student handbook, table tent cards in the cafeteria, student radio, announcements, letters home to parents... it's all fair game!

Once the program is off the ground, additional considerations to further your sustainable impact might include: talking with groundskeeping staff about adding lawn clippings to the organic collection, further saving on waste hauling fees and reducing carbon emissions; researching possible food donation or breakfast programs for excess kitchen foods and/or creating updated systems for reusing food scraps and waste; and purchasing your own digester for onsite composting on a larger scale.

Creating a school composting program deepens creative thinking skills, reduces landfill waste and associated costs, and

expands recycling resourcefulness. As students learn about the importance of composting to recycle food waste, they will also tap into new scientific interests while contributing to a healthier environment. Follow the above tips and your school will be able to tap into a successful composting program.

Doni Westfall is in her first year at the GVSU Coordinated Graduate Program. She is a native of Seattle, Washington, and enjoys hiking, kayaking, reading anything that isn't a textbook, and is passionate about feeding kids healthy foods.

Resources for you:

www.michigan.gov/eglecompost

www.michigan.gov/foodwaste

<https://savethefood.com/>

<https://www.feedingamerica.org/>

<https://www.michigan.gov/egle/public/egle-classroom/michigan-green-schools>

Farm to School and School Garden Expenses | Food and Nutrition Service (usda.gov)

School Garden Q&As | Food and Nutrition Service (usda.gov)

EGLE composting guide: <https://www.michigan.gov/egle/-/media/Project/Websites/egle/Documents/Programs/MMD/Compost/Home-Guide.pdf?rev=c26736ac7353470b9300824c77e6ecb1&hash=DF2FB97F8168C1E5C1094BB6E3C10EC6>

Green Mountain Technologies In-vessel composting systems:

<https://www.compostingtechnology.com/schools-and-universities/>

My Green Michigan (one example of an organics waste hauler):

<https://www.mygreenmi.com/>



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Practical Learning in School Stores

By Emily Mattern, MA, RDN, SNS
Michigan Department of Education, School Nutrition Programs



School stores can provide a great learning opportunity for students in how to run a business. They can learn about setting prices, managing inventory, and market trends. They can also learn about regulations that guide businesses.

Smart Snacks Standards provides the opportunity for students and instructors to learn about compliance with regulations. Since the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010, there are nutrition standards for all foods sold to students during the school day. Foods that are sold a la carte from the School Meal Programs, as well as school stores, vending machine, and fundraisers all need to meet these standards. Food sold only to adults do not need to meet the Smart Snack Standards.

One goal of Smart Snacks Standards is to help improve the health of the students. Having healthy food items available all over the school contributes to a healthier school environment. Selling candy, regular potato chips, and other foods of minimal nutritional value are counter-productive to student health. We want the healthy choice to be the easy choice.

Michigan Public Act 42 allows for two fundraisers per week and per building to not meet Smart Snacks standards. November 30, 2022, MDE reissued a memo to further explain non-compliant food fundraisers. (Food Service Administrative Memo No. 4 SY 2022-2023) An additional Q&A Fact Sheet on Smart Snacks and Fundraisers is also available on the MDE Smart Snacks in Schools webpage.

A school store may sell non-compliant items up to two days per week. However, no other food fundraisers can take place that week during the school day. So, students and staff would need to work together with other groups that wanted to run fundraisers during the school day to schedule them appropriately.

Students running the school store can learn valuable lessons

in collaboration with the food service department, instead of creating competition. School meals should be the focus of the food sales at school. School stores should not try to sell meals as well.

School day is defined in Smart Snacks as from midnight, through instruction time, until 30 minutes after the dismissal bell rings. School campus is all areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day.

Documentation is part of the following regulations. Students can use the Smart Snack Calculator to see if food items are compliant and create an organized way to keep the results. School fundraisers also need to be tracked, whether they meet standards or not. Students could assist in completing logs for days food items are sold. All of this documentation needs to be easily accessible and organized when it is time for an Administrative Review.

School stores can be great educational opportunities for students, but it can create tension with school meals. School stores could focus their efforts on selling non-food items and that removes the issue. As instructors plan for the new school year, these different points should be considered. School stores can be a win for students without being a potential problem for food service.

Enhanced School Nutrition Strategies, Training, Action Plans, and Resources (E-STAR) Grant, Michigan Department of Education

By Whitney Vance, Project Director; Viki Lorraine, Assistant Project Director; Janet Gaffke, Project Manager

The goal of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) funded E-STAR Grant is to improve school meal quality and student perception of meal quality in select school buildings in Michigan. School Nutrition

Managers were paired with retired food service directors who served as their mentors for the two-year grant period. Despite many challenges, managers continued to work toward their goals by attending virtual

training, developing and implementing action plans, delivering training to their frontline staff, and holding regular meetings with their mentors. Here are three success stories from E-STAR participants.

Spicing Things Up in the U.P. | Bay Pines Center (Residential Child Care Institution in Escanaba, MI)

When Supervisor **Cheri Robinson** decided to introduce new herbs and spices to her meals, she had no idea the many ways it would impact the young women (ages 12 – 21) she serves. She wanted to have a fresh supply of herbs on hand, so the first thing she did was purchase an herb growing station. Almost immediately the girls started asking about what things were. “The herbs have given us new things to talk about,” said Cheri. “We’re doing garlic now.”

“I looked at this activity as a way to educate. The girls like learning about where the spices come from.”

Cheri talks with the girls about the benefits of the herbs. She also bought several herb books. “We have a Pictionary of herbs and another book that talks about how the American Indians used herbs and spices for healing. The girls love to read and learn about new things.

The discussions she has had with the girls opened other conversations on how to do

research and find information on other things they’re interested in.

Cheri also wanted to increase student involvement when she selected her second activity – displaying nutrition posters in the cafeteria. In addition to the posters she purchased with her E-STAR funds, Cheri also got the students involved in designing and creating some posters. She saw it as a great way to increase the girl’s knowledge about nutrition. “Many are on meds that affect their weight. I wanted them to understand how good nutrition could help.”

And for Cheri, what has been **the best part of E-STAR** so far? Being able to brainstorm with her staff as a group. “Everyone gets fired up and excited about sharing knowledge with the girls.”

But Cheri was quick to say she couldn’t have done it without the help of her mentor. “I can’t say enough about Doreen (Simonds). She helps me with everything. She is always checking in and making sure I get what I need. She has given us such



Herb growing station

great ideas. She’s the one who started researching the herb growing station, sending me links and pictures. She has been a godsend.”

Cheri’s advice for others wanting to spice things up? “Don’t bite off too much. Take it one step at a time. One herb at a time. We started with parsley as a garnish.”

Action Plan: Improve Meal Quality

Strategy: Increase Menu Variety and Choices for Student Selection

Activity - The staff will incorporate the use of at least one herb or spice to enhance flavor each week to a menu item.

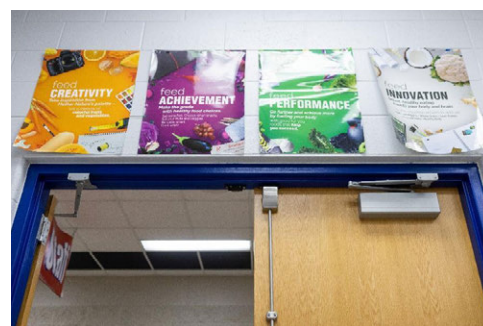
Activity - The staff will display posters and signs in the cafeteria each year to promote healthy eating among students.



Bay Pines Center Cafeteria showing posters, near the ceiling



Justin King, Food Service Director, Chippewa Hills School District



Action Plan: Improve Meal Quality

Strategy: Increase Menu Variety and Choices for Student Selection

Activity – Use new equipment

While **Justin King** was new to school food service, his 20+ years as a chef were a perfect match for an E-STAR subgrant. "I wanted to focus on things students had never had before," said Justin. "To look at what hadn't been done and bring in my background as a chef. Get the students eating things besides corn dogs and chicken nuggets. I wanted to make a culture shift."

He started with rebranding the cafeteria which included new nutrition education signage. "The kids noticed the signs immediately," said Justin. "They like learning new things. They were definitely paying more attention and commenting on the signs and their content." The signage also helped improve the cafeteria's more institutional look.

Next came a new 6.5-gallon commercial blender. Justin started with smoothies which were a big hit. "This year for St. Patrick's Day we're doing green Shamrock Shakes," said Justin. The capacity of the blender also makes it possible to do homemade soups and salsas which Justin will be adding to the menu."

"I had hoped the students would get excited about the changes and they did," said Justin. "What I didn't anticipate was how my staff would react. They have almost been as excited as the students." A four-foot-tall blender can be intimidating, but his staff wanted to see more variety and understood the blender was a better and more efficient way to get there. "My staff was also looking at broadening their own personal food horizons, so the new opportunities with the blender got them excited. "That excitement and enthusiasm carried over to the other buildings in the district. Justin will soon be getting a commercial blender for every building.

Best practices: Justin says "Don't rush things. Take it step by step. And if you have more than one building, think it through building by building because each building is going to be different. How is it going to affect the kids? The staff? Any changes you make must take into account the ability level of your staff. I didn't want to have it feel like it was



Andrea Doughty, Assistant Cook, Chippewa Hills Intermediate School, operates their new floor blender.

out of their comfort zone. Without their support it would not have worked. "

Best part of E-STAR: "The networking and getting to meet everyone," said Justin. "I had just started at the school when we got the grant. Our quarterly E-STAR managers' calls where we network with other directors opened so many doors and opened my eyes to the depths of school foods. I've learned so many small tricks from the others. E-STAR has also been an opportunity for my staff to learn new things too."

Food Service Manager **Elizabeth Quinn** wanted to focus on ways to improve the students' perception of lunches. "Students eat with their eyes," said Elizabeth. "I'm not going to eat something that doesn't look presentable, and students feel the same way. Students feel like it won't taste good because it's whole grain, low fat or has less sugar. But if it looks fresh or colorful or tasty, they'll at least try it."

"The more you get students involved the better. We share the cafeteria with gym," said Elizabeth. "It's a visual reminder - if you don't eat right you can't play sports." Elizabeth puts a big emphasis on educating her students about nutrition. "I taught EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program) nutrition education classes for several years, so I try to bring those lessons to the children."

For Elizabeth, nutrition education also includes understanding what a reimbursable meal is.

She used some of her E-STAR funds to purchase colorful posters. One of the posters demonstrated what's necessary for a reimbursable school meal.

Elizabeth started a contest where students designed a reimbursable meal. The winner got their meal offered as lunch. Pictured here is one of the winners. The winners also get their name, picture and reimbursable lunch featured on the weekly menu that is sent home to parents.

"It lets kids see why we do what we do. Even the boys liked the exercise."



Student and Elizabeth Quinn, Food Service Manager,

Everyone was working hard to get their lunch featured on the menu. And if the kids like it, we have less food waste. The students now think they can come in the kitchen and out cook us!"

"I only have one other staff person helping in the kitchen so, when I do our Manager's Corners, I include everyone from the kindergarten and gym teacher to the bus drivers. It's so important to demonstrate how food service can become part of any lesson taught. Math, English, Science, they all apply to food service. Food Service is a classroom in and of itself."

Best part of E-STAR: "The camaraderie," said Elizabeth. "During our quarterly calls with our cohort group, we have an opportunity to listen and learn about what's happening at the different schools. I've made several new friends from my group. And my mentor Carolyn (Thomas) is great!"

Action Plan: Improve Meal Quality

Strategy: Increase Menu Variety and Choices for Student Selection

Activity - The staff will incorporate the use of at least one herb or spice to enhance flavor each week to a menu item.

Activity - The staff will display posters and signs in the cafeteria each year to promote healthy eating among students.





NO KID HUNGRY

AT LINCOLN PARK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

by **Christina Varady**, Assistant Director of Food Service
Lincoln Park Public Schools — in collaboration with
Chef Jen and Mark.Rodriguez

Lincoln Park Public Schools is located in metro Detroit in an area called Downriver. From the outside of the buildings, it may not look much different from your school's food service department. However, the battles internally are many. Lincoln Park Schools struggle with many difficulties in staffing, keeping students interested in school food service while adhering to strict USDA regulations and trying to create excitement in their school cafeterias. This sparked the initiative to bring No KID Hungry- a non-profit campaign into their district to try new things in their department.

As a district with CEP status, it is no surprise that many of our students go home to a very challenged food supply- let alone a supply of food that nourishes the bodies and brains of our students who are simply trying to get through the school day to learn. Chef Jennifer Brower of No KID Hungry-Michigan was assigned to partner with Lincoln Park Public Schools early on for the 2022-23 school year. Since Chef Jenn began, it became very clear just how much can change when you connect a non-profit and a talented chef with K12 experience with a school district in need of a little TLC. Since the beginning of the 2022-23 school year, we have seen more smiles, higher participation, and an increase in staff satisfaction. Below are a handful of highlights from throughout the year- we hope this can help to give ideas for your schools. These free resources are meant to be utilized to better our communities, after all!



In the Fall of 2022, Chef Jenn agreed to come on-site at Lincoln Park High School to work with our staff on knife skills, cutting, and cooking techniques. Not only was this training great for staff, but it also provided three hours of culinary skill development for Professional Standards. Our kitchen heroes were even able to practice these skills hands-on at the training.

Soon after, Chef Jenn reviewed Lincoln Park High School, Lincoln Park Middle School, and Carr Elementary School to see what we can do differently to spark some student interest. Just before the holiday break in December, Chef Jenn came up with the idea of a Farmers Market combo'd with live interaction cooking & tasting of a new potential menu item for elementary students at Carr School during



Above: Chef Jen teaches knife skills and other culinary techniques to the staff at Lincoln Park Public Schools

their lunch periods. The students walked through and shopped for ingredients in the hopes that they may go home to make black bean fajitas with their families. As students chose their favorite produce- they were able to watch Chef Jenn make samples of Chicken Fajitas. They packed away their grocery bag which contained a recipe card with a nutrition activity, a green pepper, red pepper, purple onion, lime, a can of black beans, and a bag of soft flour tortillas. While tasting their chicken fajita samples, Chef Jenn took the microphone and chatted with the students, encouraging them to learn to cook with their families and how to get started at home.

Our district dietitian Marie Foggia then spoke to the students about the ingredients used, and the importance of 'eating a rainbow' as often as they can!. Each new group of students came in, bright-eyed and excited for what was to come- and left with a new knowledge to be able to share with their families. During this time that we had the student's attention, we made sure our LPS kids at Carr Elementary understood where food comes from, how we get food, and how food is made is so important, because as we know, this is no longer common knowledge. This monotony breaker opened minds and sparked an interest in food for most of our students.



“ We are thankful for the opportunity to share the Farmers Market with our students and their families. Students learned about vegetables and different food groups. Each student also received a bag with the fresh ingredients to take home to their families to share their knowledge about how to make healthy food choices that taste yummy too!

Whitney Waskiewicz
Principal, Carr Elementary School

This was confirmed with countless comments from faculty, families and our very own Carr Elementary School Principal. Our hope is to continue farmer's markets in the coming school years to be able to share with fun and knowledge with our other Lincoln Park Elementary Schools!

The holiday break came and went, and when we were back and ready for the new semester, Chef Jenn and No KID Hungry weren't done with us yet! Chef Jenn worked with Middle School kitchen

manager Renee Sterner on implementing a 'made to order' yogurt bar for our students. This yogurt bar included toppings of assorted cut fruits, granolas and freshly baked double cinnamon breadstick twists. Renee continues to run this yogurt bar as it has been a huge hit with our students! In fact, recent polling done in Lincoln Park Middle School has shown that the students love our yogurt bar. Production records confirm that our breakfast and lunch numbers have increased since implementation. The new yogurt bar concept will continue into the next school year.



Soon after, it was time for the high school to experience some fun changes. With the help of our pizza prep associate and Lincoln Park High School kitchen manager Katherine Romel, Chef Jenn assisted us in creating heart-shaped individual pizzas to offer as a menu meal selection for our students on Valentine's Day. Over 300 pizzas were made and every one of them was taken! Meal counts increased that day and student feedback was incredible. We found that with the right help, having more of these 'special features' is doable and fun!

At Lincoln Park School High School Chef Jenn and Mark Rodriguez (food service director) cooked up chicken caesar salad with whole muscle chicken and made to order - display cooking! The aroma

alone stirred excitement for both our students and staff coming through the cafeteria. Some students were asking for this type of concept to be available every day. Once the district is fully staffed, they plan to do more display cooking in the future.

We are so appreciative of No KID Hungry and Chef Jenn for entering our kitchens and bringing nothing but high energy and joy to all of our Lincoln Park students. It is so important to be sure we are servicing our kids in a way that makes them see that they are just as deserving of events that are often put on by schools that tend to be more affluent. Thank you, No KID Hungry, for your tireless efforts to improve the health and wellbeing being of our students.

Our work is not done. After reviewing student's survey comments in LPHS/ LPMS we will be adding a 'Tasting' day in the coming weeks before school wraps up. On this day Chef Jenn will lead the charge for change to address the main student comments/concerns of wanting more ethnic relative food choices more often! Tackling speed scratch or scratch food items is a challenge with our continuous staffing challenges, but Chef Jenn will be teaching us all how to 'make it happen' even with challenges. We will be featuring a "Made to Order" Hot theme meal set up featuring foods relative to our general student population. This will be

a very exciting experiment and learning curve for us all. Our students (I have no doubt) will absolutely love the ideas.

At Carr Elementary we are awaiting a few new pieces of equipment that will allow us to implement ideas from Chef Jenn's suggested menus and begin heating/cooking "on-site" at this building rather than all food being shipped in ready-to-hold from the High School. This will create the aromas needed to fill the halls and pull more students in daily, to dine with us. We are also going to begin offering more than one choice of a meal per day. The hope is, that with Chef

Jenn's guidance we begin serving 1-2 hot choices per day and a cold pre-packed fun item daily!



Join the next SNAM Leadership Academy!



Are you ready to take the next step in your career?

School Nutrition Professionals are true heroes, and you are the key to a successful program! Our two-day Leadership Academy is designed to develop new skills, enhance your current skills and to provide opportunities to interact with colleagues who have the same goal that you have – to Feed Kids the best possible healthy meal!



Register to join the June Academy of Outstanding Leaders

Registration is now OPEN at michigansna.org!

CELEBRATIONS AND PROMOTIONS IN THE SCHOOL CAFETERIA

Submitted by June Altom, SNS

Celebrations and promotions don't have to take a lot of time or money to create a fun and festive event for your students.

Think simple, do you want to create a buzz around a new food item? Give the food a fun name or simply use the school mascot and jazz up the serving line with posters of the featured item. Ask your broker for posters highlighting the product.

Ask your School Board, Principal, or Superintendent to come serve lunch or breakfast for a day. Students will love the interaction with them. Vendors and brokers are always looking for ways to help, ask them to come help serve and promote a new entrée or create excitement with a favorite menu.

All young children are artists and elementary students love to show off their artwork, send pages of fruits and vegetables down to classrooms for students to color, and hang them around the cafeteria or hallway. Highlight those fruits and vegetables on the menu that week.

There is a "holiday" for every day of the year, find a calendar for ideas from Chicken Dance Day to Tie Dye Day or Celebrate Penguin Day.

Better yet, SNA has a great promotional calendar that is free a resource for members.

Check it out at schoolnutrition.org!



Professional Development for School Nutrition Professionals

Go to www.michigan.sna.org to see all classes

COURSE CALENDAR

Start Date and Time	Course	Location
June 20	#134 #136 ServSafe Review & Exam	Watervliet HS
June 21, and 22	#180 Nutrition I	Edwardsburg
June 22	#415 Practical Solutions for Financial Management Success	SNAM Offices
June 22	#143 Conflict Resolution	SNAM Offices
June 26 and 27	SNAM Leadership Academy	Affinity Group Offices
July 27 and 28	#100 School Nutrition Basics	Variety FS Offices
August 9 and 10	#100 School Nutrition Basics	Affinity Group Offices
August 14 and 15	#100 School Nutrition Basics	Berrien RESA
August 22 and 23	#100 School Nutrition Basics	Edwardsburg
August 23	#152 SKILLS FOR PREPARING QUALITY MEALS	Macomb ISD
September 27	#153 STANDARDIZED RECIPES	Macomb ISD
October 04	#151 WEIGHTS, MEASURES & MEAL PRODUCTION RECORDS	Macomb ISD
October 11	#190 MEETING CHILDREN'S SPECIAL DIET NEEDS IN NUTRITION PROGRAMS	Macomb ISD
November 15	#151 WEIGHTS, MEASURES & MEAL PRODUCTION RECORDS	Macomb ISD
February 13, 2024	#151 WEIGHTS, MEASURES & MEAL PRODUCTION RECORDS	Macomb ISD

Can't find a class you're looking for or are you looking for Training customized to your needs? Ask how SNAM courses can also be tailored to meet your specific district needs!



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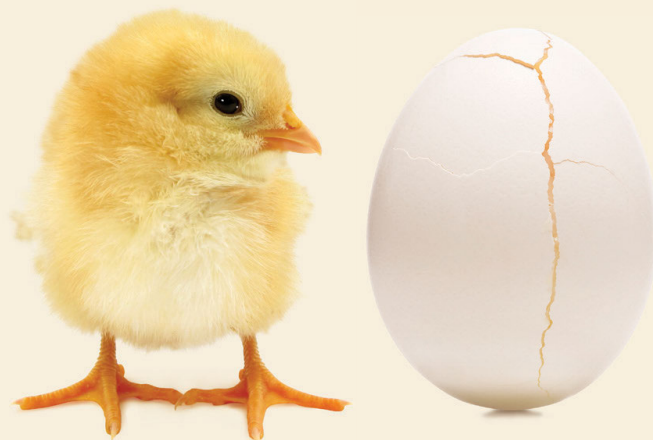
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**Which came first,
the chicken or the egg?**

Neither.



MEMBERS F1RST

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MEMBER-OWNED Group Purchasing Organization



NAME: Heather Holland, RDN, SNS
POSITION: School Nutrition Program Analyst
SCHOOL DISTRICT: Michigan Department of Education
YEARS OF SERVICE IN CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS: 23

ARE YOU INVOLVED WITH SNAM IN ANY POSITION?
 Secretary/Treasurer

FAVORITE SCHOOL LUNCH MEAL: Grilled Cheese with Tomato Soup

HOW WERE YOU INTRODUCED TO WORKING IN CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS?

I was working as a dietitian in a hospital and saw a job posting for an Assistant School Food Service Director. I love children and thought it was a perfect fit for me. Day one of my new position, I knew that this was where I was supposed to be and that this is where I would grow my career.

DESCRIBE THE DIFFERENT POSITIONS YOU HAVE HELD IN CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS:

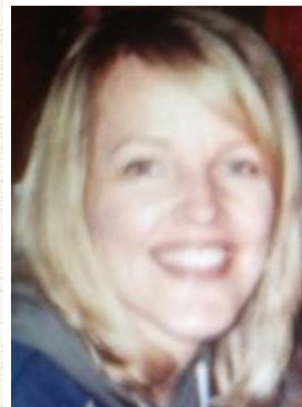
My entire working career I have been involved in foodservice, from working in restaurants as a teenager and young adult, to becoming a Registered Dietitian in college, and then working in Child Nutrition Programs as a School Assistant Food Service Director, School Food Service Director, School Nutrition Program Analyst, and the current Secretary/Treasurer of SNAM.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE WORKDAY?

It is partnering with dedicated, passionate school nutrition professionals across the state to move our child nutrition programs forward. When I can convince a school or a school district to add a nutrition program or implement a new procedure to maximize the use of school nutrition programs and reduced the prevalence of child food insecurity, it is a great day!

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING TO DO AWAY FROM THE WORKDAY?

Spend as much time with my two children, Jack and Lucy. They are growing up fast and I am soaking in every moment!



NAME: Maureen Michaels
POSITION: Account Executive- Detroit, MI
EMPLOYER: General Mills



YEARS OF SERVICE IN CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS:
 20+

FAVORITE SCHOOL LUNCH MEAL: Love Cinnamon Toast Crunch with Yoplait® Vanilla Yogurt...it's delicious!

DESCRIBE THE DIFFERENT POSITIONS YOU HAVE HELD IN CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS:

I have always been a manufacture rep and enjoyed bringing affordable meal solutions to food service directors over the years. I worked for PepsiCo, the CORE Group and now General Mills. It's a pleasure working with the K12 segment. They feed our future and I am always amazed with their dedication and passion for their students.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE WORKDAY?

I love the mornings! Hitting the ground running fulfills me and gives me a sense of accomplishment.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING TO DO AWAY FROM THE WORKDAY?

I do my best to unplug from the workday by walking, biking, reading and meeting with friends for some laughs.



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