



### Who Are We?



AFHK's vision is a world in which every kid is healthy, active and ready to learn.

## Who Are We?



Action for Healthy Kids works to mobilize school professionals, families and communities to take actions that lead to healthy eating, physical activity and healthier schools where kids thrive.

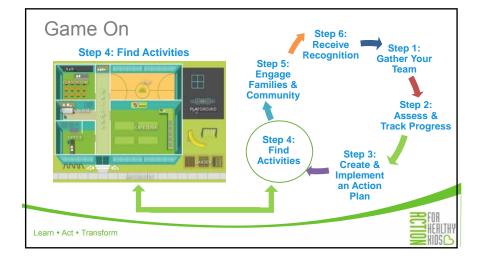


### Get Your Game On



Game On supports America's schools, their staff, students, and families to incorporate healthy food choices and physical activity into their daily lives and school environment, with the ultimate goal of getting recognized as a health-promoting school.

ActionforHealthyKids.org/Game-On





## What We'll Cover



- How national school meal programs work
- Challenges school meal programs face
- Strategies for collaborating with your school nutrition department
- How parents can support healthy school meals
- Resources to advocate for healthy school meals

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United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services Child Nutrition Programs

- National School Lunch Program (NSLP)
- School Breakfast Program (SBP)
- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- Special Milk Program
- Summer Food Service Program



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#### National School Meal Programs

Participating public and non-profit private schools:

- Receive cash subsidies and USDA Commodity Foods for each meal served
- Must offer nutritionally balanced meals that meet federal nutrition requirements
- Must offer free or reduced-priced meals to eligible children



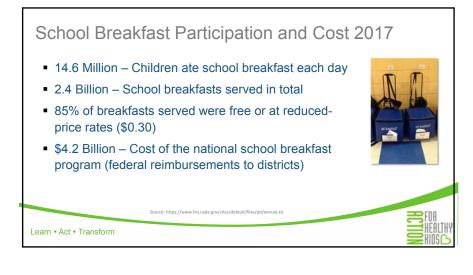
More than 13 million children in the United States live in "food insecure" homes, meaning they don't always have enough to eat.

#### School Lunch Participation and Cost 2017

- 30 Million Children ate school lunch each day
- 4.9 Billion School lunches served in total
- 73.6% of lunches served were free or at reducedprice rates (\$0.40)
- \$13.6 Billion Cost of the national school lunch program (federal reimbursements to districts + commodities)



BHEALT



#### The Learning Connection



Skipping breakfast affects student performance—demonstrated through levels of alertness, attendance, memory, problem solving and math skills.



Action for Healthy Kids, The Learning Connection What You Need to Know to Ensure Your Kids are Healthy and Ready to Lear http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/thelearningconnection

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#### The Learning Connection

Students with a higher quality diet are found to be on task more often and have higher test scores and attendance rates.



More information and citations can be found in: Health is Vital for Student Success: A Summary of Relevant Research, Colorado Education Initiative: http://www.coloradoedinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MakingtheCaseFF.pdf

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Federal Government State Government School Board District Administration Food Service Director Principal Teachers and Staff Parents and Students National School Meal Programs Who makes the decisions?

Schools must follow the federal requirements, but decisions about specific foods to serve and how to prepare them are left up to local school food authorities.

Learn more: Center for Ecoliteracy: Understanding the Levels of Authority for School Food Systems: http://www.ecoliteracy.org/article/understandinglevels-authority-school-food-systems

#### A Balancing Act...

- Budget the costs of running a food service operation food, labor, equipment, supplies, maintenance, transportation, utilities and more
- Federal government's Food and Nutrition Standards
- High expectations of parents and the community
- Narrow food preferences of so many children

"Budgeting for thousands of wholesome, appetizing, kid-friendly meals on a daily basis is easily compared to a high-wire act. It requires a near-microscopic focus on where every cent goes, and relentless, expert balancing of the nutritional, esthetic, and financial value of every single choice."

> "The Cast of School Lunch," School Food 101, School Food Focus http://www.schoolfoodfocus.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm\_uploa ent/unloads/dlm\_unloads/2016/05/The-Cost-of-School-Lunch

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#### How School Meals Are Funded

- Paying students
- Federal reimbursement dollars for Free, Reduced and Paid student meals and after-school snacks
- A la carte sales, including snack carts and vending machines
- Catering services or contracts with community programs, child care and elder care centers

2017-2018 School Lunch Reimbursement Rates: \$3.29 Free, \$2.89 Reduced, \$0.37 Paid + 2¢ additional per meal in districts with 60% or more free/reduced. Alaska and Hawaii receive higher rates. For more information about reimbursement rates and eligibility guidelines, visit https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/child-nutrition-programs

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#### **Commodity Foods**

- 15-20% of the food on school lunch trays usually comes from the USDA commodity food program (USDA Foods)
- Typical commodities available include meat, poultry, eggs, grain products, cheese, fruits and vegetables
- School districts place their orders as much as a year in advance

Source: White Paper: USDA Food in the National School Lunch Program https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/fdd/NSLP-White-Paper.pd

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# The Cost of School Lunch

• Food: \$0.85 - \$1.40

Source: Chef Ann Found

http://www.chefannfou

 Labor, equipment, supplies, maintenance, transportation, utilities, training and more: \$1.60 - \$2.15

ation, Parent Advocacy Toolkit dation.org/assets/uploads/documents/CAF_School_Food_Infographic_Oct2016.pdf		
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#### The Lunch Box

Supports school districts and food service teams who are transitioning their food programs from processed foods to scratch cooking and fresh ingredients. Find best practices, tools, grants, online trainings, menus and recipes and more!



#### Healthy School Meals: Participation Challenges

- Kids don't have enough time to eat
- Popularity and availability of convenience foods



- Competition from outside restaurants
- Stigma associated with eating school lunch

Increasing participation needs to be a community effort!

#### Parents as Partners: Lunch Period Timing



Experts recommend that students be allowed 20 minutes to eat after they arrive at the table with their food.

"It takes more time to chew a whole apple than applesauce. Eating an entrée salad takes longer than eating a cheeseburger or chicken nuggets...Sometimes kids eat their favorite foods first, and if they run out of time, those vegetables may land in the trash." Helen Phillips, President of the School Nutrition Association, 2011-2012 "Cuting short lunch time in school may lead to obesity" Nanci Helmich, USATODAXCOM 8/17/2011

Game On Activity http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges/cafeteria-challenges/1435-time-to-eat



#### Parents as Partners: Recess Before Lunch



Kids tend to eat a better lunch if they've already had their time on the playground, leading to less waste, better behavior and performance.

#### Game On Activity http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges/cafeteria-challenges/1232-recess-before-lunch



#### Parents as Partners: Competitive Foods

"Competitive foods" compete with nutritionally balanced school meals for student dollars. They include a la carte lines in the cafeteria, vending machines, snack carts, school stores and fundraisers.



- Work with nutrition services to offer healthier snack items
- Restrict purchases before kids have finished their meals
- Ask nutrition services to allow families to opt out
- Restrict access to competitive foods from other school groups during mealtimes

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#### Parents as Partners: Smarter Lunchrooms



- Make healthy foods more visible and convenient
  - Present foods in an appealing way
  - Use cool labels that appeal to kids
  - Use signs and verbal prompts
  - Utilize suggestive selling



#### Game On Activity

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges/cafeteria-challenges/1430-smarter-lunchrooms

#### Parents as Partners: Marketing Your Program

- Host taste tests of healthy menu items
- Organize a smoothie contest •
- Hold Farm Fresh Fridays to showcase locally grown foods
- Educate families about good nutrition and its connection to learning
- Conduct a student focus group to gather student input
- Spruce up your cafeteria with new paint, murals and music

#### Game On Activities

Taste Tests: http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges/cafeteria-challenges/1210-host-a-taste-test Cafeteria Spruce Up: http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges/cafeteria-challenges/1267-cafeteria-spruce-up Nutrition Promotion: http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges/cafeteria-challenges/1485-nutrition-promotion

#### Parent Advocacy Toolkit

School Food 101, understanding the political landscape, case studies, conducting an investigation, reviewing your priorities, understanding your district wellness policy and priorities, identifying collaborators, holding a kick-off meeting, exploring programming possibilities, connecting with decision-makers and key influencers, requesting a district meeting

www.chefannfoundation.org/for-parents/parent-advocacy-toolkit/





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## Parents as Partners – Supporting Healthy School Meals

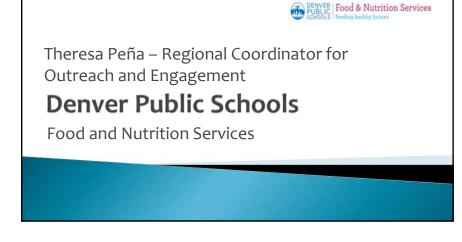
- Understand and support the process
- Offer feedback along the way
- Enlist your kids to champion school meal improvements among their peers



- Encourage other parents to join the movement
- Support a healthy school food culture outside the cafeteria with healthy celebrations, fundraisers and rewards

Source: LiveWell@School Food Initiative https://livewellcolorado.org/healthy-schools/school-food-initiative,

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#### Fun Facts....

- > 207 schools
- > 92,331 students
- ▶ 67% FRL
- Meals Served (2016-17)
- Breakfast: 32,251 average daily participation
- Lunch: 47,577 average daily participation
- \$41M annual budget
- Approximately (800+) food service workers



Food & Nutrition Services

## Key DPS initiatives...Scratch cooking

- Seasonal Menus:
  - New entrees
- Hot vegetarian entrees
- Fruit & vegetable bars
- Urban farms and school gardens
- Complimentary breakfast for ALL students
- Better nutrition AND tastier items



Food & Nutrition Services

#### Areas of Focus...

- Improved quality of entrees and sides
- Modern Menus:
- New entrees
- Hot vegetarian entrees
- Customization of entrees
- More sauces, more flavor
- More & different choices
- Fewer processed ingredients
- Education and feedback



Food & Nutrition Services

## Parent Engagement

- School Based
  - Menu changes
  - Access to Water
  - Policy
  - District Level
  - School Wellness Policy
  - Menu Options
  - Policy





#### **Parent Engagement**

- Feedback
  - Lunchroom manager
  - Supervisor
  - Executive Director
- Opportunities
  - Recipes
  - Quality
  - Taste tests
  - Host educational opportunities with PTA, community groups, parents
  - Regularly eat in the lunchroom



Food & Nutrition Services

#### Allison Howe, MPH

Parent and PTO Member Sherman Early Childhood Center, Pioneer Elementary Fort Morgan, Colorado Colorado AFHK Parent Advisory Board



Certified Health Education Specialist Consultant for the Lifelong Wellness Project Morgan County School District

#### Applied for Salad Bars and related **School Food Initiative** equipment Fully funded for all of our elementary schools Offers culinary, operations Implemented first in Columbine Elementary and marketing technical School assistance to help food service directors and staff in Salad Bars \_iveWell Colorado provide wholesome, to Schools nutritious school meals. COLORA www.saladbars2schools.org

#### Use your strengths to support Nutrition Services!

- Writing grants
- Writing letters of support
- Writing press releases
- Speaking at PTO/PTA Meetings
- Fundraising
- Create a logo
- Leading a parent group
- Taking pictures of events



# Every Kid Healthy™ Week Annual celebration of schools' wellness achievements Recognized on the calendar of National Health Observances Takes place last week of April each year Schools have hosted more than 5,000 Every Kid Healthy Week events since 2013, engaging over 2 million students, parents, teachers and community members! Register your event: EveryKidHealthyWeek.org Leam • Act • Transform





