

Superintendent's Cafeteria Task Force:

Areas of Focus

- Review of a la carte options available for sale to students
- Farm to School Program: using local products for cafeteria program
- Program Enhancements: more fresh, from scratch menu items; less frozen, prepared items

Recommendations

A La Carte Program

- Review and reduce the overall number of packaged, processed items available
- Replace with appealing, fresh and healthier a la carte items such as fruit kebobs, fruit and yogurt parfaits and fresh fruit "boats"
- Rethink current method of marketing a la carte items: re-locate less healthy items to rack behind cashier. Re-purpose newly vacant space to expand salad bar items and healthier a la carte items
- Review the contents of the vending machine. Reduce the number of less healthy items and replace with healthier, fresh items

Farm to School Program

- Connect with local growers to procure seasonal produce for food service program
- Request "local" produce when purchasing from primary food vendor
- Connect with DoD vendor AT Siravo for local New England produce using USDA commodity dollars

Food Service Program Enhancements

- Develop a "Guest Chef" program where area chefs partner with the food service program on a variety of projects
 - Chef-developed recipes for vegetable and side dishes, main course items, gourmet pizza items, marinades and dressings
 - Work with food service staff on professional development: knife skills, new cooking methods, seasoning with herbs and spices, etc.
 - Conduct cooking demonstrations in the dining area during meal periods to showcase new menu items
 - Conduct student tastings to successfully launch new menu items
 - Make classroom presentations if requested
 - Develop full-day menus, work with food service staff and assist in preparation for "Guest Chef Day" events
- Re-Focus on Lunch Program
 - Revisit the current salad bar and explore strategies to increase student selections of fruits, vegetables and salad entrees
 - Expand the selection of salad entrees to include various types with seasonal and ethnic flavors (Asian chef, Southwest chef, Seafood chef, Roasted Root chef, etc)
- Hire consultant to help design and implement structure and support syste

Current Status and Timelines

- A la carte Offerings
 - Vending machine contents have been inventoried
 - All offerings have been screened against Healthy Food Certification criteria
 - For opening 2015-16: new a la carte item recipes developed, items to be replaced identified, and marketing plan developed (product placement and signage)

- Farm to School Program
 - Connection made with Massaro Farms: able to supply product beginning with the 2015-16 school year
 - Continue reaching out to area farms and growers
 - Develop menu items around seasonal products

- Guest Chef Program
 - Two potential chefs in place; waiting to hear from 3 others
 - Planning one new menu item in collaboration with chef for end of May or early June
 - Chef will develop recipe, conduct demo and offer student tastings
 - Additional collaborations will include periodic new recipes (when possible, using seasonal produce from local farm partners) and possibility of full day's menu with chef assistance in preparation and serving

- Positive Program Promotion
 - Offer presentation on food service program to PTO and at parent event opportunities
 - Keep public informed of food service activities and progress toward goals