

CHILD NUTRITION/FOOD SERVICE

Over the past month, the Nutrition Department has been actively working on several key initiatives to strengthen and modernize our program. We have pursued multiple grant opportunities, both for new equipment and for advancing our efforts toward locally sourcing more of our food products. Our Farm to School Grant application aims to build partnerships with local farmers and ranchers, ensuring fresher, community-based ingredients in our school meals. In addition, we've been focused on restoring all kitchen equipment to full functionality, as years of deferred maintenance have taken their toll. Two walk-in cooler units have already been replaced at separate schools, with several more likely to require replacement before the school year ends. Our warehouse manager recently became certified as a technician for our new cold vending machine, which will soon be installed in the Minico Ag Building to provide fully reimbursable meals to students who are located farther from the dining hall. We are also developing plans to revitalize the Minico High School cafeteria into a modern, inviting food court-style space designed to encourage more students to stay on campus and enjoy nutritious meals rather than relying on off-site convenience foods. Once design concepts are finalized, we look forward to presenting a comprehensive proposal to the Board and Administration. While we recognize that rebuilding and modernizing this department is a significant undertaking, we remain fully committed to our mission of *Fueling Healthy Futures* for the students at Minidoka County School District.

Michael Harris

Director of Child Nutrition and Foodservice

Minidoka Schools

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