

Illinois School Nutrition Success Stories

Illinois Nutrition Education and
Training Program



Nutrition Education
& Training Program



Bushnell-Prairie City Elementary School, Bushnell

Bushnell-Prairie City employed a variety of activities to improve school nutrition. A weekly healthy food tip is announced over the school intercom and a monthly nutrition book on a bulletin board is displayed in the library. Students created a school garden that contained radishes, lettuce, tomatoes, green peppers, cucumbers and potatoes to encourage vegetable consumption. Fresh grab-and-go fruits and veggies like apples, bananas and carrot sticks were added to lunch menus. In addition, 51 percent or more whole wheat flour was substituted in recipes for baked items, including pumpkin bars and whole wheat cookies.

Hawthorn School, Salem

Hawthorn School made use of *HealthierUS* School Challenge mini-grant funds to purchase menu planning software that helped develop and promote a six-week menu cycle that contains more fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Students were involved in menu changes and taste tested new foods, completed food preference surveys and assisted with menu planning. Healthier fare was added to the menus, which included tangerines, spinach salad, black bean salsa, baked new potatoes, stop light peppers (raw red, yellow and green sliced peppers for dipping), kiwi, commodity whole wheat spaghetti, whole grain bread and whole grain tortilla chips.

Indian Prairie School District 204, Bolingbrook, Naperville and Aurora

Indian Prairie School District has made great strides to improve the quality of their school meals program. A visiting chef program has been initiated in the high schools to broaden the variety of healthier options offered to students. Chefs were hired for special school events to demonstrate preparation of healthful options like stir-fry dishes, whole wheat crust veggie pizzas and hamburgers on whole wheat buns. The district's foodservice company sent their division chef to schools to educate foodservice staff on preparation of healthful foods. Nutritious options like salad and apples are also priced less to encourage student purchase and consumption.

Northside and Southside Elementary Schools, Morrison

In an effort to meet *HealthierUS* School Challenge criteria and more closely align menus with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Morrison elementary schools added a variety of fiber-rich dry beans and peas (legumes) to the lunch meals. Tasty additions included beef and bean burritos, chili, baked beans and adding fat-free refried beans to the tacos.

Oliver Wendell Holmes Elementary School, Oak Park

Oliver Wendell Holmes Elementary School kicked nutrition education up a notch with *HealthierUS* School Challenge mini-grant funds by purchasing a variety of education materials for the classroom and cafeteria. Staff also developed twelve classroom nutrition education lessons that were integrated into language arts and mathematic curriculum for

students. In addition, the school partnered with *Seven Generations Ahead*, a local non-profit organization, to put on an educational nutrition fair for students and staff that included healthful food samples.

Red Hill Community Unit School District 10, Bridgeport (Bridgeport Grade School, Petty Elementary and Sumner Attendance Center)

Utilizing *HealthierUS* School Challenge mini-grant funds, Red Hill School District employed a variety of activities to improve each school nutrition program. A registered dietitian was hired to review lunch menus and educate the school community about the menu improvements that included a choice of whole wheat or white bread, a choice of entrée and a daily serving of fruit. Schools also held a “Taste the Spinach” Challenge and provided education on the *MyPyramid* milk group, taking milk mustache pictures of the students.

Ridgeview Community Unified School District 19, Colfax

The Ridgeview Local Wellness Policy Team Members met to assess the needs of their district and schools and create a plan for improvement. Healthier enhancements to district a la carte and hot lunch lines included serving only baked snack chips, offering bagged fruit, veggie plates and salads and offering only milk, juice and water as beverage selections in kindergarten through grade five.

Tri-C Elementary School, Carterville

Jeannie Dixon, food service director, switched to turkey hot dogs and corn dogs, reducing fat grams from 16 to 10 per serving. She reduced the fat in her nacho recipe by 7.5 grams per serving by switching to a dry, low-fat cheese sauce mix. She eliminated grilled cheese sandwiches and substituted lean turkey and chicken sandwiches, which removed 24-36 grams of fat per month from the menu or the equivalent of two cans of shortening per year. Also, Jeannie surveyed students to determine fruit and vegetable preferences and added a lettuce salad with fat-free ranch dressing to her menu.

Veterans Memorial Middle School, Blue Island

Wellness is a top priority for Michael McLaughlin, Principal and Leah Humphrey, Assistant Principal, at Veterans Memorial Middle School. School staff, parents and students participate in a variety of student, community and academic-based activities that make nutrition a major focus throughout the school year. A healthful smoothie bar is offered at school lock-ins and Fit 4 Life activities. Also, baked chips are available in vending machines instead of regular chips. Soft drinks have been eliminated from the building and only water and unsweetened tea and juice are provided. Vegetables and other healthful snacks are also available to students.

Vienna Elementary School, Vienna

In an effort to improve school nutrition, Vienna Elementary School signed up as a Team Nutrition School and has excluded soft drinks, candy bars and sale of other junk food items during the instructional day. In addition, school nutrition staff has received training on healthy meal compliance.

William Hatch Elementary School, Oak Park

By employing a variety of nutrition education and promotional activities, William Hatch Elementary was able to raise their Average Daily Participation (ADP) in the National School Lunch Program from 41 percent to over 60 percent. A salad bar was implemented in the cafeteria. Classrooms participated in a school lunch participation challenge. The winning classroom received an extra physical education class during one school week. Marketing efforts also included promoting healthful foods and school meals with food samples, nutrition education posters throughout the school, PTO presentations and newsletters for parents.

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This program has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services. The content of this program does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department, nor does mention of trade names, commercial product, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.