

National School Lunch Week - October 10-14, 2011



Cherokee County Schools



# Agenda

- The facts about School Lunch and School Meals
- National School Lunch Week
- School Lunch – Let's Grow Healthy
- Getting Involved



# School Lunch



- **National School Lunch Program (NSLP)**
  - 31 million children served daily
  - 95% of schools participate in NSLP
- **Our district's Lunch Program**
  - 37 hundred students served daily
  - 87% of students participate in NSLP



# School Meals – The Facts

**School meals  
are healthier  
than ever!**

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Whole grains
- Reduced or zero TransFats
- Salads and salad bars
- Lowfat dairy items
- Baked items rather than fried
- Healthy cooking/prep techniques

# School Meals – The Facts



- **School meals are balanced and healthy**
  - The National School Lunch Program requires school lunches to meet federal dietary guidelines which dictate:

No more than 30 % of calories can come from fat and less than 10 % from saturated fat.

Lunches must provide 1/3 of the RDA of protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium and calories.

School meals must be served in age appropriate portions.

# School Meals – The Facts



- **School Lunches include innovative items:**
  1. Milk – Lowfat
  2. Vegetables – From jicama to fresh carrots
  3. Fruit – Everything from kiwi to locally grown apples
  4. Grains – More whole grains
  5. Protein – lean meats and beans

With all of these choices, school meals add up to great value!

# School Meals – The Facts



- **What about the childhood obesity crisis?**
  - There is no evidence that either the school breakfast or lunch program is contributing to rising rates of childhood obesity. \*
  - Children who eat school lunch are more likely to consume milk, fruit & veggies and less likely to consume desserts and snack items than children who do not. \*
  - Students are less likely to gain weight during the school year when in school than during the summer when school is out. \*\*
  - Students only eat 17% of their meals each year in schools

Addressing childhood obesity is a community-wide effort.

*\*Source: Journal of the American Dietetic Association, February 2009*

*\*\*Source: American Journal of Public Health, April 2007*

# School Meals – The Facts



- **School meals help students to do better in school**
  - Research has shown that students who eat school meals perform their best academically.
  - Students who eat school breakfast have greater gains in standardized test scores and show improvements in math, reading and vocabulary scores.\*
  - Healthy eating correlates with less trips to the school nurse and less absenteeism.
  - Providing nutritious school breakfast on testing days – and every school day - leads to improved test scores.

*\*Source: Classroom Breakfast Scores High in Maryland, Maryland Meals for Achievement. October 2001*

# School Meals – The Facts



- **School meals are safe**
  - School nutrition professionals have rigorous training in food safety and have implemented a HACCP Plan.
  - School kitchens are subject to two health inspections annually conducted by the local health department.
  - According to the CDC, school kitchens maintain exceptional food safety records.
    - Schools account for only 4 % of foodborne-disease outbreaks. (Food prepared at home – 20 %, Restaurant fare – 50 %)

# National School Lunch Week



- Annual celebration of National School Lunch Program (NSLP), using a fun theme
  - Established by President John F. Kennedy in 1962
  - Opportunity to highlight the important, positive role of school lunch in our nation
- NSLW 2011 is October 10-14, 2011



# Key Campaign Goals

- Promote the overall benefit that school lunch helps kids grow healthy
- Promote farm to school and locally grown foods
- Promote the foods and nutrients required for kids to grow healthy and strong
- Educate students on where food comes from



# Try Something New

Take a field trip to a:

- Local Farm
- Urban Farm
- Pumpkin Patch
- Apple Orchard
- Farmer's Market

... Or, if you can't go to the farmer, have him come and talk to your students.

Hold a pumpkin carving or potato decorating contest.

# Try Something New

Find out what foods grow in your region and create a display.

Get your students to create posters of the Farm to School items you are serving.

Taste test local produce including dairy products.

# Try Something New

Start a school garden or visit a local community garden.

Grow Something:  
Lima beans in a bag or basil and parsley in pots.

Dress up as a farmer or get your students to wear a color representing a different fruit/veggie each day.

# Get Involved - Parents

- Parents and school nutrition professionals share the same goals:
  - **Well-balanced nutritious meals for their kids**
  - **Creating healthy eating habits for life**
- Parents are role models and influence what kids eat
- Encourage healthy eating and lifestyles at home for you and your kids (actions speak louder than words...)
- Create a “Let’s Grow Healthy” night at PTO or PTAs
- Volunteer to help set up a school garden or chaperone a field trip to the local farm



# Get Involved - Parents

- Review the cafeteria menu with your kids to help them plan a balanced meal
- Join your kids for school lunch during NSLW or any time during the year
- Communicate any concerns or special diets your kids may have
- Tell us what you think



# Get Involved

## Teachers & Administrators



- Visit the cafeteria during lunch
- Encourage the school nutrition director to make presentations about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle at PTA meetings and in the classroom
- Talk about “Let’s Grow Healthy” during assembly
- Make Farm-to-School a unit of study



# Thank You

