

Cafeteria Chronicles: Eagle-Mountain Saginaw Independent School District

When nutrition education extends beyond students, your community takes notice.

At **Eagle-Mountain Saginaw Independent School District** in Fort Worth, TX, Food and Nutritional Services Director Meghan Martinson, RD and Assistant Director Darlene Lopez-Monge, RD recognized the need to start nutrition education with students at a young age, to build healthy eating habits for life.

With over 24,000 students in the district, Martinson and Lopez-Monge plan nutrition education activities to reach students at school and at home. Flyers are given out to teachers and posted in the cafeteria, reinforcing healthy eating habits at the point of service. The school newsletter includes messages for parents/guardians about the importance of reducing sodium, added sugars and increasing whole grains along with practical tips like label reading and choosing natural flavor enhancers. Social media messages help to amplify their nutrition education messages as well.

Learn more about nutrition education at Eagle-Mountain Saginaw ISD [here](#).

To create excitement around nutrition education, the district hosts promotions throughout the year, such as the “Farm Fresh Challenge” highlighting local farmers and the health benefits of the foods grown for the school lunch menu. One benefit the district has seen because of the nutrition education is that students are more eager to try new foods, since they learn about them from cafeteria flyers, newsletters and social media posts.

The mission for this district is to instill passion for a lifetime of continuous improvement, and it's clear nutrition education is part of that mission. When the district considered applying for a Healthy Meals Incentives (HMI) Recognition Award, they knew their current work was making an impact but wanted to challenge themselves further. With support from Action for Healthy Kids, Martinson notes that:

This material is based upon work supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Administration. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

“...they [Action for Healthy Kids] are such a great partner, for schools and a great resource for schools that we maybe didn't even realize was out there until we started walking through this process.”

-Meghan Martinson, Food and Nutritional Services Director

After earning the Innovation in Nutrition Education HMI Recognition Award, Eagle-Mountain Saginaw ISD is now recognized as a leader in their school community and beyond.

Hats off to the team at Eagle-Mountain Saginaw ISD for leading the way in school nutrition!

This material is based upon work supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Administration. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.