

Cafeteria Chronicles:

Port Townsend School District 50

As a recipient of Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK) and USDA's Healthy Meals Incentives (HMI) Grant, Port Townsend School District 50 in Port Townsend, Washington has made great strides in providing fresh, nutritious school meals that students love.

The HMI Grant enabled the district to make improvements to its school nutrition program, including increasing the capacity of the district's school garden, recruiting additional staff, upgrading kitchen equipment, and identifying staff training opportunities. Additionally, grant funds will allow the district to better incorporate local agricultural products into their school nutrition program, such as fresh, locally sourced yogurt, cheese, sausage, wheat, beef, fish, poultry, vegetables, and fruit.

Collectively, these changes have made it possible for the district to implement more scratch cooking. This approach allows for better control over ingredients, resulting in reduced added sugars and sodium in school meals. The district was one of the first to receive AFHK and USDA's Breakfast Trailblazer Award for their efforts in reducing added sugars by switching to scratch made baked goods, only offering reduced sugar cereals, and utilizing local, unsweetened yogurt. This recognition highlights the district's exceptional efforts to meet the USDA's updated school nutrition standards, demonstrating the district's commitment to providing nutritious meals and promoting student well-being.

See Port Townsend School District 50's efforts in this [video](#).

Port Townsend's child nutrition staff has also worked to engage students in menu planning by receiving feedback through surveys and by partnering with the Sustainability Club and the Student Voice Club. This involvement ensures that meals not only meet nutritional standards but also reflect students' preferences, making healthy eating more appealing. The district has seen a positive response from students and families, including an increase in participation at breakfast, which demonstrates the success of these initiatives in promoting better nutrition and overall health.

As Port Townsend School District 50 continues to innovate in school nutrition and looks forward to more healthy, delicious meals for its students, we would like to congratulate them on the incredible work that they have done so far. Together, they are making a significant impact—one nutritious meal at a time!

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