

Cafeteria Chronicles:

Power School District 30

Educating students about local agriculture is not just about food, but about building a stronger, healthier community for School Nutrition Director Laura Toeckes at Power School District 30 in Power, Montana. As a result, the district was recognized with the Healthy Meals Incentives (HMI) Innovation in Nutrition Education Award by USDA and Action for Healthy Kids.

Each month, students from the Family and Consumer Science class participate in a “Harvest of the Month” program to highlight locally grown food. One recent example of their efforts was “Go for Golden Grains” nutrition education day, where local grain farmers were invited to the school. After hearing the farmers describe how grains are grown and processed, students were given the chance to grind and sift grains themselves! These locally grown grains are also used in the district’s scratch-prepared rolls recipe. Other local foods the district has featured include choke cherries, bison jerky, eggs, and honey.

See nutrition education by Power School District 30 in action in this [video](#).

After purchasing a new freezer with the support of an HMI Small and/or Rural School Food Authority Grant, Power Schools was able to purchase more locally grown produce and meat, such as bison from local farmers. Students even took a field trip to a local bison farm to learn more about where their school meals come from.

Understanding the benefits of reducing sodium, Power Schools adjusted several recipes to a scratch-prepared version, such as scratch-prepared rolls and sauces used in their orange chicken and teriyaki chicken recipes. By making these changes, Power Schools was also awarded the HMI Small and/or Rural Lunch Trailblazer Award.

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