

Utilizing the

Cafeteria

as a Classroom

Instructor's Manual

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Key Areas:

1, 4

Professional Standards Codes:

1200, 4110, 4120, 4130, 4150

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Institute of Child Nutrition

The University of Mississippi

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Improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

VISION

Lead the nation in providing research, education, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

MISSION

Provide relevant research-based information and services that advance the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

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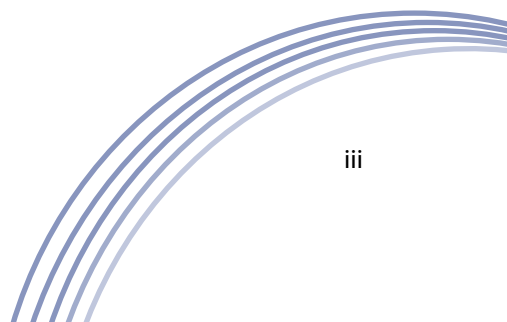
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Background Information

Instructor's Note: The purpose of the background information section is to help you become familiar with the context of the training. It is not a part of the training detail.

Introduction

Welcome to *Utilizing the Cafeteria as a Classroom*. The school cafeteria can easily be the largest classroom on a school campus. It provides a valuable venue where school nutrition professionals can assist teachers and parents in encouraging children to make wise food choices that will contribute to a healthy lifestyle. This course is designed to provide school nutrition professionals with the tools and resources that will enable them to develop and enhance a school nutrition program that will be recognized as an integral part of the education system.

Course Framework

Utilizing the Cafeteria as a Classroom contains four lessons.

- Lesson 1: Marketing Healthy Options
- Lesson 2: Reaching Out to the School Community
- Lesson 3: Communicating with Parents
- Lesson 4: Farm to School and School Garden Programs

The time frame planned for each lesson is one hour to 1 hour and 15 minutes; however, the course design is flexible. The scheduled time may be shortened or lengthened by allowing more or less time for class discussion and/or learning activities. Lessons may be combined to provide longer training sessions. The lessons are designed to encourage participant involvement. Two to three learning activities are incorporated into each lesson to engage the participants and reinforce the concepts discussed in the class.

Prompts are as follows:

SAY: What the instructor is to say to participants. This is the content that teaches the learning objectives.

ASK: This prompt is used when the instructor should ask the participants a question.

FEEDBACK: This prompt is used to ensure certain elements are covered in discussions.

DO: This prompt is used to explain what the instructor/participants are to do. It may be used to lead into activities, do demonstrations, or show videos.

SHOW SLIDE: This prompt is used for showing slides.

Functional Areas and Competencies

Functional Area 7: Menu and Nutrition Management

Competency 7.2: Provides leadership to support the nutrition and wellness initiatives within the school district.

Knowledge Statement: Know the importance of school nutrition education as a component of the coordinated **school health education program**.

Functional Area 6: Marketing and Communication

Competency 6.1: Develops a systematic approach for marketing the school nutrition program.

Knowledge Statements:

- Knows the importance of school nutrition staff in marketing the school nutrition program.
- Knows the importance of involving stakeholders in implementing marketing plans, measuring **outcomes, and interpreting results**.

Functional Area 6: Marketing and Communication

Competency 6.2: Develops a customer service infrastructure to promote the school nutrition program.

Knowledge Statements:

- Knows techniques for providing high-quality customer service.
- Knows the importance of customer feedback on menu planning.
- Knows fundamentals of creating a pleasant, appealing, and safe dining experience.
- Knows food-merchandising techniques to enhance the presentation of food.
- Knows methods to collect and use data on customer acceptability of school meals.

Source: Institute of Child Nutrition. (2009). *Competencies, knowledge, and skills for district-level school nutrition professionals in the 21st century*. University, MS: Author.

Professional Standards

1000 – Nutrition

- 1200 – Nutrition Education

4000 – Communications and Marketing

- 4110 – Strategic and Marketing Plans
- 4120 – Program Promotion
- 4130 – Customer Service
- 4150 – School and Community Communication

Key Area Codes

- 1 – Nutrition
- 4 – Communications and Marketing

Objectives

At the end of this training, participants will have accomplished the following objectives:

1. Describe diversity among students and state student needs and expectations.
2. State ways the menu serves as a marketing tool.
3. Identify ways the menu can promote nutrition education and nutrition integrity.
4. Describe how the cafeteria environment affects student eating behaviors and food choices.
5. Describe how the interaction between students and school nutrition professionals affects participation in school nutrition programs.
6. Describe ways to develop and maintain a positive image for school nutrition.
7. Identify school district policies that impact the school nutrition program.
8. Evaluate school nutrition procedures to see if they meet the needs of the school community.
9. Suggest ways school nutrition professionals can become involved with school committees and activities.
10. Identify parent expectations regarding the school nutrition program.
11. Describe ways to distribute program information to parents.
12. State approaches to providing nutrition education tips to parents.
13. Identify means to acquire feedback from parents.
14. Suggest ways parents may become involved in the school nutrition program.
15. Define the goals of a Farm to School program.
16. Describe examples of Farm to School activities.
17. Give scenarios of how a school garden can function.
18. Identify ways a school nutrition program can support a school garden program.
19. Describe ways that a Farm to School or school garden program can help market school meals.

Ground Rules

ICN has developed Ground Rules to help the class run smoothly and allows all participants to benefit from the course instruction and information. (These Ground Rules can be found on the ICN website – Ground Rules for Training Mini-Posters.)

Preparation Checklist

Task	Person Responsible	Completion Date	✓
Reserve equipment and gather supplies as needed for use on the day of class (6 weeks prior). Instructor's Manual Participant roster Sign-in sheets List of equipment and supplies needed Microphone (preferably wireless) Computer to present slides and/or DVD Projector and Screen Speakers Wireless presenter device and laser pointer Chart paper (self-adhesive strip sheets) Painter's tape (do not use masking tape) Markers (chart paper) Pens, pencils, notepaper, highlighters, self-adhesive notes, page markers, index cards (each table) Name tags and table tents	Instructor		
Participant's Workbook			
Agenda, roster of presenters/participants, and handouts			
Pre-/Post-Assessments (available at www.theicn.org)			
Other handouts (documents from outside sources needed for training)			

Lesson 1:

Marketing Healthy Options

Lesson-at-a-Glance

Time	Topic	Activity	Materials
10 minutes	• Introduction to lesson	• Pre-Assessment	• Participant's Workbook • Pre-Assessment
Objective: Describe diversity among students and state student needs and expectations.			
5 minutes	• Understanding Your Customers		• Participant's Workbook • Chart paper • Markers
Objective: State ways the menu serves as a marketing tool.			
15 minutes	• Menu as a Marketing Tool	• Using the Menu as a Marketing Tool	• Participant's Workbook • Using the Menu as a Marketing Tool worksheet • Menu A • Menu B • Pens or pencils
Objective: Identify ways the menu can promote nutrition education and nutrition integrity.			
15 minutes	• Nutrition Education • Nutrition Integrity	• Hands Up: Nutrition Education and Nutrition Integrity	• Participant's Workbook • Hands Up: Nutrition Education and Nutrition Integrity handout
Objective: Describe how the cafeteria environment affects student eating behaviors and food choices.			
5 minutes	• Cafeteria Environment • Cafeteria Staff Interactions		• Participant's Workbook
Objective: Describe how the interaction between students and school nutrition professionals affects participation in school nutrition programs.			
10 minutes	• Summary and Review	• Summary and Review Question Swap	• Participant's Workbook
1 hour			

Introduction

SHOW SLIDE: Lesson 1: Marketing Healthy Options

SAY: Welcome to *Utilizing the Cafeteria as a Classroom*. The first lesson in this training is Marketing Healthy Options. Just what does that mean? Before we can teach nutrition education and help our students develop lifelong healthy eating habits, we need to get them into the cafeteria. "Marketing," by definition, is getting the customer to buy a product. We do not want our customers to buy just once; we want them to buy repeatedly. We want them to feel good about our services. To keep students and families coming back, we need to develop trust and loyalty.

SHOW SLIDE: Objectives

SAY: Today, we will focus on the steps we can take to develop customer trust and loyalty. After completing this lesson, participants will:

- Describe diversity among students and state student needs and expectations.
- State ways the menu serves as a marketing tool.
- Identify ways the menu can promote nutrition education and nutrition integrity.
- Describe how the cafeteria environment affects student eating behaviors and food choices.
- Describe how the interaction between students and school nutrition professionals affects participation in school nutrition programs.

Objective: Describe diversity among students and state student needs and expectations.

SHOW SLIDE: Understanding Your Customers

The first step to marketing our meals and services is to know our customers. We need to understand our customers' needs so we can deliver the service that they will expect and continue to respect.

ASK: Who is our customer? Who is the most important customer?

FEEDBACK: Answers should include the students (most important), parents, teachers, and school staff.

DO: Write or invite someone to write the responses on a piece of chart paper.

ASK: How do our customers differ?

FEEDBACK: Answers may include age, size, gender, physical ability, economic background, and ethnicity.

DO: Write or invite someone to write the responses on a piece of chart paper.

ASK: What are the needs and wants of our different customers?

FEEDBACK: Answers may include consistent quality, fresh-tasting food, variety, familiar foods, vegetarian options, local produce, age-appropriate portion sizes, affordable prices, foods that are easy to eat, age-appropriate tableware, quick service, and friendly and helpful staff.

DO: Write or invite someone to write the responses on a piece of chart paper.

Objective: State ways the menu serves as a marketing tool.

SHOW SLIDE: Menu

SAY: Let's talk about the menu. For some of our customers, like parents, the menu is the only direct contact they have with the school cafeteria. All other knowledge of the food served is hearsay. Picture 10-year-old Sam returning home in the afternoon. Mom asks, "How was school today?" It is doubtful that Sam would reply, "Lunch was great. We had these fun little red, yellow, and orange tomatoes that were the Harvest of the Month."

Unfortunately, too many times, the scene may go something like this: Mom asks, "How was lunch?" Her child answers, "There was nothing to eat!" This same scenario often happens to moms when they return home from grocery shopping and fill the refrigerator and cupboard only to have a child fling open the refrigerator door and exclaim, "There's nothing to eat!" Parents do not make the same connection with the school cafeteria that their children do. They might get the impression that the cafeteria either ran out of food or does not offer anything the child likes. So how do guardians know what the child is being offered for lunch? What is "Harvest of the Month"? The menu can communicate this information. We need to think about what information the menu needs to include, not only for our students but also for their parents.

ASK: Let's look at the menu from a customer's perspective. When you go to a restaurant, what do you expect to learn from the menu that will influence what you choose to buy?

FEEDBACK: Answers may include the following: It sounds good. It tells which food items are available. It describes the ingredients, price, cooking methods, suggestions for healthy options, nutritional information, and allergens. It promotes local produce. It is attractive and easy to read.

ASK: Now, what information do we need to provide on our menus?

SAY: We are now going to complete an activity where we look at two school menus and compare how they might meet our customers' needs. Do they communicate the information our customers want to know? You may complete it alone or work with a neighbor.

SHOW SLIDE: Using the Menu as a Marketing Tool

ACTIVITY: Using the Menu as a Marketing Tool

- Materials: **Menu A** handout, **Menu B** handout, **Menu as a Marketing Tool** worksheet
- Time: 10 minutes
- Instructions: Divide the participants into teams of 4–5 members. Ask each team to use the Menu A and B handout to answer the questions on the Menu as a Marketing Tool worksheet. Participants can use local school menus if they would like.

SAY: We are now going to look at the menu as a marketing tool. I will divide you into teams of 4–5 members. Use the Menu A and B handout to answer the questions on the Menu as a Marketing Tool worksheet. Choose a reporter to share your team's thoughts after the activity.

DO: Divide participants into teams of 4–5 members. Allow participants to work for 5 minutes. After the activity, review each team's thoughts.

Using the Menu as a Marketing Tool

Refer to the lists of customer wants and expectations discussed in class. Use Menu A and Menu B or local school menus to answer the following questions. Check one or both. If neither menu provides the information, leave it blank.

Menu A

Menu B

Elementary Student Customers

- Are the menus easy to read?

- Can the student identify the food items?

- Does the menu sound good? Does it look good?

- Would any food item take too long to eat?

- Will the food items be easy to eat?

- Is the menu too repetitive or boring?

- Is the menu age-appropriate?

High School Student Customers

- Are the menus easy to read?

- Can the student identify the food items?

- Does the menu sound good?

- Would any food item take too long to eat?

- Will the food items be easy to eat?

- Is the menu too repetitive or boring?

- How much does it cost?

- Is the menu age-appropriate?

- Does the menu provide variety to meet student diversity?

Parents

- Can the parent identify all items that may come with a meal?
- How much does the meal cost?
- Does the menu look nutritionally balanced?
- Does the menu promote healthy nutrition?
- Does the school serve local produce?

Teachers and School Staff

- Does the menu provide students with a variety of choices that will encourage them to eat so they can remain attentive all day?
- Can it be served quickly?
- Is the menu served to staff also?
- Can the school be proud of this menu?

Menu A

ABC School District Food and Nutrition Services

April 20XX Elementary Lunch Menu



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Spring Break April 2-9				
Salad Bars are offered every Wednesday! Choice of Fruits & Veggies!				
9 Baked Chicken Sweet Potato Wedges Choice of Fruit Whole Wheat Roll	10 Tacos and Seasoned Rice Shredded Lettuce Cheese Refried Beans Kiwi	11 Cheeseburger on Whole Wheat Bun Salad Bar	12 Turkey and Gravy Mashed Potatoes Popeye Salad Graham Bear	13 Cheese Pizza Local Snap Peas Choice of Fruit
16 Turkey Sandwich on Whole Wheat Bun Baby Carrots Apple	17 Spaghetti and Meat Sauce Bread Stick Garden Green Beans Banana	18 Homemade Tomato Soup Salad Bar Baked Cheese Sticks Diced Pears	19 Baked Ham Spinach Salad Whole Wheat Roll Pineapple Tidbits	20 Chicken Stir-Fry Brown Rice Red/Yellow Pepper Strips Choice of Fruit
23 Hamburger on Whole Wheat Bun Baked Beans Blueberry Cup	24 Macaroni and Cheese Broccoli Florets Strawberries	25 Grilled Chicken Sandwich on Whole Grain Bun Salad Bar	26 Bean and Cheese Burrito Baby Carrots Fresh Apple	27 Build Your Own Wrap Bumps on a Log Choice of Fruit

*Choice of low-fat milk and nonfat milk offered with every lunch.

It's spring and time for our local Farm to School Snap Peas, our HARVEST OF THE MONTH! Crisp and sweet, they may be enjoyed raw or cooked. Eat the whole pod. They are a good source of vitamin A.



Menu B

ABC High School The Pirates Galley



Grandma's Kitchen

Baked Chicken

Meatloaf

Baked Ham

Rice and Beans

Mustard Greens

Macaroni and Cheese

Davy Jones Deli

Sub Special

Vegetable Wraps

Chicken Chef Salad

Ham or Turkey on Wheat Bread

Carrot and Red Pepper Strips

Garbanzo Bean Salad

Wok Up Here

Egg Roll & Rice

Teriyaki Rice Bowl

Sushi

Chow Mein with Asian Vegetables

Roasted Bok Choy

Mixed Vegetables

Gangplank Grill

Hamburger

Black Bean Burger

Cheeseburger

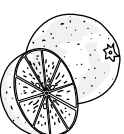
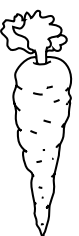
Grilled Chicken Strips

French Fries

Yellow Squash

Salad Bar Included with Meal Purchase

May include, but not limited to, tossed greens, carrots, corn, peas, green beans, jicama sticks, red beans, beets, apples, oranges, canned fruits, raisins, cranberries, sunflower seeds, edamame, local seasonal produce, and assorted dressings.



SAY: Let's share our ideas about the menus. What information did these menus provide that would help influence a customer to buy?

DO: Refer to the worksheet as you encourage participants to respond. Allow a few minutes to discuss.

FEEDBACK: Responses may include clear descriptions of food items, appealing food combinations, clearly stated prices, age-appropriate menu choices, an interesting variety of meal items, an emphasis on nutritious fruits and vegetables, and nutrition education information.

ASK: Are there any questions before we move on?

Objective: Identify ways the menu can promote nutrition education and nutrition integrity.

SHOW SLIDE: Nutrition Education on the Menu

SAY: We have talked about our customers' needs and how we can use the menu to meet some of these needs. Let's discuss how we can develop and use the menu to promote nutrition education and nutrition integrity. Nutrition education is a familiar term and concept. What do we mean by nutrition integrity in our meal programs? The best way to teach nutrition is to model behavior by offering our students healthy choices. That is where nutrition integrity comes into play. Nutrition education and nutrition integrity go hand in hand.

SHOW SLIDE: Nutrition Integrity

SAY: Nutrition integrity means that we will provide meals that are consistently safe, of high quality, affordable, and that meet the nutritional guidelines set by the USDA. "Consistently" is the key word here. Quality meals must be provided consistently in order to gain the trust of our students and parents. Students want to be assured that their food will always look and taste good. Parents want to feel assured that school meals will be safe and of high nutritional content and quality.

The menu can include nutrition education messages in the form of nutrition notes, games, recipe suggestions, and announcements of featured fruits or vegetables of the month. Nutrition integrity can reinforce those messages by including the featured foods on the menu at least once.

Nutrition messages and descriptors like whole grain muffins, fresh local strawberries, and low-fat milk indicate to parents that school meal programs are promoting good nutrition. The menu must communicate the types and varieties of food being offered. It is important to be truthful in the menu: if the menu says fresh strawberries, frozen strawberries cannot be served.

SHOW SLIDE: ***Hands Up: Nutrition Education and Nutrition Integrity***

ACTIVITY: Using the Menu as a Marketing Tool

- Materials: **Hands Up: Nutrition Education and Nutrition Integrity** handout
- Time: 10 minutes
- Instructions: Tell participants that you will be reading them 10 menu-related examples. For each example of nutrition education, they are to raise their right hand. For examples of nutrition integrity, they are to raise their left hand. Be sure to ask the additional, asterisked questions for discussion in examples 4 and 10.

SAY: I will be reading 10 menu-related examples. For each example of nutrition education, raise your right hand. For examples of nutrition integrity, raise your left hand.

DO: Ask the 10 menu-related examples from the Hands Up: Nutrition Education and Nutrition Integrity handout.

Hands Up: Nutrition Education and Nutrition Integrity

Instructions: Tell participants that you will be reading them 10 menu-related examples. For each example of nutrition education, they are to raise their right hand. For examples of nutrition integrity, they are to raise their left hand. Be sure to ask the additional, asterisked questions for discussion in examples 4 and 10.

Instructor's Note: Nutrition integrity can also serve as nutrition education by modeling behavior. For examples of both, they should raise both hands.

1. Game of hangman spelling out "Strawberry" on the menu.
2. Providing consistent and age-appropriate portion control.
3. Serving ripe fruit.
4. Describing how to eat a kiwi.
 - a. Question for discussion: A kiwi is an unusual-looking, fuzzy piece of fruit. Will a student opt to not try a kiwi if he or she does not know how to get past the fuzz to eat it? Is nutrition education necessary to maintain the integrity of the meal?
5. Explaining the origin of a specific ethnic food.
6. Offering spinach salad.
7. Using "Harvest of the Month" as a promotion on the menu.
8. Preparing foods that are easily identifiable.
9. Providing a recipe for Yogurt Veggie Dip.
10. Serving white, whole wheat hamburger and hot dog buns.
 - a. Question for discussion: Although the white, whole wheat flour has a nutritional value similar to that of darker whole wheat, does using white, whole wheat buns effectively teach students to eat whole grains? If you cannot see it, do you know it's whole grain?

Hands Up: Nutrition Education and Nutrition Integrity Answers

1. Nutrition education – A game of Hangman spelling out “Strawberry” is designed to be fun and to draw attention to the fruit. Strawberries should also be offered on that same menu to reinforce the activity.
2. Nutrition integrity – Providing consistent and age-appropriate portion control is part of quality control to meet the customers’ expectations.
3. Nutrition integrity – Ripe fruit is more appealing to eat, as the flavor and texture are better than green or unripe fruit. Students will be more apt to eat it again if it tastes good the first time.
4. Nutrition education – Teaching a student how to eat an unfamiliar type of food will encourage consumption. A student may choose not to try a new food if he or she does not know what to do with it.
5. Nutrition education – Explaining the origin of a food teaches about the location where the food is grown or produced and about the culture of the people who eat it.
6. Nutrition integrity – The salad provides a serving of a nutrient-rich vegetable that meets the customers’ expectations for a healthful meal.
7. Nutrition education and nutrition integrity – A “Harvest of the Month” promotion teaches about a specific fruit or vegetable by telling something about the item on the menu. That same item is offered on the menu to reinforce nutrition education, which demonstrates nutrition integrity.
8. Nutrition integrity – A child might not choose a food that they do not recognize. A food should be clearly defined on the menu.
9. Nutrition education – This recipe printed on a menu serves as a teaching tool to help parents encourage their children to eat more vegetables.
10. Nutrition integrity – Providing nutrient-rich foods like whole wheat products meet the customers’ expectations for a healthful meal.

SHOW SLIDE: *What Comes to Mind?*

SAY: When we think of the school cafeteria, the menu and food usually come to mind first; however, the environment and atmosphere can be a major influence on what students choose to eat. What comes to mind when you think of the school cafeteria during lunch? What comes to our students' minds? First, let's think of our five senses.

ASK:

- What do you hear?
- What do you smell?
- What do you see?
- What do you feel?
- What do you taste?

DO: Encourage responses.

ASK: Now, what do our students:

- Hear? (noise level)
- Smell? (aromas, odors)
- See? (colors of food and room, staff appearance, cleanliness of room and tables, available seats)
- Feel? (cold/hot, cramped, crowded, rushed)
- Taste? (flavor, texture, and temperature of food)
- How do these factors influence students' choice to eat in the cafeteria? How do these factors influence their choices in food?

FEEDBACK: Responses may include the following ideas. Loud noises and crowding can make the environment uncomfortable for some students. The aroma of sweet baked products is enticing, whereas the strong odor of cooked broccoli or fish may be overpowering. Seeing attractive colors, clean tables, ample seating, and a friendly face is inviting. No one wants to sit at a sticky table. Students want the food to taste good. Cold foods like salads and milk need to be cold. Hot food needs to be hot.

Objective: Describe how the cafeteria environment affects student eating behaviors and food choices.

SHOW SLIDE: *Cafeteria Environment*

ASK: How do environmental factors affect student choice? Think about the following questions.

- The serving line – Is it fast and easy?
- Tables – Are the size, shape, and height age-appropriate? Are they clean? Are there enough of them, and are they beneficial for social interaction? Do some students need to stand to eat?
- Trays/dishware – Are they age-appropriate?
- Flatware/sporks/disposable tableware – Can a student eat the menu items easily?
- Is there adequate time to eat?
- Is there effective adult supervision?
- Do school parties, fundraisers, or snack bars compete for the students' attention?
- How does peer behavior affect student choices?

SAY: There are many things about the cafeteria that we cannot control. We cannot control its size, the number of students scheduled to eat at one time, the noise level, or the temperature in the room. The one thing we can control is our attitudes and the way we communicate with students and one another.

ASK: What is our image? How do we see ourselves, and how do others see us? Think of a time when a waitperson in a restaurant or a clerk in a store was rude or made you feel uncomfortable in front of other customers. How did you feel? Did you continue to patronize the business?

Objective: Describe how the interaction between students and school nutrition professionals affects participation in school nutrition programs.

SHOW SLIDE: *Cafeteria Staff Interactions*

SAY: There was an article about a boy who worked as a bagger at a grocery store. Every night he would write little notes with positive messages. They were simple messages like, "Have a nice day," or "The sun smiles on you." He put one of these notes in every customer's grocery bag. Customers were so taken by his gesture that they would stand in his line longer just to get his bag with a message. Students will patiently stand in line if they know there is a smile waiting for them. Students will avoid lines where the server is rude or uncaring.

Young students can be timid and shy. They sometimes need gentle encouragement. These youngsters are your customers, not only now as students but also as future parents. Young parents who have good memories of their cafeteria experience are more apt to urge their children to eat at school.

The cafeteria can be very rushed during meal service, but it takes no longer to smile than to frown. Take the time to listen to what a student is saying or asking. Sometimes we need to anticipate or second-guess a shy child's needs. If you run out of food on a serving line, do you tell the students you are bringing more, or do you let them pass by without informing them? A shy child most likely will not ask if there will be more food. They may go without.

We all know the cafeteria can be a very noisy place. Too often, school nutrition assistants have been accused of yelling at students when they are just trying to be heard over the noise. Yelling has a very negative connotation. A smile will soften a loud voice. People see a smile, and they do not associate it with yelling. Did you know that when you smile, your voice raises in pitch? A higher voice is felt to be less threatening. Try this.

DO: Instruct participants to turn to their neighbors.

SAY: Look at your neighbor. Without smiling, say, "You're short a quarter." Afterward, try smiling and saying, "You're short a quarter." Do you hear a difference?

Think about if you roll your eyes. What does that say to a student? If a student tries to explain why they are late, short money, or forgot their lunch number, do you roll your eyes? As a parent, have you ever scolded your own child, "Don't you roll your eyes at me!" Facial expressions and gestures often say more than words.

ASK: So, what can we do to better communicate with our students?

FEEDBACK: Allow participants to respond and then remind them: a smile welcomes students to the cafeteria and helps soften a negative or uncomfortable interaction. Listening carefully ensures understanding. Gestures can speak as loud as words.

SHOW SLIDE: *Summary and Review***ACTIVITY: Summary and Review**

- Materials: **Question Swap** handout, container
- Time: 10 minutes
- Instructions: Copy the Question Swap pages. Cut the questions into individual strips and place them in a container. Distribute to the participants by allowing them to each draw a question. Instruct participants to not share or read aloud their questions. Going around the room, have each participant read his or her question to the person sitting to the right. Allow that person to answer the question. Give hints if the person needs help answering. If the question is not answered, ask the group to answer it.

SAY: We have come to the end of Lesson 1. Let's complete a final activity that will review the topics we covered. I am going to walk around with some questions, and I would like each of you to draw a question. Please do not share or read aloud your question. I would like each of you to read your question to the person sitting to the right.

DO: Facilitate summary and review question swap.

SAY: Thank you for your attention and participation today. I hope you enjoyed our first lesson. During Lesson 2, we will discuss how we can reach out to our school community.

Summary and Review Question Swap

Instructor's Note: Copy pages. Cut the questions into individual strips and place them in a container.

Instructions: Distribute to the participants by allowing them to each draw a question. Instruct participants to not share or read aloud their questions. Going around the room, have each participant read his or her question to the person sitting to the right. Allow that person to answer the question. Give hints if the person needs help answering. If the question is not answered, ask the group to answer it.

----- cut -----

1. What is one sign of customer satisfaction?

----- cut -----

2. What are three things that should be listed on a menu?

----- cut -----

3. What are two things that may keep a student from purchasing a school meal?

----- cut -----

4. Who is the primary customer of a school nutrition program?

----- cut -----

----- cut -----

5. What does "diversity" mean when applied to our student customers?

----- cut -----

6. Who is responsible for customer satisfaction?

----- cut -----

7. What are two things that students want to experience when they come through the lunch line?

----- cut -----

8. What is one need or expectation that may be more important to a high school student than to an elementary student in the cafeteria?

----- cut -----

9. In what way might an elementary student need more attention than a middle school student in the cafeteria?

----- cut -----

----- cut -----

10. What are two things that influence a student's eating habits?

----- cut -----

11. How does the school nutrition team's morale and working relationships affect its image?

----- cut -----

12. How is quality control part of marketing healthy meals?

----- cut -----

13. How does the image of the school nutrition program affect student participation?

----- cut -----

14. Why is it important to listen carefully to student questions and comments?

----- cut -----

15. What is one way to make a student feel comfortable in the cafeteria?

----- cut -----

Summary and Review Question Swap Answers

1. What is one sign of customer satisfaction?
 - Responses may include high participation, consistent sales, no or few complaints, smiling students and staff, and positive interactions with students and staff.
2. What are three things that should be listed on a menu?
 - Responses may include clear descriptions of menu items, price, age-appropriate menu choices, a variety of choices, emphasis on nutritious fruits and vegetables, and nutrition education information.
3. What are two things that may keep a student from purchasing a school meal?
 - Responses may include dislike of menu items, uncomfortable cafeteria environment, slow service, negative interactions with school nutrition professionals or other students, and insufficient time to eat lunch.
4. Who is the primary customer of a school nutrition program?
 - Although parents and school staff are customers, the student is the primary customer.
5. What does "diversity" mean when applied to our student customers?
 - Students differ in age, size, gender, physical ability, ethnicity, and economic background.
6. Who is responsible for customer satisfaction?
 - All school nutrition professionals are responsible.
7. What are two things that students want to experience when they come through the lunch line?
 - Responses may include fast service, friendly staff, pleasing aromas, visually appealing menu items, and user-friendly serving tools and equipment.
8. What is one need or expectation that may be more important to a high school student than an elementary student in the cafeteria?
 - Responses may include a wider variety of menu items, larger portions, and more self-service options.
9. In what way might an elementary student need more attention than a middle school student in the cafeteria?
 - Elementary students are smaller and may require more help in serving the meal. As elementary students are also shy and less independent, school nutrition assistants should try to anticipate their needs.
10. What are two things that influence a student's eating habits?
 - Responses may include menu items, peer pressure, length of time to eat, cafeteria environment, nutrition education, and habits developed at home.
11. How does the school nutrition team's morale and working relationships affect its image?
 - The customer easily develops trust as he or she is more comfortable interacting with a staff that maintains high morale and positive working relationship. They are more approachable.
12. How is quality control part of marketing healthy meals?
 - Marketing means getting and keeping the customer to buy your meals. Quality control ensures the consistency to continually meet the customers' expectations, so they continue to purchase your meals.

13. How does the image of the school nutrition program affect student participation?
 - A positive image will increase student participation. Peer pressure is a strong force among students. Students are more likely to participate in the program if their friends make positive comments about it.
14. Why is it important to listen carefully to student questions and comments?
 - Feedback is the most valuable tool in assessing customer satisfaction and avenues for improvement. It also shows that the staff cares about the student.
15. What is one way to make a student feel comfortable in the cafeteria?
 - Responses may include providing friendly service, smiling, listening carefully to student questions and problems, being aware of communicating with gestures and other forms of nonverbal communication, and anticipating student needs.

Lesson 2:

Reaching Out to the School Community

Lesson-at-a-Glance

Time	Topic	Activity	Materials
5 minutes	• Introduction to lesson		• Participant's Workbook
Objective: Describe ways to develop and maintain a positive image for school nutrition.			
30 minutes	• Role of the School Nutrition Program	• How Would Your Respond?	• Participant's Workbook • How Would You Respond? worksheet • Pens or pencils
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify school district policies that impact the school nutrition program. • Evaluate school nutrition procedures to see if they meet the needs of the school community. • Suggest ways school nutrition professionals can become involved with school committees and activities. 			
25 minutes	• School Nutrition Policies and Procedures	• Analyzing School Nutrition Procedures • Lesson 2 Review	• Participant's Workbook • Analyzing School Nutrition Procedures worksheet • Review Questions handout
1 hour			

Introduction

SHOW SLIDE: Lesson 2: Reaching out to the School Community

SAY: Welcome to Lesson 2: Reaching out to the School Community. In Lesson 1, we emphasized the need to get our students into the cafeteria as regular customers in order to provide them with a learning environment that will promote healthy lifestyles. We focused on using the menu as a marketing tool for our students and their parents, as well as how the cafeteria environment affects students' meal choices. In this lesson, we will look at how we can best serve another customer grouping that consists of the administration, teachers, and other staff.

SHOW SLIDE: Objectives

SAY: After completing this lesson, participants will:

- Describe ways to develop and maintain a positive image for school nutrition.
- Identify school district policies that impact the school nutrition program.
- Evaluate school nutrition procedures to see if they meet the needs of the school community.
- Suggest ways school nutrition professionals can become involved with school committees and activities.

Objective: Describe ways to develop and maintain a positive image for school nutrition.

SHOW SLIDE: Role of the School Nutrition Program

SAY: Every member of the school community plays a specific role in helping our children learn. Each position comes with its own responsibilities and challenges. School nutrition programs are a support service. We are here to support academic achievement.

School nutrition programs are expected to support academic achievement by consistently providing high-quality meals, but we can also support it in other ways. We previously discussed that to maintain maximum participation in our programs, we must develop trust and loyalty with our student and parent customers. Likewise, we need to develop that same trust and loyalty among our teachers, administration, and staff.

Although they are not the largest segment of our paying customers, they do influence our students' choices, and we need to create a strong relationship with them. School policies and procedures developed to ensure the school operates efficiently affect how we operate our nutrition program. We want all members of the school community to feel the school nutrition program and cafeteria are necessary and integral parts of the school community. We want them to hear our story, so they understand we are striving to provide a living-learning environment. One way to develop respect for our school nutrition personnel is to develop department procedures and practices that make the teachers' and other staff's jobs easier.

We should strive to develop a strong relationship with our school community. School nutrition programs have many regulations and detailed compliance issues which are not known or understood by the rest of the school community. We commonly establish practices to make our jobs easier and maintain compliance. Unfortunately, our procedures may not work so well for everyone.

SHOW SLIDE: *How Would You Respond?*

ACTIVITY: How Would You Respond?

- Materials: **How Would You Respond?** worksheet, pen or pencil
- Time: 10 minutes
- Instructions: Have each participant read each scenario and then circle the letter of the response that would be most effective in developing a good rapport with members of the school community. Participants may circle more than one answer.

SAY: Let's start with taking 5 minutes to complete the activity *How Would You Respond?* The scenarios in this activity demonstrate ways school nutrition programs can promote and maintain a positive image by implementing practices that help other faculty and staff do their jobs. During this activity, read each scenario and then circle the letter of the response that would be most effective in developing a good rapport with members of the school community. You may circle more than one answer.

DO: Take 5 minutes to complete the activity. After participants have completed the activity, review the answer for each scenario.

How Would You Respond?

Instructions: Read each scenario and then circle the letter of the response that would be most effective in developing a good rapport with members of the school community. You may circle more than one answer.

1. Doris, the school nutrition manager at Platypus Elementary, was frustrated. For the third time in four weeks, a teacher had not told her about an upcoming field trip. On the morning of the field trip, the teacher appeared in the cafeteria and requested bagged lunches for a number of students.

Doris should:

- Tell the teacher she was too late to order lunches.
- Complain to the principal that the cafeteria has too many leftover lunches when teachers do not give advance notice of field trips.
- Ask the teacher what time she needs the lunches ready and prepare them for her.
- Review and reevaluate the cafeteria procedures for reporting field trips.

2. Lucille is the school nutrition manager supervisor at Apple Blossom School. Lucille wants to apply for a Fresh Fruit and Vegetable grant that would provide a free daily snack of fruit or vegetables for all the students. She approaches the principal, Mr. Bing, and suggests their school apply for the grant. Mr. Bing instructs Lucille that she must first conduct a survey of the teachers to see if they are willing to participate in the grant. Mr. Bing will only support the grant if the teachers support it.

Lucille should:

- Forget about the grant because it will be too much work to obtain teacher feedback.
- Request to attend a teachers' meeting where she can first explain the opportunity and benefits of the grant. She could distribute the survey at the meeting.
- Ask two or three teachers for their opinions about the grant.
- Commiserate with school nutrition assistants about how hard it is to get anything done around the school.

3. Mrs. Farney's second grade class planted a garden of potatoes. The students were to nurture, harvest, and then cook the potatoes as part of a nutrition education lesson. Unfortunately, a band of hungry raccoons dug up the garden. Mrs. Farney asked the school nutrition assistants to help salvage the lesson.

The school nutrition assistants should:

- Offer to prepare a batch of baked potatoes with assorted toppings for the students to eat in class.
- Apologize and explain they did not have enough time.
- Recommend that Mrs. Farney ask the parents for help.
- Suggest that Mrs. Farney use the school menu as an instructional tool by pointing out where potatoes were being served.

4. Mike Towney, the athletic director at Wilbur Middle School, was constantly running to the store to pick up snacks and drinks to sell at the afterschool sports events. He often bought his lunch in the cafeteria.

The school nutrition manager could:

- a. Offer to set up a system where Mike can preorder and purchase his supplies from the school nutrition program.
 - b. Give Mike all their unused coupons from the newspaper.
 - c. Ask Mike if it was really his job to go to the store so often.
 - d. Review the school's Wellness Policy list of approved snacks with Mike.
5. Arthur T. Books High School offers an agriculture class. As part of a school project, several students cultivated a crop of artichokes. The students advertised on the school district webpage that the artichokes were for sale.

The school nutrition manager and cook see the ad and decide:

- a. The number of artichokes available for sale is not enough to offer on their student menu, so they will just forget about it.
 - b. The artichokes will be too difficult to prepare, so they pass on the idea.
 - c. To purchase enough artichokes to offer as a special lunch for the teachers and staff. They can promote the artichokes as "local school grown."
 - d. To ask their co-workers to suggest artichoke recipes.
- DO:** Review the How Would You Respond? worksheet. Use the following discussion points with each scenario.

How Would You Respond? Answers

Question #1 – In the long run, the best responses are (c) and (d).

- It is best to try to help the teacher. Make her job easier, and she will appreciate your efforts. If teachers commonly forget to notify the school nutrition manager of field trips, it is time to review the procedure for reporting field trips. Is there a written procedure? Has it been communicated to all the teachers? Is it too inconvenient or time-consuming for the teachers? Do the teachers understand your regulations and production issues? Can the procedure be revised to simplify it for the teachers and still meet your school nutrition programs' needs? Are there other situations similar to the scenarios that need to be addressed?

Question #2 – The appropriate responses are (b) and (c).

- If Lucille feels the grant will benefit the school, she should pursue it. Talking to a few teachers about the grant before the meeting can help prepare her for concerns that might arise. Presenting at the teachers' meeting will help promote your contributions to the classroom. Response (d) is counterproductive. Complaining to co-workers is like whining and can spark harmful gossip. It sets a bad example and discourages working as a team to resolve a problem.

Question #3 – The best response is (a).

- The school nutrition assistants should jump at the chance to get into the classroom. Besides creating goodwill, it helps establish their credibility as the food experts on campus.

Question #4 – The best response is (a).

- Helping Mike purchase his snack products helps the school nutrition assistants establish a sound working relationship. Their purchasing expertise can help Mike use his time more effectively in organizing the athletic department. Are there similar situations where school nutrition programs could help in purchasing another program's supplies?

Questions #5 – The best response is (c).

- Purchasing the artichokes and working them into a menu shows great support for the school's agriculture program. It helps the teacher provide students with experience in selling to a real business. Promoting them on the menu provides advertising for the students and the program.

Objectives:

- Identify school district policies that impact the school nutrition program.
- Evaluate school nutrition procedures to see if they meet the needs of the school community.
- Suggest ways school nutrition professionals can become involved with school committees and activities.

SHOW SLIDE: Policy

SAY: Great job! Now that we have discussed responding to situations let's discuss policies and procedures and how they influence our program. A policy is an overall plan that presents general goals to guide and determine the present and future decisions of an organization.

SHOW SLIDE: Procedures

SAY: A procedure is more specific in that it establishes a series of steps followed in a definite order. Organizations such as our school district develop policies and procedures to ensure everyone stays focused and directed toward the same goal. A school nutrition program must organize its work and adjust its schedules in accordance with school site and district procedures.

SHOW SLIDE: Analyzing School Nutrition Procedures

ACTIVITY: Analyzing School Nutrition Procedures

- Materials: **Analyzing School Nutrition Procedures** worksheet, pen or pencil
- Time: 15 minutes
- Instructions: Part A: List three expectations or needs of each school group. Part B: List school nutrition procedures designed to meet the needs listed in Part A. Place a star beside the one that you feel is the top priority for each group. Give participants 10 minutes to complete the activity. Upon completion, ask the participants to state their answers in Part A. Ask a participant to write the top priority from each school group on chart paper. After discussing Parts A and B, have participants complete and discuss Part C.

SAY: We are now going to do an activity. This activity has three parts. Right now, let's focus on Parts A and B. In Part A, list three expectations or needs of each school group. In Part B, list school nutrition procedures designed to meet the needs listed in Part A. Place a star beside the one that you feel is the top priority for each group.

DO: Have participants complete Analyzing School Nutrition Procedures worksheet. After the activity, ask a volunteer to write the top priority from each school group on chart paper.

Analyzing School Nutrition Procedures

Part A: List three expectations or needs of each school group. Place a star beside the one that you feel is the top priority for each group.

Principals/Administrators	Teachers	Staff (secretary, nurse, custodians)
1. _____	1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____	3. _____

Part B: List school nutrition procedures designed to meet the needs listed in Part A.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Part C: Put a check under the part of the Nutrition Services' operation that is affected by a district policy or procedure.

Policy/Procedure	Menu Items	Serving Times	Length of Meal Service	Staffing
Wellness Policy				
Teachers' Contract				
Classified Contract				
School Meal Schedules				
School Bus Schedules				
Before or After School Programs				
Other:				

ASK: Please look at Parts A and B of the activity. What expectations or needs do we have for each group? Do we have procedures in place that will meet these needs?

DO: Discuss the participants' answers. Ask if there are procedures that need to be developed to meet any needs. Have a participant write any needed procedures on the chart paper.

SAY: We need to be aware of how district policies and procedures affect the operation of school nutrition programs. An example is the scheduling of lunch. Class time is not scheduled around our preferred mealtime, but rather lunch is normally scheduled to accommodate class and teachers' schedules. Let's take a look at what school policies and procedures may determine how we conduct business. Now take 5 minutes and complete Part C. In Part C, put a check under the part of the Nutrition Services' operation that is affected by a district policy or procedure.

DO: Give participants 5 minutes to complete the Analyzing School Nutrition Procedures Part C activity. Give the participants 5 minutes to complete the activity.

ASK: Looking at the list of policies and procedures, which ones affect our programs and how?

FEEDBACK: Allow the participants to respond and discuss their answers.

ASK: Are there any policies or procedures not on the list that we should consider?

FEEDBACK: Allow the participants to make additional comments.

ASK: How can we become more involved and visible in school committees and activities on campus? Think about some of the scenarios we discussed in the *How do you respond* activity. First, who are the different committees, organizations, or clubs? What are some of the activities that take place?

DO: Have a participant write the responses on a piece of chart paper.

FEEDBACK: Responses may include Parent Teacher Organizations, School Site Council, Home to School Club, Athletic Boosters, Student Council, Student Body Leadership, performing arts clubs, foreign language clubs, sports teams, and various student clubs. Activities that take place may include Open House, Back-to-School Night, sporting events, music and drama performances, and teachers' meetings.

SAY: How can school nutrition assistants contribute to these groups and participate in the activities to become visible and maintain a positive image?

FEEDBACK: Responses may include:

- Reinforcing a teacher's nutrition education class through menu planning and promotion in the cafeteria
- Becoming members of the organizations
- Providing catering or help in purchasing or obtaining and storing food items for meetings or groups
- Participating in Open Houses and Back to School Nights by setting up a table or booth to provide information and show samples of meals
- Hosting a taste testing of samples
- Promoting school and club activities on the menu and in the cafeteria
- Applying for grants that will benefit the school. Grants may provide free fruits and vegetables, new equipment, or nutrition education materials

DO: Review Questions activity. Encourage participants to offer multiple answers.

SHOW SLIDE: *Lesson 2 Review*

ACTIVITY: Lesson 2 Review

- Materials: **Review Questions** handout
- Time: 10 minutes
- Instructions: Ask participants the questions from the Review Questions handout. Allow for multiple answers.

SAY: We have come to the end of Lesson 2. Let's complete a final activity that will review the topics we covered. I am going to ask you some questions. Please raise your hand if you would like to answer the question.

DO: Facilitate Lesson 2 review.

Review Questions

To review and summarize Lesson 2, ask participants the following questions. Allow for multiple answers.

1. What is the school nutrition program's role within the school district?
2. What are different ways to develop and maintain a positive image of the school nutrition program at a school site?
3. Give examples of a teacher's needs and expectations.
4. What might school nutrition assistants do to meet a teacher's needs?
5. Describe a school or district policy or procedure that affects the operation of a school nutrition program.
6. Give examples of a principal's needs.
7. What might school nutrition assistants do to meet a principal's needs?
8. Who are the parent organizations or school committees that are active on campus?
9. How can school nutrition assistants contribute to school committees or participate in school activities?
10. How can school nutrition assistants help a teacher with nutrition education?

Review Questions Answers

1. The response should be to support academic achievement.
2. Responses may include consistently providing high-quality meals, developing trust and loyalty among students and staff, and becoming an integral part of the school community.
3. Responses may include adult meals, adult payment plans, quick service through the meal line for both students and staff, easy procedures to obtain meals for field trips, clear and easy procedures to process meal applications, clear communications, and help with nutrition education lessons.
4. Responses may include offering a separate adult menu, developing a prepayment plan for teachers, including teacher input when developing program procedures, providing quick service at mealtimes, and offering to help with nutrition education classes.
5. Responses may include bell schedules, bus schedules, special activity schedules, early dismissals, Wellness Policy, union contracts, and Human Resources procedures.
6. Responses may include flexibility to make meal schedule changes, high-quality meals, willingness to work as team players with the entire school staff, quick service in the cafeteria, and clear communications with the students, staff, and parents.
7. School nutrition assistants can meet a principal's needs by communicating with the office to ensure meal services meet schedule changes, remaining organized to provide quick service, maintaining a good working relationship with students, staff, and parents, participating in school activities and committees when needed, and developing nutrition program procedures that are mindful of the whole school community.
8. Parent organizations may include a Parent Teacher Organization, School Site Council, Home and School Club, Athletic Boosters, and support and fundraising groups for the different performing arts groups.
9. Responses may include school nutrition assistants who can become members of an organization, can help in providing catering or obtaining food items for meetings and fundraisers, can promote activities on the menu, and can apply for grants that will benefit the school.
10. Responses may include giving school kitchen tours and demonstrations, assisting in obtaining food supplies and equipment for classes, offering specific foods on the menu to reinforce lessons, and promoting nutrition in the cafeteria with posters and bright, eye-catching materials.

Lesson 3:

Communicating with Parents

Lesson-at-a-Glance		1 hour 15 minutes	
Time	Topic	Activity	Materials
5 minutes	• Introduction to lesson		• Participant's Workbook
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify parent expectations regarding the school nutrition program. • Describe ways to distribute program information to parents. • State approaches to providing nutrition education tips to parents. • Identify means to acquire feedback from parents. • Suggest ways parents may become involved in the school nutrition program. 			
55 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent expectations • Program information distribution • Nutrition education tips • Parent feedback • Parent involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm • Review Challenge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant's Workbook • Brainstorm worksheet • Review Challenge handout • Pens and pencils • Chart paper • Markers
1 hour			

Introduction

SHOW SLIDE: *Lesson 3: Communicating with Parents*

SAY: Welcome to Lesson 3: Communicating with Parents. In Lesson 1, we discussed using the school menu as a marketing tool to communicate with parents. We will touch on that approach again as we explore different ways to better communicate with parents.

ASK: How many of you are parents?

DO: Allow participants to respond.

ASK: Have you shared any of these common experiences?

- As your child is dressing for school, he informs you that he needs something for class that day.
- You discover you have been volunteered to help at a school function without your knowledge.
- You missed signing a permission slip for a field trip.
- Perhaps you learned too late of a school program that might have met your child's special interest or a family need.

It is frustrating, right? Lack of knowledge causes these types of circumstances for parents. We do not want our parents feeling those kinds of frustrations about the school nutrition program. We can prevent them from occurring by establishing clear lines of communication.

SHOW SLIDE: *Objectives*

SAY: After completing this lesson, participants will:

- Identify parent expectations regarding the school nutrition program.
- Describe ways to distribute program information to parents.
- State approaches to providing nutrition education tips to parents.
- Identify means to acquire feedback from parents.
- Suggest ways parents may become involved in the school nutrition program.

Objectives:

- Identify parent expectations regarding the school nutrition program.
- Describe ways to distribute program information to parents.
- State approaches to providing nutrition education tips to parents.
- Identify means to acquire feedback from parents.
- Suggest ways parents may become involved in the school nutrition program.

SHOW SLIDE: *Brainstorm*

ACTIVITY: *Brainstorm*

- Materials: **Brainstorm** worksheet, pens, and pencils
- Time: 45 minutes
- Instructions: Divide the participants into five groups and assign one question to each group. The group size will be determined by the total number of participants in the class. Ideally, group sizes will be 2–4 participants. Groups can be assigned more than one question in classes with less than ten participants. Multiple groups can be assigned the same question for large classes. Instruct each group to complete the answers to its assigned question. After the activity, review the worksheet. All participants should fill in the answers to the other questions as they are discussed in class.

SAY: Please turn to the Brainstorm worksheet in your Participant's Workbook. I am going to divide you into groups and assign each group one of the questions in the activity.

DO: Divide the participants into groups. Assign each group one question.

SAY: Please discuss the question among your group and write your answers on the form in your workbook. Select one person to be a spokesperson for your group. We will refer to these questions throughout the class. When your group is called upon, the spokesperson will read your question and share your answers. Take 5 minutes to complete the activity.

DO: Allow 5 minutes for participants to complete the activity.

Brainstorm

Instructions: Divide the participants into five groups and assign one question to each group. The group size will be determined by the total number of participants in the class. Ideally, group size will be 2–4 participants. Groups can be assigned more than one question in classes with less than ten participants. Multiple groups can be assigned the same question for large classes. Instruct each group to complete the answers to its assigned question. All participants should fill in the answers to the other questions as they are discussed in class.

Question #1 – What are 3–5 parent expectations regarding the school nutrition program?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Question #2 – What are 3–5 ways to distribute program information to parents?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Question #3 – What are 3–5 approaches to provide nutrition education tips to parents?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Question #4 – What are 3–5 means to acquire feedback from parents?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Question #5 – What are 3–5 ways parents may become involved in the school nutrition program?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

SHOW SLIDE: Brainstorm – Question 1

SAY: Group 1, please read your question and then tell us how your group answered it.

(Question #1 – What are 3–5 parent expectations regarding the school nutrition program?)

DO: Allow the spokesperson to respond. Write or have a participant write the responses on a board or chart paper.

FEEDBACK: Responses may include:

- High-quality meals
- Popular student choices
- Available up-to-date menus
- Few menu changes
- Fair pricing
- Clear instructions on how to submit meal applications
- Easy access to student accounts
- Notification if a student owes money
- Established complaint procedures

SAY: Your answers are right on target. School nutrition programs may have procedures in place to meet all these parent expectations, but it is important that the parents are aware of them. Sometimes we spend so much time working on meeting our schools' needs that we forget to ensure that parents are informed about the programs and procedures in place.

SHOW SLIDE: Example

SAY: Let's look at the case of Alisal Union School District located in Salinas, California. The Salinas Valley is one of our country's major agricultural areas. Alisal is a growing district that presently has 11 schools serving 8,600 students in grades K–5. The school nutrition program provides breakfast, lunch, snack, and dinner. Their program has worked with local growers to provide salad bars in every school for over fifteen years; the program was at the forefront of introducing Farm to School programs and supporting school gardens.

The event, "Back-to-School with Fresh Fruits and Vegetables: California Schools, Parents, and Students Support Healthier School Meals," was held in Salinas in August 2011. It was attended by the local congressional representative, the USDA Under Secretary for Food and Consumer Services, members of the United Fresh Produce Association, and invited parents and school officials. The morning of the event included farm tours and lunch at a local Salinas elementary school that offered a daily salad bar. A public forum was held in the afternoon to discuss the school meal requirements. Many school nutrition directors from different school districts attended the forum. An emphasis on the fruit and vegetable components was the main topic. At one point, a parent stood and said, "My children attend the Alisal Union School District. I wish they had a salad bar at their school." The school nutrition director from Alisal was in the audience and was, of course, dismayed at the parent's lack of knowledge regarding their program. Can you feel her frustration? We will later discuss the actions to remedy this problem.

SHOW SLIDE: Brainstorm – Question 2

SAY: Group 2, it is time to read question #2 and share your thoughts.

(Question #2 – What are 3–5 ways to distribute program information to parents?)

DO: Allow the spokesperson to respond. Write or have a participant write the responses on a board or chart paper.

FEEDBACK: Responses may include:

- The menu
- Newsletters
- U.S. mail
- School site newsletters
- Automatic telephone messaging
- Website
- E-newsletter
- Social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Attending parent organization meetings
- Participating at open houses and back to school nights
- Sponsoring events like "Bring a Parent to Lunch or Breakfast,"
- Offering breakfast to parents on "Ride Your Bike" or "Walk to School" event day

SAY: These are good ideas. Looking at the list of responses, we could divide it into three categories. First, we have the traditional approach using the menu and written communications like newsletters and mail. The second means is taking advantage of today's technology, which allows us to distribute information faster and with less paper. Last but not least, school events and activities provide us with the opportunity to have face-to-face interactions with parents.

ASK: What will your parents respond to best?

- What is the most effective method to reach them?
- What are the community's demographics?
- Do most families have home computers?
- Do more parents use cell phones?
- Do materials need to be produced in multiple languages?
- What is the parent attendance at school-sponsored events?

SHOW SLIDE: *NSPRA Survey*

SAY: These questions must be considered when determining the most effective course of action. The National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) recently conducted a survey to determine parents' preferences for how they receive information from their children's schools:

- 50 school districts in 22 states participated
- 43,410 adults submitted completed responses

The top five answers were:

- Email from the district or school
- Online parent portals
- E-newsletters
- District and school websites
- Telephone/voice messaging

These results indicate a strong preference for a reduction in paper correspondence and a move toward electronic communications. Contrary to the high ratings for electronic communications, social media sites like Facebook and Twitter were rated much lower than printed publications. Social media rated 15 out of 17 factors. This rating might be different if teenagers were answering the survey.

SHOW SLIDE: Alisal Union School District

SAY: Let's look at Alisal Union School District one year after hearing the parent's discouraging remark. All school nutrition professionals took steps to make parent communication a top priority and implemented three new programs. They first worked with teachers to create a Nutrition Corner in each classroom. The Nutrition Corner teaches students and parents about the school meal pattern and what choices can be made. Each meal component is represented by a different color star. Every Nutrition Corner includes large colorful posters highlighting nutrition education information on each meal component. Students are taught to take at least three different color stars when selecting their lunch. The food items on the cafeteria lunch lines and salad bars are labeled with identifying colored stars to help students make the correct choices. School nutrition assistants visit the classrooms and present a lunchroom orientation during which they discuss the star system and salad bar etiquette. The posters and information found in the classroom Nutrition Corner have been reduced to fit on an 8.5" x 11" handout, which is distributed to parents by nutrition services at each school's open house or Back-to-School Night.

Next, Alisal developed a meal-sampling program for parents. When school nutrition assistants participate in school events and activities, they distribute a flyer, which includes a coupon providing a parent with one cafeteria meal tasting. Parents must notify the school by 9:30 a.m. the day they would like to sample the menu. There is a limit of 20 parents per day. The parents visit the cafeteria during lunch, where they receive one-half of an entrée on a small tray and are encouraged to try other offerings and anything on the salad bar. The small tray restricts the portion size, as it is just a sampling, not a full meal. Parents are then asked to complete a survey regarding the meal and service. The meal-sampling program was expanded by taking meal samples to the parents participating in school committee meetings; often, a school nutrition assistant will attend a meeting to interact with parents. They will bring a tray of items from that day's lunch for the parents to see and taste. The food items are cut in small tasting sizes. Sometimes the assistant does not attend the meeting but just sends a tray of samples. The meal-sampling program has been successful, and parents have learned that their children's description of school food is not always accurate.

Alisal's third step to enlighten parents on what their children are served is to conduct mini food shows in the multi-purpose rooms at school sites. Several vendors help by setting up booths and offering samples of commonly served products. Parents are encouraged to attend the show with their children. During the school year, there were six shows, with two schools invited to each show.

ASK: Does anyone have any comments or thoughts on what we just discussed regarding how to reach the parents?

DO: Allow for questions and comments.

SHOW SLIDE: Brainstorm – Question 3

SAY: Additionally, we can share nutrition education tips with our parents. Doing so will help establish credibility, and show that we prioritize healthful, lifelong eating habits. Group 3, will you please read your question and share your answers.

(Question #3 – What are 3–5 approaches to provide nutrition education tips to parents?)

DO: Allow the spokesperson to respond. Write or have a participant write the responses on a board or chart paper.

FEEDBACK: Responses may include:

- Provide nutrition education tips and recipes on the menu
- Focus on nutrition education on a website
- Provide nutrition education information for school newsletters
- Participate in a school health fair
- Create a cookbook that re-sizes favorite school recipes into servings of 4–6 that can be used at home

SAY: These are good thoughts.

ASK: Now we know how to share nutrition information with parents, but where do we get the materials to begin?

SAY: The USDA, Team Nutrition, and Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) all provide nutrition education materials at no cost. Many of the vendors and manufacturers serving the school nutrition industry have developed nutrition education materials targeting students and parents. An example of manufacturers would be cereal companies. Another source is associations representing specific agricultural products like the Dairy Council, California Strawberry Commission, and the Cling Peach Board. These agencies provide nutrition information and recipes. The local bookstore or library are also resources for books on nutrition. Nutrition education messages or tips for parents do not have to be lengthy, just to the point.

ASK: Would anyone like to suggest other resources?

SHOW SLIDE: *Brainstorm – Question 4*

SAY: Let's now turn our attention to how we can attain feedback from the parents. Communication is a two-way street. We need to hear back from parents to evaluate our progress. Group 4, can you please read your question and tell us your group's ideas.

(Question #4 – What are 3–5 means to acquire feedback from parents?)

DO: Allow the spokesperson to respond. Write or have a participant write the responses on a board or chart paper.

FEEDBACK: Responses may include:

- Conducting written and electronic surveys
- Creating a parent advisory committee
- Implementing complaint procedures
- Interacting with parents at school events and activities
- Listening to student comments (like, "My mom said ...")

SAY: These are good ideas.

SHOW SLIDE: *Brainstorm – Question 5*

SAY: We have one more question. Group 5, can you please read your question and tell us your group's suggestions.

(Question #5 – What are 3–5 ways parents may become involved in the school nutrition program?)

DO: Allow the spokesperson to respond. Write or have a participant write the responses on a board or chart paper.

FEEDBACK: Responses may include:

- Volunteer in the cafeteria to help encourage children to try new foods
- Participate in a parent advisory council
- Volunteer to help with a student nutrition advisory council
- Request to be a parent representative on the wellness committee
- Apply for a job working with the school nutrition program

SAY: You have made good suggestions. Team Nutrition is a helpful resource for information on how to involve parents in a school wellness program.

ASK: Are there any questions or comments about today's lesson in general?

SHOW SLIDE: *Review Challenge*

ACTIVITY: Review Challenge

- Materials: **Review Challenge** handout
- Time: 10 minutes
- Instructions: Read the scenario about Over Hill Elementary School from the Review Challenge handout to the class. When finished reading, ask the participants to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of Over Hill's efforts to communicate with parents. To help spark ideas and stimulate conversation, write the following discussion points on a board or chart paper.
 - Parent Expectations
 - Distribution of Information
 - Nutrition Education Tips
 - Parent Feedback
 - Parent Involvement

SAY: We will conclude the class with the Review Challenge activity. This activity will give you a chance to practice and apply the concepts we discussed today.

DO: Facilitate Review Challenge activity.

SAY: I am going to read you a scenario about Over Hill Elementary School. The scenario is in your workbook if you would like to follow along as I read. When I have finished reading, I will ask you to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of Over Hill's nutrition services' efforts to communicate with parents.

DO: Read the scenario. To help spark ideas and stimulate conversation, write the following discussion points on a board or chart paper.

- Parent Expectations
- Distribution of Information
- Nutrition Education Tips
- Parent Feedback
- Parent Involvement

Review Challenge

Instructions: The purpose of this activity is to practice applying the concepts discussed in class. Read the following scenario about Over Hill Elementary School to the class. When finished reading, ask the participants to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of Over Hill's efforts to communicate with parents. To help spark ideas and stimulate conversation, write the following discussion points on a board or chart paper.

Discussion Points

- Parent Expectations
- Distribution of Information
- Nutrition Education Tips
- Parent Feedback
- Parent Involvement

Scenario

Jane and Jack Broom are students at Over Hill Elementary School. Jane is in the fifth grade, and Jack is in first. Mrs. Broom uses a cat magnet to hold a copy of each month's school lunch menu on the refrigerator door. Today is Wednesday, November 4th. They still have October's menu up as they have yet to see the new November menu. Mrs. Broom likes to prepay for twenty lunches at a time. Jane and Jack look at the menu to choose the meals they like and usually buy school lunch three to four times a week. This morning everyone is running late. Mrs. Broom tells the kids to get their lunch at school as she guides them toward the school bus.

Around 3:15 p.m., the school bus pulls up out front and drops off Jane, Jack, and Jack's two friends, Sam and Bruno. The kids tumble through the back door. Jack says, "Mom, we're hungry. I'm starving. What's to eat?" Mrs. Broom grabs a jar of peanut butter to go with crackers and sliced bananas. "You seem especially hungry today. What did you eat for lunch?" she asked.

Jack begins to chatter. "They had that noodle stuff I don't like. I tried to eat a carrot, but I was afraid my loose tooth would come out. Mrs. Gerdy tried to get me to eat spinach. She said it would make me strong like Popeye. I don't buy it. Lisa Smith drank half my chocolate milk when I was talking to Fred."

Jane looks at her mom and rolls her eyes. "They said I didn't have any money on my account, but they let me charge because they said you were a good customer. They said Jack doesn't have any money left either." "How can that be!" exclaims her mother. "It seems like I just paid. That can't be right!"

There is a knock at the door. It is Mrs. Anders to pick up Sam and Bruno. "Hi, guys; what's up? Are my kids driving you nuts? What are you cooking? Smells good."

Mrs. Broom smiles and replies, "I'm trying that recipe for Cinnamon Apples that was on the September school lunch menu. Jack said he liked it when they served it at school. Apples are in season, and the baked apples are easy for him to eat while he is missing two teeth."

"Oh, yummy!" Mrs. Anders smacks her lips. "You'll have to tell me how the recipe comes out. I like cooking and working with food. You know I have a couple of hours of free time and would like to volunteer in the cafeteria to help encourage the kids to eat well, but I really do not know how to do it or where to start. Hey, can I taste those apples?"

"Sure, please do. I want to know what you think. The recipe included a request for our opinion on how we like it. There is a short survey located on the school's webpage. Maybe you should check there to see if they have any suggestions for parent volunteers."

Mrs. Anders shook her head. "My computer is down, and I'm not sure when it will be working again. I am blaming it on my teenager. I wonder if that survey is like the one distributed at the PTO meeting."

Possible Discussion

Parent Expectations

- Parents expect to know what is being served on the menu each day. Menus should be up to date. The menu in the scenario was old, and Jack didn't eat because he didn't like the entrée.
- Parents want easy access to student account balances and notification that accounts are low.
- Mrs. Broom did not know the children's accounts were low. Notification could be by written note, telephone voice messaging system, email, or text.

Distribution of Information

- Although the current month's menu is late, they do regularly distribute a menu. It could be either printed and handed out in class or made available electronically on a webpage.
- The school has a website that can provide information; however, Mrs. Anders commented that her family's computer is not working. Other families may not have home computers. There should be alternative methods of distributing information besides electronically.

Nutrition Education Tip

- The September menu included a recipe that used seasonal fruit and had been served in the lunch at school.

Parent Feedback

- Parent feedback was requested in the form of surveys. One survey was distributed on the website and another at a parent-teacher meeting.
- School nutrition assistants attended the parent-teacher meeting to distribute a survey and interact directly with the parents.

Parent Involvement

- Mrs. Anders wanted to become involved with the school nutrition program but didn't know how to do so. Suggestions on parent involvement could be posted on the school's website, printed on the menu, and presented at the PTO meeting.

ASK: Looking at this list of discussion points, how would you evaluate Over Hill's efforts to communicate with parents?

FEEDBACK: Allow for responses and contribute to the discussion with the possible answers listed in the Instructor's Manual.

SAY: Thank you for your attention and participation today. We have discovered there are many possible ways to effectively communicate with parents. In our next lesson, we will discuss implementing Farm to School programs.

Lesson 4:

Farm to School and School Gardens

Lesson-at-a-Glance

Time	Topic	Activity	Materials
15 minutes	• Introduction to lesson	• Fact or Fiction	• Participant's Workbook • Fact or Fiction worksheet • Pens or pencils
Objective: Define the goals of a Farm to School program.			
10 minutes	• Farm to School Goals		• Participant's Workbook
Objectives:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe examples of Farm to School activities. • Give scenarios of how a school garden can function. 			
10 minutes	• Farm to School Activities		• Participant's Workbook
Objective: Identify ways a school nutrition program can support a school garden program.			
10 minutes	• Supporting the School Garden		• Participant's Workbook
Objective: Describe ways that a Farm to School or school garden program can help market school meals.			
15 minutes	• Using Farm to School to market school meals	• Fact or Fiction Revisited	• Participant's Workbook • Fact or Fiction worksheet • Fact or Fiction Revisited handout • Pens or pencils
1 hour			

Introduction

SHOW SLIDE: Lesson 4: Farm to School and School Gardens

SAY: Welcome to Lesson 4: Farm to School and School Gardens. Today we will discuss how we can incorporate Farm to School and school garden programs into school nutrition programs.

SHOW SLIDE: Objectives

SAY: After completing this lesson, participants will:

- Define the goals of a Farm to School program.
- Describe examples of Farm to School activities.
- Give scenarios of how a school garden can function.
- Identify ways a school nutrition program can support a school garden program.
- Describe ways that a Farm to School or school garden program can help market school meals.

SHOW SLIDE: Fact or Fiction

ACTIVITY: Fact or Fiction

- Materials: **Fact or Fiction** worksheet
- Time: 5 minutes
- Instructions: Have participants read each question on the Fact or Fiction worksheet and check whether the question is a fact (true) or fiction (false). After the activity, tell participants that the answers will be discussed during the lesson.

SAY: First, let's test our current knowledge of these kinds of programs. Please turn to the Fact or Fiction worksheet in your Participant's Workbook. I want you to read each question and check whether the question is a fact (true) or fiction (false).

DO: Allow 5 minutes for participants to complete the activity.

Fact or Fiction

Instructions: Read each of the following questions and choose whether the question is fact (true) or fiction (false).

1. A Farm to School or school garden program can lead to increased consumption of fruits and vegetables in a school nutrition program.

- a. **Fact**
- b. Fiction

2. Farm to School programs are initiated to connect schools with local and regional farmers.

- a. **Fact**
- b. Fiction

3. The first United States school garden project was developed in 1995.

- a. Fact
- b. **Fiction**

FEEDBACK: Fiction. School gardens have been used as an educational technique for centuries. The first recorded school garden in the U.S. was at George Putnam School in Roxbury, Massachusetts, in 1890.

4. One goal of a Farm to School program is to incorporate agricultural education with nutrition education.

- a. **Fact**
- b. Fiction

5. A student field trip to a farmer's market is a Farm to School activity that can provide nutrition education to help improve student nutrition.

- a. **Fact**
- b. Fiction

6. In 2009, the USDA launched the Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Initiative, which led to the development of the USDA Farm to School Team.

- a. **Fact**
- b. Fiction

7. The primary reason local produce is offered in school meals is to support local farmers.

- a. Fact
- b. **Fiction**

FEEDBACK: Fiction. Supporting local farmers is only one of four goals.

8. A class that has little yard space can enjoy a successful garden project by using buckets for a container garden.

- a. **Fact**
- b. Fiction

9. Students must plant more than one crop to have an effective school garden project.

- a. Fact
- b. Fiction**

FEEDBACK: Fiction. Neither size nor variety of the garden matters. Growing something as simple as a single herb can teach students the basic steps of the garden-to-table process.

10. Providing tastings from a local farm item during lunch in the cafeteria is one way school nutrition programs can participate in a farm to school program.

- a. Fact**
- b. Fiction

11. School nutrition professionals can support a school garden program by providing students with recipes that call for one or more of the food items grown by their class.

- a. Fact**
- b. Fiction

Objective: Define the goals of a Farm to School program.

SHOW SLIDE: Goals of Farm to School

SAY: This activity is a little teaser of what is to follow in today's lesson. Listen for the correct answers during our discussions. The term "Farm to School" may evoke different ideas for different people so let's start by focusing on its purpose and goals. Farm to School programs establish relationships between schools and local or regional farms.

Four Farm to School program goals are to:

- Provide healthy meals at school
- Improve student nutrition
- Provide opportunities to include agriculture in nutrition education
- Support local and regional farmers

There is no specific approach to meeting these goals. Farm to School activities will vary depending on the needs and resources of the communities and regions where the schools and farms are located. Farm to School programs are most effective when Nutrition Services and teachers work together on the activities.

In 2007, the USDA launched the Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiative, which led to the establishment of the USDA Farm to School Team in 2009. This Farm to School Team assists schools in accessing local markets and communicating with growers and producers.

Objectives:

- Describe examples of Farm to School activities.
- Give scenarios of how a school garden can function.

SHOW SLIDE: Examples of Farm to School Activities

ASK: Can you give me some examples of how school nutrition professionals and teachers might work with local farms? What activities might be done to achieve the goals I just mentioned?

SAY: Please refer to the Farm to School Goals listed in your Participant's Workbook. Give me an example of a farm to school activity, and then tell what goal or goals it will achieve.

DO: Write or have a participant write the suggested activities on a board or chart paper.

FEEDBACK: Responses may include the following:

- Incorporate local produce or products on the menu.
 - Goals: Provides healthy meals at school; improves student nutrition; supports local farmers
- Provide tastings of produce or new products in the classroom or cafeteria.
 - Goals: Provides nutrition education; improves student nutrition
- Arrange farm tours.
 - Goals: Provides nutrition education; improves student nutrition
- Invite farmers to speak to students.
 - Goals: Provides nutrition education; improves student nutrition; supports local farmers
- Arrange for field trips to farmer's markets.
 - Goals: Provides nutrition education; improves student nutrition
- Provide cooking classes in the classroom or cafeteria.
 - Goals: Provides nutrition education; improves student nutrition
- Invite local chefs to demonstrate or participate in preparing fresh produce for school meals.
 - Goals: Provides healthy meals at school; provides nutrition education; improves student nutrition
- Initiate a process that allows local farmers to pick up food scraps and vegetable trimmings to use as animal feed or compost.
 - Goals: Includes agriculture lessons in nutrition education; supports local farmers

DO: Suggest any of the above ideas that were not mentioned by the participants.

SHOW SLIDE: School Gardens

SAY: Let's turn our attention to school gardens.

ASK: Who can tell us when the school gardens first began?

DO: Allow for responses.

SAY: School gardens received national attention around 1996 when Alice Waters collaborated with Berkeley Unified School District in Berkeley, California, to establish the Edible Schoolyard Project. Their vision was to start a garden and then build a teaching kitchen that would utilize the garden's produce. The garden and kitchen were to be tools to enrich the curriculum and life of the school community. At about the same time, individual school districts in agricultural states like California and Florida were piloting their own school garden projects that would later be used as models for other districts. The truth is, the concept of teaching children to garden has been around for centuries. The first officially recognized school garden in the United States was developed at George Putnam School in Roxbury, Massachusetts, in 1890. In the 1800s, many school gardens were developed not only to teach students agricultural skills but also as a means of survival. The gardens fed the students and teachers.

Objective: Identify ways a school nutrition program can support a school garden program.

SHOW SLIDE: Supporting the School Garden

SAY: Today's school gardens are used as an instrument to teach children how food grows, so they will understand where their food originates, and to teach nutrition education. Students need to see that food does not just come from the store. Students who work in school gardens are apt to develop healthier eating habits and consume more fruits and vegetables. School gardens can vary in design and size. In schools with enough yard space, the garden may be maintained by one grade or classroom or multiple classes. Each student may have a row to cultivate or just an individual plant. Schools with little space can use buckets or cans to create container gardens. Teachers and students may plant a variety of fruits, vegetables, and flowers, or just a single crop. Gardens may have themes that target nutrition, science, and environmental topics or encompass all subject areas.

SHOW SLIDE: School Nutrition Professionals and the School Garden

ASK: What role can school nutrition professionals play in the development of school gardens?

SAY: Not all schools can have a large garden. Regardless of the size of the garden, nutrition services can work in many ways to support teachers and their garden projects. Nutrition services establish the link of farm to table. Items from a school garden can be featured on the school breakfast, lunch, or snack menu as the "Harvest of the Month." Nutrition information or perhaps a recipe using the item can be printed on the menu. The menu can also give credit to the classes who grew the item. Those students will be proud, and other classes will be curious about the food their schoolmates grew. Produce from the garden can be offered on a salad bar. If the garden is too small to provide enough product to feed all the students, more of the same items can be purchased from a vendor. Specific garden items can be identified on the serving line by the use of colorful cards or a unique design or sticker.

If offering the item as part of a meal is not a viable option, how about doing tastings of the item during a meal period? Liven up a taste test in the cafeteria by having a student or employee dress in a costume that represents the food being served. Fruit and vegetable costumes like an apple, peas in the pod, a carrot, and a stalk of broccoli are readily available. Someone could dress as a farmer or, better yet, bring in a farmer to share in the fun.

SHOW SLIDE: Preparing Food from the School Garden

SAY: Another alternative to offering the item on the school menu is to prepare the food for the students who grew it. The cooking can take place in the school kitchen or, depending on the item, in the classroom. Students can help in preparation. Whether or not cooking is done, school nutrition professionals can provide a class with written recipes containing one or more of the food items grown by the students. A recipe for spaghetti sauce can highlight school-grown herbs like basil and oregano or vegetables like tomatoes. For schools with little yard space, rinse and save empty #10 cans for students to use in container gardens. Small plants like herbs can easily be grown in #10 cans.

ASK: How about other ideas?

DO: Allow for responses.

Objective: Describe ways that a Farm to School or school garden program can help market school meals.

SHOW SLIDE: *Marketing Farm to School and the School Garden*

SAY: If we refer back to our past lessons, we will remember that our customers include our students, teachers, and parents. Let's look at a few examples of how Farm to School and school garden programs help market school meals to each of these customer groups.

We will start with marketing to our most important customers, the students. Students like foods to look good. They like color. They see the food with their eyes before it makes it to their mouth. They like to know how the food will taste. Many students are shy about trying unfamiliar foods. A Farm to School program can provide fresh, colorful fruits and vegetables. With the farms being close by, the products travel fewer miles which helps ensure freshness and consistent quality control. Farm to School and school garden programs can provide opportunities for students to see and taste new and unfamiliar foods so that when they see the items in the cafeteria, they can identify them and will be more apt to choose them as part of their meal.

SHOW SLIDE: *Collaboration*

SAY: Marketing is an essential part of a school nutrition program. It includes developing positive working relationships with the school community. School nutrition professionals can collaborate with teachers by introducing them to the local farmers and promoting produce grown by the students. The purpose of creating a school garden is to teach students about their food and its source. By featuring student-grown produce on the menu, the school nutrition program can become part of the educational process. As the end-user, the school nutrition program helps the students connect the dots for the entire flow of food from farm to table.

SHOW SLIDE: *Involvement*

SAY: In Lesson 3, we discussed that one way to improve communications with parents is to provide them a means of becoming involved with the school nutrition program. School gardens provide an excellent opportunity for parent involvement. For instance, school gardens do not have the weekend and holidays off. They need care whether school is in or out of session. Many teachers are not experienced in gardening, so help from parents who are is greatly appreciated. More adult hands in the gardens allow more attention to be provided to the students' participation. If school garden harvests are promoted in the cafeteria, parents will see how the meal program integrates into the educational system.

Another way volunteer parents can become involved is to encourage students to try a variety of items at a salad bar. Also, if a school has a fruit and vegetable grant that provides fresh produce at recess, parents can hand out the item and talk about its source and its nutrient benefits.

ASK: Can anyone share other ideas of how Farm to School and school gardens can help market the meal programs?

DO: Allow for responses.

SHOW SLIDE: Resources

SAY: Today, we mentioned the USDA's Farm to School Team and the Edible Schoolyard Project. Two more resources that are helpful are the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) and the National Farm to School Network. The website addresses and contact information can be found in your Participant's Workbook. These organizations are great resources for information regarding Farm to School and school garden projects. The websites link to articles and stories about Farm to School and school garden projects in a number of school districts across the country. The articles might inspire you to implement or expand your own programs.

SHOW SLIDE: Fact or Fiction Revisited**ACTIVITY: Fact or Fiction Revisited**

- Materials: **Fact or Fiction Revisited** worksheet
- Time: 10 minutes
- Instructions: Review each question on the Fact or Fiction worksheet used earlier in the lesson. Allow participants to respond to each question.

DO: Review Fact or Fiction Revisited. Allow participants the opportunity to respond to each question.

Fact or Fiction Revisited Answers

Instructions: Read each of the following questions and choose whether the question is fact (true) or fiction (false).

1. A Farm to School or school garden program can lead to increased consumption of fruits and vegetables in a school nutrition program.

- a. **Fact**
- b. Fiction

2. Farm to School programs are initiated to connect schools with local and regional farmers.

- a. **Fact**
- b. Fiction

3. The first United States school garden project was developed in 1995.

- a. Fact
- b. **Fiction**

FEEDBACK: Fiction. School gardens have been used as an educational technique for centuries. The first recorded school garden in the U.S. was at George Putnam School in Roxbury, Massachusetts, in 1890.

4. One goal of a Farm to School program is to incorporate agricultural education with nutrition education.

- a. **Fact**
- b. Fiction

5. A student field trip to a farmer's market is a Farm to School activity that can provide nutrition education to help improve student nutrition.

- a. **Fact**
- b. Fiction

6. In 2009, the USDA launched the Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Initiative, which led to the development of the USDA Farm to School Team.

- a. **Fact**
- b. Fiction

7. The primary reason local produce is offered in school meals is to support local farmers.

- a. Fact
- b. **Fiction**

FEEDBACK: Fiction. Supporting local farmers is only one of four goals.

8. A class that has little yard space can enjoy a successful garden project by using buckets for a container garden.

- a. **Fact**
- b. Fiction

9. Students must plant more than one crop to have an effective school garden project.

- a. Fact
- b. Fiction**

FEEDBACK: Fiction. Neither size nor variety of the garden matters. Growing something as simple as a single herb can teach students the basic steps of the garden-to-table process.

10. Providing tastings from a local farm item during lunch in the cafeteria is one way school nutrition programs can participate in a farm to school program.

- a. Fact**
- b. Fiction

11. School nutrition professionals can support a school garden program by providing students with recipes that call for one or more of the food items grown by their class.

- a. Fact**
- b. Fiction

ASK: Does anyone have any questions or comments about today's class?

SAY: This lesson concludes *Utilizing the Cafeteria as a Classroom*. I hope that the information we have shared has triggered new ideas that you will take back to the kitchen and cafeteria. Remember, the cafeteria can be the largest classroom on campus. I encourage you to take action to help your school community embrace the concept of the nutrition program being an integral part of the educational process, helping students develop and enjoy healthy, active lifestyles.

Resources

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE WITH FAMILY FARMERS (CAFF)

Mailing address: CAFF
PO Box 363
Davis, CA 95617

Website: www.caff.org

Phone: (530) 756-8518

EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD PROJECT

Mailing address: Edible Schoolyard Project
1517 Shattuck Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94709

Website: www.edibleschoolyard.org

Phone: (510) 843-3811

FAMILY FARMED

Mailing address Family Farmed
225 W. Hubbard, Suite 650
Chicago, Illinois 60654

Website: www.familyfarmed.org

Phone: (312) 874-7360

COMMUNITY FOOD DIVISIONS – United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Mailing address: Food and Nutrition Service
3101 Park Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22302-1500

Websites: www.fns.usda.gov/cfs

NATIONAL FARM TO SCHOOL NETWORK

Mailing address: National Farm to School Network
P.M.B. #104
8770 West Byrn Mawr Ave., Suite 1300
Chicago, IL 60631-3517

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