

Manager's Corner

Student Taste Testing – Lunch

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PURPOSE

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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Professional Standards

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING – 4100

Employee will be able to develop plans that include involvement with school and community members, empower school nutrition leaders, and address excellent customer service.

4120 – Program Promotion
Promote the Child Nutrition Program.

Introduction

Manager's Corner: Student Taste Testing–Lunch is designed to empower managers to use in training their staff. Each lesson is roughly 15 minutes. This lesson plan contains:

- Learning objective
- Statement explaining the importance of the topic
- List of materials
- Instructions on how to present the information
- Questions to ask staff
- An activity to strengthen or refresh the knowledge of the staff

Lesson Overview

Instructions for lesson:

- Review the lesson objective and background information.
- Review why it is important.
- Ask staff the questions.
- Facilitate the activity outlined.
- Provide time for staff to ask questions.

Objective: Promote the National School Lunch Program by hosting a taste testing of lunch foods.

Background information: The National School Lunch Program was created to provide nutritionally balanced, low-cost or no-cost lunches to children each day. School meals should be appetizing to students while also meeting the meal pattern requirements. The school lunch might be some students only way to receive a safe, healthy meal each day. It makes a difference when meals look appealing and are served at the proper serving temperatures. It is always important to have a positive attitude and smile while engaging with students, staff, and administrators.

Why it is important: It is important to hold taste tests for students because they can vote on whether they like the food or not and give their own opinion of the foods and school meals. This can also be used to promote the program and entice students to eat school lunch.

Questions for Staff

- **What are the benefits of encouraging students to eat school lunch?**

Possible Answers:

- School meals are appetizing to students and meet nutrition standards.
- It brings more money into the school meal program.
- School meals might be some students only way to get a safe, healthy meal.
- The school nutrition program can increase students' learning ability, energy, positivity, and can improve overall health and wellness.

- **How can you get students interested in tasting the lunch food?**

Possible Answers:

- Make the food look very appealing and make sure that the food stays at the optimal temperature.
- Have a positive attitude while serving the food.
- Encourage school administrators and teachers to promote lunch.
- Offer meals for field trips and class outings.
- Create bulletin boards, signage, and other lunch promotional materials.
- Ask students to serve as school meals ambassadors.

Please note: The answers provided are only examples and are not an inclusive list of possible responses.

Activity: Lunch Menu Item

Activity materials included in this document:

- **Lunch Menu Item**
- **Lunch Menu Item Answer Key**

Materials provided by the school nutrition operation:

- Copies of handouts
- Pens/pencils

Activity Instructions:

- Print the handouts.
- Ask staff to complete the **Lunch Menu Item**.
- Ask staff to share their responses.
- At the conclusion of the activity, review the **Lunch Menu Item Answer Key**.

Lunch Menu Item

Instructions: Write your response to the questions below and have an open dialogue with your staff.

What are some lunch foods that we should serve for the taste test?

What are some ways to promote the school lunch program?

What are some ideas to make taste testing fun? How could those ideas be implemented?

Lunch Menu Item Answer Key

Instructions: Write your response to the questions below and have an open dialogue with your staff.

What are some lunch foods that we should serve for the taste test?

Example responses:

- New product entrees for consideration on next year's school lunch menu.
- Foods that the vendor has indicated have had a product recipe change.
- Recipes provided by a class or student organization.

What are some ways to promote the school lunch program?

Example responses:

- Create and/or hang posters
- Add it to the newsletter
- Announce it during lunch
- Post menu on the website

What are some ideas to make taste testing fun? How could those ideas be implemented?

Example responses:

- Create themes for taste testing. Encourage the school to decorate and dress according to the theme.
- Get student representatives to help coordinate a taste test.

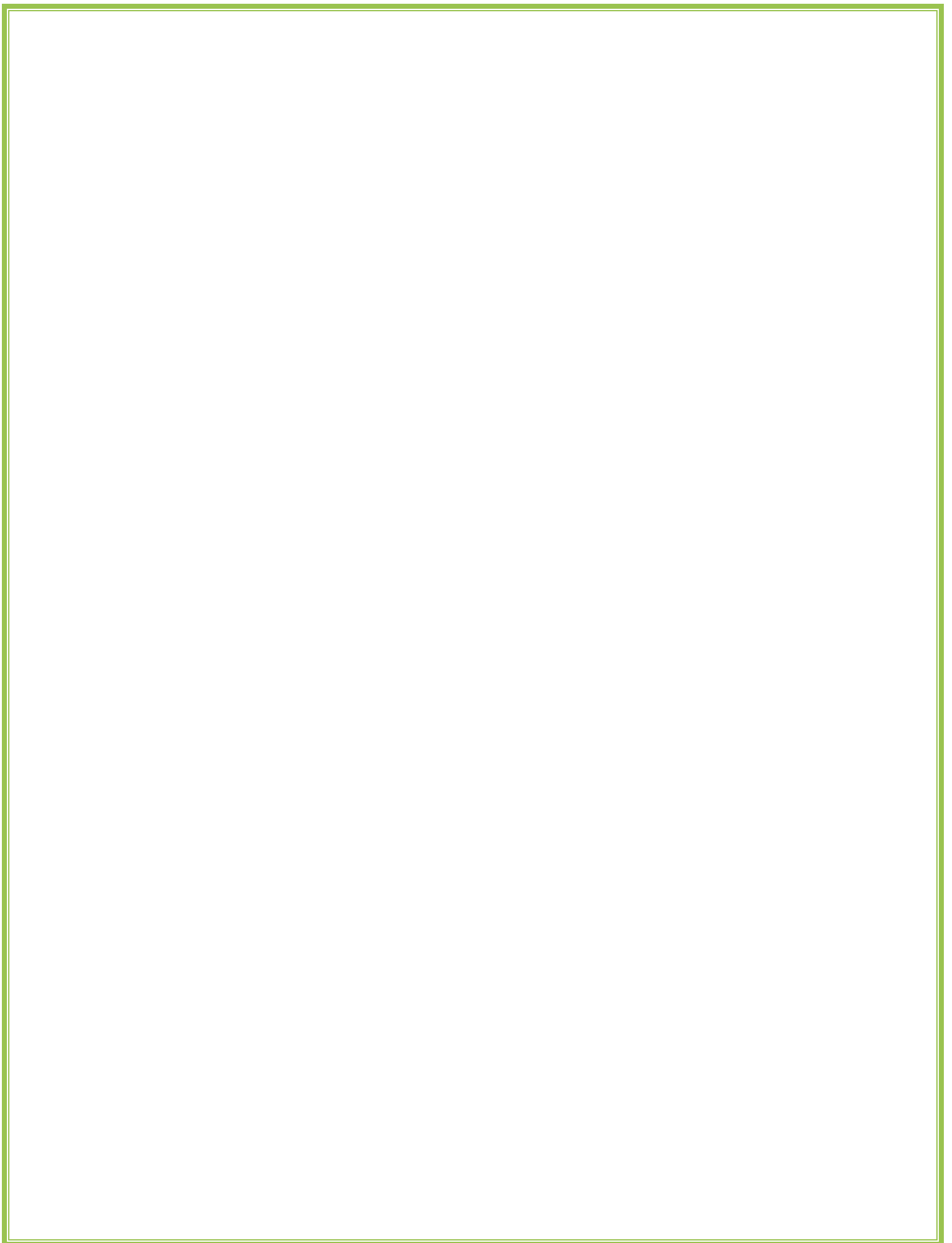
Please note: The answers provided are only examples and are not an inclusive list of possible responses.

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