

Healthi Kids School Food Progress Report



- Bringing students to the table to improve school food -

Based on direct observation & feedback from students, in 2015 Healthi Kids recommended policy and practice changes to support healthy school meals in the Rochester City School District (RCSD). Healthi Kids continues to advocate for the policy and practice changes and monitor the status of implementation.

Recommendations:



Implement salad bars in schools to increase the variety of fruits and vegetables



Enhance flavor and give kids choice with the creation of Flavor Stations



Allow student voice to be heard by creating a Youth School Food Advisory Council



Create and design kid friendly, healthy marketing for school cafeterias



Improve customer service to support a healthy and positive cafeteria environment



Simplify recipes - kids want recipes and food they know and like.



Ensure kids have access to free drinking water during all school meals.

Status of Recommendations:



Beginning Spring 2016, salad bars have started to be phased into 9 schools funded by the Greater Rochester Health Foundation.



Beginning Spring 2016, flavor stations are being piloted at schools #16, #53, #58 and School of the Arts.



In January 2016 the RCSD Food and Nutrition Service held it's first Youth Food Advisory Council meeting. The council meets monthly throughout the school year and includes children from 4th to 7th grade. RCSD is now looking to create a youth council for older students too.



Kid friendly signage and marketing has been introduced at the 9 Health Foundation funded elementary schools. The Youth School Food Advisory Council has also assisted marketing by renaming menu items to support healthy eating.



Healthi Kids, the Health Foundation and Playworks have /will provide(d) ongoing training in October 2015-2016, and Fall 2016-2017 of food service staff and lunch aides to emphasize the importance of a healthy and positive cafeteria environment.



Youth School Food Advisory Council members are voicing their ideas to simplify recipes and include more traditional menu items like "Taco Tuesday". The new recipes will be piloted in the 2016-2017 school year.



In response to over 200 letters from parents, RCSD Food and Nutrition Services created a pilot program for kids to have free water with their meals. Healthi Kids continues to monitor implementation and is working towards a more permanent solution.



For more information visit:
www.healthikids.org

