

# FAIRFIELD

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Advisory Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday, October 29, 2019**  
**1:00pm**

501 Kings Highway East  
Board of Ed. Conference Room

### Minutes

- I. Call to Order 1:08pm
- II. **Present were members:** Frank Arnone (Director of Innovation, Curriculum & Programs), Maura O'Malley (Director of Food Services), Marne Denslow (TMS parent), Beau Denslow (TMS student), Jennifer Tomasulo (TMS parent), Connor Tomasulo (TMS student), Mark Ashkinos (FLHS parent), Troy Ashkinos (FLHS student), Stephanie Schacher (NS parent), Jonathan Klein (NS student), Gayle Kuhr (NS parent), Eli Kuhr (NS student), Meghan Tetro (TMS parent), Kathryn Tetro (TMS student), Vicki Hastings (FLHS teacher), Barbara Cohen (FLHS teacher), Julie Emerick (TMS teacher/parent), Todd Emerick (TMS student), Michelle Taddei (TMS teacher), Janice Mayeran (FLHS teacher), Kelly McWhinnie (NS parent), Katie McWhinnie (NS student), Lisa Goven (Food Services Secretary)
- III. Mr. Arnone opened the meeting with introductions and stated the goal of the committee is to share input from students, parents and teachers regarding the lunch menus. He suggested that the committee reconvene in January to see what suggestions were implemented.
- IV. **Overview of the NSLP (National School Lunch Program)**  
Mrs. O'Malley presented an overview of the federal NSLP. She described the five food components in a meal, the offer vs. serve provision, the lunch meal patterns for each of the three grade groups (K-5, 6-8, 9-12), the menu planning dietary specifications and a sample of lunch offerings for elementary, middle and high schools.
- V. **What are some successes of the lunch program?**  
What follows is a compilation of positives and successes shared by the members, including their favorite items served: breakfast for lunch, the grilled chicken sandwich, vegetarian options, nachos, salads offered every day at the HS, popcorn chicken, yogurt parfait, the fruits and vegetable look very fresh.

A student asked why the pizza bites disappeared in the MS. Mrs. O'Malley responded that the manufacturer raised the saturated fat level in the bites above the dietary specifications. She will look for a substitute.

#### **VI. How can we improve on the lunch program?**

This is a list of suggestions from the members:

- Add a salad bar at the MS. They are tight on space but Mrs. O'Malley will look if there is a place to fit it.
- The hot dogs and pizza can be better.
- A parent asked for more exciting salads and pizza. Suggestions were Mexican salad, veggie pizza or cauliflower pizza crusts. She suggested looking at the salads sold in Pronto, The Pantry and Chef's Table for ideas.
- RLMS runs out of boxed cereal during lunch.
- Would like more guest chef visits because they are very popular. Mrs. O'Malley said they are in the process of hiring a new chef and hopes to restart the chef visits in November.
- We need more choices at the salad bar at TMS. A TMS teacher suggested making a salad from the varied vegetable options at the Coyote Grill. She does it often.
- Would like to have smoothies. Mrs. O'Malley said they are looking at smoothie machines that can handle the volume of a lunch wave.
- There is too much cheese as the main protein. Would like to see more variety of cheeses other than American cheese.
- Meals are high in sugar.
- Why is there no soup? Mrs. O'Malley said that the sodium level in soup exceeds the dietary specifications. Mrs. Hastings believes she may have a recipe that is low in sodium. Will forward the recipe to Mrs. O'Malley.
- ES lunches do not offer the variety of MS and HS lunches. This is a space issue in the ES cafeterias.
- Can we serve sushi or salmon? Ms. O'Malley said they cannot serve raw fish but they did have a chef visit the MS and HS that made non-fish sushi such as California rolls. USDA breaded salmon was tried in the elementary schools and was not received well.
- Add more options for chicken that is not breaded.
- Have an alternate lunch option that is not so high in carbs. Mozzarella sticks are too high in carbs. Maybe offer half of a wrap as an alternate lunch.
- French toast should only be served "once in a blue moon."
- Should serve non-lactose milk. The parent was advised to talk to the school nurse and have her ask the kitchen manager to order some.
- The beverages Switch and Envy are high in sugar. Mrs. O'Malley said that both drinks are on the Healthy Food Certification list of acceptable beverages and are not high in sugar.

- What is the method for feedback on meals? Mrs. O'Malley said that Whitsons FD Mealplanner app allows comments on the meals. The link can be found on the FPS Food Services webpage.
- I would be willing to pay more for less processed food. Mrs. O'Malley said that the Board of Education sets the meal costs.
- We are just serving a healthier version of unhealthy foods.
- Lunch shifts are too short.
- There is too much plastic waste. Mrs. O'Malley said they are piloting a program at Sherman ES with the goal of eliminating as much plastic as possible. Biodegradable straws will be coming to all schools soon.

**VII.** Meeting adjourned at 2:12pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Goven  
Food Services Secretary  
Fairfield Public Schools