



Clayton County Public Schools

Building A Better Tomorrow, Today!

1058 Fifth Avenue, Jonesboro, GA, 30236 | Tel: 770-473-2700 | Web: www.clayton.k12.ga.us

ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Division of Communications, Public Relations, Marketing & Strategic Improvement

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CCPS Welcomes Host of USDA, Federal, and Local Agency Representatives to Kickoff 2024 National School Breakfast Week

JONESBORO - On Monday, March 4, 2024, the School Nutrition Department of Clayton County Public Schools (CCPS) welcomed Mr. Willie Taylor, Southeastern Administrator for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Nutrition Services (FNS) to Clayton County. The purpose of the visit, which took place at Jonesboro Middle School (JMS), was to celebrate and kick off National School Breakfast Week, which is observed the week of March 4-8, 2024.

A diverse assembly of federal, state, and local governmental representatives as well as guests from non-profit organizations associated with food and feeding people, joined Mr. Taylor in observing and sampling a school breakfast. The menu featured a delightful Surfer Sunrise Breakfast Pizza, chicken biscuit, cereal, bartlett pears, and fresh strawberries, providing a taste of the nutritious options available to our students. While enjoying breakfast, the special visitors engaged with JMS students and discussed breakfast habits, fostering valuable conversations about nutrition and healthy choices.

"National School Breakfast Week serves as a crucial reminder of the vital role breakfast plays in our students' daily lives," said Dr. Anthony W. Smith, Superintendent/CEO of Schools. "It's heartwarming to see such diverse collaboration and dedication toward ensuring our scholars have access to nutritious meals. As we continue to prioritize student wellness, events like this reaffirm our commitment to providing not just education, but also the nourishment needed for success," he added.

"At Clayton County Public Schools, we are committed to innovative approaches in providing nutritious options for our students. Initiatives such as National School Breakfast Week showcase our dedication to promoting healthy habits and addressing food disparities in our community," said Dr. Ralph Simpson, CCPS Deputy Superintendent of Administrative Services. "By offering diverse and appealing breakfast choices, we aim to not only fuel academic achievement but also cultivate a culture of wellness that extends beyond the classroom."

"I am thrilled to see the positive impact of our breakfast programs on students' health and well-being," said Ms. Audrey Hamilton, Executive Director of School Nutrition. "Monday's event highlights the importance of fostering meaningful conversations about nutrition and empowering students to make healthy choices. By collaborating with stakeholders at all levels, we can continue to innovate and ensure that every student has access to nutritious meals that support their academic and personal growth."

Following breakfast, a thought-provoking panel discussion was held in the school's gymnasium. Panelists representing federal, state, regional, and local entities, along with school district personnel and students, addressed important topics such as food insecurity, the significance of breakfast, and strategies to combat food disparities in minority and/or impoverished communities.

Among the esteemed panelists were:

- Mr. Willie C. Taylor, Southeast Regional Administrator of USDA Food and Nutrition Services
- Dr. Ralph Simpson, CCPS Deputy Superintendent of Administrative Services and Strategic Improvement;
- Ms. Kimberlee Barnett, Principal of Jonesboro Middle School;
- Ms. Audrey Hamilton, Executive Director of CCPS School Nutrition Services;
- Ms. Lillian Mitchell, Consumer Sciences Teacher at Babb Middle School;
- Dr. Caree Cotwright, Director of Nutrition Security and Health Equity, USDA Food and Nutrition Service;
- Ms. Jacqueline Mull, ACF Region 4 Regional Administrator;
- Mr. Bill Green, Executive Director, The Common Market;
- Ms. Laura Bracci, American Heart Association Director of Government Relations; and
- Mr. Will Sellers, Wholesome Wave Georgia Executive Director.

Additionally, students who were a part of the program as well as panel discussion were Zohe Gomez-Castillo, Zahion Mikell, Jada Flemming, and Te'ora Houser.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all the representatives who visited Clayton County Public Schools and joined us in kicking off School Breakfast Week at Jonesboro Middle School. Their presence and contributions to the panel discussion have enriched district leaders' and administrators' understanding of food insecurity, healthy food choices, and the importance of a healthy breakfast for all scholars. Additionally, this visit underscores our shared commitment to fostering healthy habits and ensuring the well-being of our scholars.

The school district leadership is grateful for everyone's dedication to promoting nutritious options and for the invaluable insights shared during this event. We look forward to continued collaboration in creating a healthier future for our students as we Build A Better Tomorrow, Today through our innovative administrative service efforts.

To view images of this visit please click the following link:

<https://ccpscommunications.client-gallery.com/gallery/usda-national-school-breakfast-week-kickoff-at-jonesboro-middle-school>

-An official document from the Clayton County Public School System-

About Clayton County Public Schools: Clayton County Public Schools (CCPS) is fully accredited by Cognia. The district offers a focused world-class program based on a challenging curriculum which is taught from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Serving over 50,000 students, Clayton County Public Schools is ranked among the 100 largest school districts in the U.S. and is the sixth-largest school system in Georgia.

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