

Addendum
BUUSD Board Meeting
September 25, 2024

FOOD SERVICE PURCHASES - WARRANTS

Hello members of the board! I understand that the spending on food service equipment has raised some questions, and I want to clarify and assure you that each dollar was thoughtfully and strategically allocated.

Since the start of the school year, we've made a strong push towards transitioning our menus to 100% scratch-made meals—a major improvement from the previous "heat-and-eat" approach. Parents and students are thrilled, and participation in our meal program has increased. We're also proud to say that two of our schools received a perfect 100% on their health inspections, and the others scored around 97%. To maintain and exceed these standards, many of the items we purchase are essential.

Here's a quick overview of what we've spent on and why:

1. **Scales** – Accurate portioning is key to both nutrition and cost control. These scales ensure we're offering balanced, consistent meals.
2. **Cutting Boards** – Essential for food prep, these were mandated by health inspectors to replace old, worn-out boards that could no longer be safely sanitized.
3. **Speed Racks & Hotel Pans** – Both are critical for organizing and efficiently preparing large quantities of food. These help us keep meals moving during busy service times.
4. **Dicing Machines & Sectionizers** – These machines help with the high volume of fruit and vegetable prep for our scratch-made meals, saving time and ensuring uniform portions.
5. **Measuring Cups & Spoons** – Precise measurement is essential in scratch cooking to ensure quality and consistency in our recipes.
6. **Salad Bars** – As part of our focus on healthier, fresher options, salad bars allow students to select fresh, local produce, promoting healthier eating habits.
7. **20-Quart Mixer** – This is necessary for making doughs, batters, and other large-volume items in-house. It's a key piece of equipment in our move to scratch cooking.
8. **Potato Peelers** – With a focus on fresh ingredients, these help us efficiently prep potatoes and other root vegetables for meals, saving labor time.

Upcoming purchases:

- **Combi Ovens for Barre City School** – We already have these ovens at our high school and our Barre Town Middle and Elementary school, and they're crucial for efficient, multi-functional cooking (baking, roasting, steaming), which supports our scratch menu.
- **Racking at the High School** – We need new racking to store food safely and efficiently, as our current racks are outdated and inadequate.
- **Two Reach-In Refrigerators** – The existing units are unreliable and costly to repair, posing a risk to food safety. New ones will ensure our ingredients stay fresh and safe to serve.

All of these purchases are critical for maintaining our high standards of food quality, safety, and efficiency as we move towards our 100% scratch-made menu. All expenditures were reviewed and approved by the procurement consultant at the Agency of Education School Nutrition Department.

We are incredibly proud and excited of the positive feedback from parents, students, and our community. This shift is allowing us to provide higher-quality meals, boost student engagement, and invest in the long-term success of our nutrition programs.

I appreciate your understanding and support as we continue to transform our food services. I am happy to come to a School Board meeting to discuss further.

Additional Information about purchases in the Warrants for the September 25th Board meeting are forthcoming.

Jennifer Hutchinson

Propane Tank Location

