

THE DISH

DOUBLE
PRINT

* YOUR SCHOOL NUTRITION NEWSLETTER *



Staff Spotlight

Thank you to our School Nutrition Director, Maggie Sanna, for working hard this semester on advancing our meal programs to include high-quality, balanced options and local items!



School Nutrition Spotlight

Photo by Chundou Her

Eating Together, Growing Stronger



UPCOMING EVENTS

* GIVINGTUESDAY



December 2, 2025

Celebrate GivingTuesday by eating school lunch! Learn more in the main featured article.

* National Maple Syrup Day

December 17, 2025

Celebrate Nat. Maple Syrup Day! Featuring Wisconsin local maple syrup during lunch this week.



* Around the World in 80 Trays

January 20-22, 2026

A state-wide event with the purpose of increasing global flavors in school meals! (read about it on page 4)

[GivingTuesday](#) is an annual global recognition on the Tuesday during the first week of December. On this day, participants show their generosity through acts of kindness, volunteering, advocacy, donating, and giving back to the community. This is an effort to remind us to be kind to each other and support all people in our neighboring and global

communities. This year, Giving Tuesday will be held on December 2nd, 2025. GivingTuesday is just one day to spark inspiration in those capable of spreading the "magic" of generosity every day. Monona Grove School Nutrition spreads this generosity by providing all students access to well-balanced, healthful, meals that consider child preferences (*continues on page 3*)

Message from the Dietitian

I'm excited to get back into classrooms this winter! Engaging with students & teaching them about food & nutrition are skills they can carry on for life. You can start at home by focusing on offering balanced meals with all 5 food groups or snacks with 2 or more food groups.



Local Feature

A Farm Fresh School Year

This semester, we successfully had over 20 local items on our menus, spending over \$25,000 on local foods! We served Wisconsin-grown fruits, vegetables, dairy, beef, pork, and maple syrup! As the winter season approaches, it will be tougher for us to buy food locally. However, we are committed to continue spending dollars locally when we're able by purchasing items such as root vegetables, frozen foods, meat, dairy products, and dry goods.



**CHECK OUT OUR
SCHOOL MEAL MENUS**

[LINK TO MENU PAGE](#)

Fall Semester in Pictures



All cafeterias held their first themed menu day during Homecoming Week! The menu & cafeteria were fit for the stadium!



Winn. students "crunch" on local apples from Pleasant Springs Orchard in Stoughton during The Great Apple Crunch in October.



MG School Nutrition accepted two awards from the Healthy Meal Incentives Program for their innovation in school meal programs.



MG School Nutrition staff members and surrounding district staff attended a live training at MGHS. Thank you Chef Robert from the CIGN!



Culinary Corner

Recipe of the Month



Homemade Beef Meatballs

In November, we celebrated the state-wide event: Wisconsin Local Food Day! We featured cranberries & other local items. Did you know that cranberries are the state fruit of Wisconsin?

Besides cranberries, School Nutrition also highlighted our new, homemade beef meatballs that were featured at the community dinner menu - pictured above. Try it at home today with our recipe! [LINK](#)

Parent/Guardian Feedback Survey

School Nutrition wants to know what you think of school meals. Take our survey below!

[LINK TO SURVEY](#)



Get Involved!

School Nutrition is looking to reform it's Local School Wellness (LSW) Policy Committee, and create a School Meals Task Force in 2026. Both groups encourage community, family, *(continues on page 4)*



THE DISH

⊛ YOUR SCHOOL NUTRITION NEWSLETTER ⊛



December Staff Birthdays

Maggie S – SN Director
 Deb F – GR Manager
 Lauri G – GR
 Nathaniel B – WQ
 Sue D – CG Manger
 Cindy V.H – GR
 Carolyn D – GDS
 Sarah W – GDS



UPCOMING EVENTS

⊛ Root Vegetable Month

December, 2025

December is National Root Vegetable Month! Can you spot the root veggies we've included on our menus?

⊛ Winter Menu Cycle

January–March, 2026

The new menu cycle is just around the corner, featuring some NEW menu items for all grade levels!



⊛ Winter Themed Menus

January – February, 2026

Keep an eye out for the next themed menu day at your child's school(s) this winter!



School Nutrition Spotlight

Photo by Chundou Her

Eating Together, Growing Stronger (cont'd)



(begins on page 1) & local agriculture, each school day. The unique challenge school nutrition programs face is that they need students (and staff or family members) to purchase lunch at school to generate money in order to invest directly back into the school meal program and its staff members. School Nutrition has a separate district fund balance, known as Fund 50 that is not impacted by the district-wide budget or state & city tax dollars. That being said, the more students in the district that eat school meals, the more money the program has to continue to improve the quality of meals for all students, whether they receive free, reduced-priced, or full priced

meals. Because school meal programs are a hunger relief program, consider school lunch or breakfast as a great option for your MG child to eat. If your family or child cannot commit to eating school meals daily, consider a starting point by joining us for lunch on GivingTuesday this year on December 2nd. We would love to see more students participate in school meals on this day in support of providing high quality food that meets nutrition requirements to all students, especially those who rely on our school meals as one of their main source of nutrition. Find our menus and other resources [here](#).

Local Feature

Fall Community Dinner Recap

Thank you to everyone who attended our Fall Community Dinner at Monona Grove High School in October! We had between 150-175 guests. This free event was filled with locally-grown, homemade menu items that are offered on our lunch menus. High School

student clubs also held activities for kids. A recap of this event was presented to the School Board during the Celebration of Excellence section of the [Nov. 11th meeting](#). The Spring Community Dinner will be held in Cottage Grove in late Spring of 2026.



10 Wisconsin farmers & producers benefited from our event!

Fall Community Dinner

Photos by Chundou Her



Our MGSD School Nutrition staff pose for a picture. We are proud of their hard work planning, cooking, and serving the dinner meal.



A student uses a blender bike provided by REAP Food Group to blend up a fruit smoothie with local foods.



Community Dinner guests line up to get local dessert of warm cinnamon apples and vanilla ice cream served by MGHS students.



MGHS students created fun family activities for the event. Asian Club used Play Dough to teach kids how to make dumplings.



**Monona Grove
School District**

Culinary Corner

New Event!



**Around the
WORLD
in 80 Trays**

In January, we will be participating in the Around the World in 80 Trays state campaign promoted by DPI. This campaign encourages school nutrition programs to provide culturally inclusive food items on their menus. The event promotes education and exposure to new foods & cultures among students. Our MGHS student organizations will help us find culturally relevant recipes that our elementary and middle school students will try in January, and MGHS students will try after finals. Keep an eye out for menus! More info to come!

Get Involved!

(begins on page 2) and student participation in whole-district wellness and school meal advancement efforts. Both of these groups will be low commitment, volunteer participation. Please contact Kori Blumer, MGSD Registered Dietitian, if interested you're in joining, at kori.blumer@mgschools.net



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