



A Monthly Newsletter from Minnetonka Nutrition Services

March 2026

Welcome to Tonka Fresh, the official newsletter of Minnetonka Nutrition Services! March brings great opportunities to celebrate school meals including National Nutrition Month® and National School Breakfast Week, along with building excitement for the upcoming planning of Student Choice Menus. Keep reading to learn more about our busy Spring plans and fun celebrations!

Eating Our Way Through the Alphabet: Celebrating Nutrition Month on Social Media



March is National Nutrition Month®, which brings the opportunity to highlight some of the wonderful foods that comprise Minnetonka school breakfast and lunch. To celebrate, our District Nutrition Services Team is posting daily on the Tonka Fresh Instagram page. Each day, showcases a food item that begins with each letter of the alphabet, from Apples to Zucchini!

The idea behind this series is to learn more about the nutrients, benefits, and fun facts about foods seen during breakfast and lunch at Minnetonka Schools. While the menus are built strategically to fit into the USDA's nutritional guidelines, it is also important that students are offered a variety of new foods to try throughout the year. Many of the foods featured in this series are items that have been sampled with students in the past, introducing them to new items they may have never tasted before, or trying familiar food items with a fun twist. Be sure to check out [@tonkafresh](https://www.instagram.com/tonkafresh) on Instagram and follow along as we Eat Our Way Through the Alphabet!

Local Spotlight: Showcasing A Student Menu Favorite From Hoyo

Hoyo, a company located in Minneapolis provides Minnetonka students with a well-known menu favorite, Sambusas. When surveyed this winter, Minnetonka High School students ranked Sambusas as a top choice among all of the school lunch entrees offered. This menu

consistently represents one of the highest meal participation counts each month at the high school.

Students are offered their choice of beef or lentil Sambusa, both containing a savory blend of Somali spices and wrapped in a savory pastry. These flaky pockets are paired with Hoyo's freshly made sauces. Students can choose from their more mild option, Tamarind and Date sauce, or for those who prefer a bit more spice, their Basbaas sauce with a bit of a kick.

When served at Minnetonka schools, this menu is paired with steamed rice and vegetables, fresh fruit and milk.



Hoyo, which translates to “mother” in Somali, is a company that is run by Somali mothers who hand-fold each sambusa to ensure a high-quality and delicious product. They follow recipes that have been passed down through generations of mothers, and the company has provided a space to empower local mothers and women. We are so grateful for our partnership with Hoyo, and the smiles their food brings to our students!

Coming Soon: Collaborating with Elementary Students to Design New Lunch Menus



This month, we are kicking off our elementary student groups! Student leaders from Groveland, Minnewashta and Scenic Heights will have the opportunity to provide feedback on school meals, and design their very own Student Choice menu that will be featured at all elementary schools in May.

To start this process, student leaders selected by their Principals will have the opportunity to learn more about the menu-building process from our District Nutrition Services Team, including the USDA nutritional guidelines that are followed. After learning more about this process, students will collaborate with their peers and work together with the Nutrition Services Team to design their own lunch menu. These menus will include their choice of entree, vegetables, fruits and even a treat, and will be served at all six elementary schools at the end of the school year.

Highlights from last year's student choice menus that have become mainstays for all grade levels include pickles, orange bell peppers, frozen yogurt and Woodles. Student feedback has allowed a number of positive menu changes and additions to be made over the past couple of years, and this new group of students is sure to continue that trend. We cannot wait to see what the students come up with this Spring!

Pictured is one of the groups of student leaders from last Spring with their Student Choice Menu

National School Breakfast Week: Recognizing the Importance of Beginning the School Day With A Balanced Meal

The first week of March each year marks National School Breakfast Week, designed to honor the importance of school breakfast in fueling students for a successful school day. According to the School Nutrition Association, students that eat breakfast are more likely to be more alert, have better concentration, and reach higher levels of achievement in their classes. Minnetonka recently implemented a School Breakfast Program in 2023. Since then, our breakfast program has expanded to include a four-week cycle menu of entrees designed to provide students with the nutrition they need for a day of learning and growing.



All of our breakfast entrees are whole grain, and each meal is paired with fruit options, a protein food and milk. This means that each morning, students are offered a balanced meal to kick start their school day. With each free breakfast, students are required to select a serving of fruit and at least two other food groups to ensure they are getting a variety of nutrients to nourish their minds and bodies all morning long.

So far in 2026, two new breakfast entrees have been introduced to the breakfast menu. The Smoothie Loops, a fruity twist on a classic ring-shaped breakfast cereal, have added a tasty and nutritious crunch to student mornings. Another new addition to the breakfast menu is Apple Cinnamon Pancake Bites, which have been a huge hit among students who have tried them. These whole-grain, bite-sized pancakes provide a warm and tasty start to any morning.

Did you miss a previous month's edition? Check out all [past newsletters](#) on the Nutrition Services Department website.

Stay Connected! Follow @TonkaFresh on Instagram

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Learn more by visiting the updated Minnetonka Nutrition Services website:

minnetonkaschools.org/nutrition