



A Monthly Newsletter from Minnetonka Nutrition Services

April 2026

Welcome to Tonka Fresh, the official newsletter of Minnetonka Nutrition Services! Spring has sprung, and our team is taking these last few months with students to gather input for next school year's school breakfast and lunch menus. Our student leaders at elementary schools are providing insightful feedback and creative ideas, while older students sample potential new items. Keep reading to learn how student voice continues to impact school meals.

Student Voice: Elementary Student Leaders Begin Designing Student Choice Menus

It's officially Springtime, which means it's time for Elementary student choice menus! This month, we have been meeting with student leaders, selected by their Principals, at Groveland Elementary, Minnewashta Elementary and Scenic Heights Elementary to teach them how a school lunch menu is created, to gather their feedback to make changes to the menus, and to design their very own student choice menu.



Student leaders got to learn how the menu-building process is a puzzle requiring different pieces such as required food groups, nutrient ranges, student preferences, cooking methods, and food delivery schedules to fit together perfectly. Next month, the three student choice menus will be debuted at all Elementary Schools in the district, and they are guaranteed to be delicious!

Some of the additional feedback received from students included a desire for more spicy food options, specific fruit preferences and comments on their favorite and least favorite meals that are currently offered. This input helps our team to know where to focus our energy in bettering the kitchens, so students have the best experience during school breakfast and lunch each day.

Student feedback will not only be used to design student-choice menus for this Spring, but will also assist our team in planning menus for next school year. Knowing which menus are must-haves, and which ones could use some updates guides our decision-making process as plans for next year are laid out.

Local Spotlight: Bruegger's Bagels Brings a New Addition to High School Breakfast



This month, we are shining a light on a brand-new Local Partner, Bruegger's Bagels! Bruegger's has been a longstanding member of the Minnetonka community with their location right off County Road 101 for over 40 years. Given their wonderful presence in our community, it only made sense to collaborate with them for school meals.

Bruegger's Bagels is partnering with us to provide Minnetonka High School students with authentic New York-style bagels, baked fresh right in our own community. Last week, Bruegger's sent 25 baker's dozen freshly baked whole grain bagels for breakfast at the High School. This new collaboration was a hit! We are excited to continue partnering with Bruegger's into next school year.

Spicing Up Familiar Foods with Fun Flavors: Sampling at Minnetonka High School

Students at Minnetonka High School know that when it's a "Try It Tuesday", there is going to be something good to sample during lunchtime. This month, high school students will get not one, but two Try It Tuesdays, as our team is working to freshen up menus for next school year.

One piece of feedback heard often from all grade levels is that school meals could use more spice. With options for spicy chicken and flavorful condiments having already been added to our menus, we are experimenting with spicing up some of our sides! Based on program guidelines, students are required to take at least one serving of fruit or vegetable with each meal daily, which can become uninteresting when similar options are seen on a weekly basis. By adding some new flavors to fruits and vegetables, we are hoping that students will be more excited about the fresh sides that brighten up their trays.



Designed to add a bold kick to fresh fruits and vegetables, Tajín is a mild seasoning blend that combines the tasty flavors of chile peppers, lime and sea salt. This month, High school students will have the opportunity to taste a sample of fresh watermelon seasoned with Tajín. Tajín has

never been featured on our menus before, so if the feedback is positive, there is opportunity for even more menu applications with this delicious spice blend!

In continued efforts to add more spice to school meals, our high school students will also have the chance to sample a new recipe: boom boom cauliflower. Our boom boom sauce is already a hit with entrees such as chicken nuggets and macaroni & cheese, but how will students respond to cauliflower with a kick? We can't wait to find out!

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

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