WHY SCHOOL MEAL CHALLENGE?

THE SCHOOL MEAL CHALLENGE IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS WITH THE SCHOOL NUTRITION TEAM. THE GOALS INCLUDE:

- To increase understanding of school meal nutrition standards.
- To increase support of school meals.
- To understand perceptions of and priorities for school meals.
- To generate new ideas for nutritionally sound, compliant, and delicious school meals.

SCHOOL MEALS ARE VITAL FOR KIDS; HOW CAN WE SUPPORT THEM?
WHAT IS THE SCHOOL MEAL CHALLENGE?

The school meal challenge is an event where food enthusiasts, parents, and community members take on the challenge of following school nutrition guidelines from the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to create a sample dish. The event can take many different shapes with or without culinary-trained professionals and this toolkit will give you ideas on how to contact community supporters and local stakeholders to plan and promote your event!

THE SCHOOL MEAL CHALLENGE CAN BE AS SIMPLE AS:

- SAMPLING LOCAL PRODUCE
- INVITING LOCAL CHEF/DIETICIAN TO PROVIDE COOKING DEMO
- INVITING LOCAL GROWER/PRODUCER TO PROVIDE TALK ON LOCAL FOODS
- RECIPE SHARING FOR HEALTHY FOODS

Healthy Meals = Successful Students
SCHOOL MEAL GUIDELINES

1. All meal concepts must include a whole grain, protein, and at least one vegetable.
2. All meals should aim for no more than $2 in food costs per plate.
3. All meals must contain between 600 and 700 calories.
4. All meals must contain a minimum of 2 oz equivalent meat/meat alternate (2 oz equivalent examples = 2 oz cooked pulled chicken, 1/2 cup black beans, 8 oz yogurt, etc.).
5. All meals must contain a minimum of 2 equivalent whole-grain rich (WGR) bread (2 oz equivalent examples = 56 grams whole-wheat bread, 1 cup cooked brown rice, 1 cup whole grain-rich pasta).
6. All meals must contain a minimum of 1/2 cup vegetable serving. If vegetable crediting is from leafy greens, the portion size must be 1 cup.
7. All meals must contain no more than 35% of calories from fat.
8. All meals must contain no more than 10% of calories from saturated fat.
9. All meals must contain no more than 1000 mg sodium.
10. All meals must contain zero trans fats (no hydrogenated oils).
11. All meals should limit added sugars.
12. Meals may not contain foods prepared in deep fryers.
13. Meals may not contain artificial dyes or flavors.
IDENTIFYING VOLUNTEERS

REACH OUT TO YOUR COMMUNITY TO RECRUIT FOOD ENTHUSIASTS, CHEFS, DIETICIANS AND OTHER VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN CREATING SCHOOL MEALS FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERS, STUDENTS AND PARENTS TO TASTE. EACH DISH WILL OFFER A TASTY OPTION WHILE FOLLOWING THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM GUIDELINES.

HERE ARE A FEW PLACES TO GET STARTED:

• Local restaurants
• Farmers Markets/co-ops
• Local Food Council
• Grocery stores
• Healthcare partners/hospitals
• High School Culinary Programs
• College Culinary Programs
• Teachers at your school/local area
• Parents and students

Healthy Meals = Successful Students
SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS
MAXIMIZE PARTICIPATION!

• Encourage anyone and everyone to like and share any social media posts you make related to the event.

• Use Hashtags! They are words or phrases that identify social media messages on a specific topic, preceded by #. #healthyschoolmeals and #NCSchoolMeals are ones we commonly use.

• Tag people/organizations! Within a post you can tag people or organizations that are “findable.” In order to do that, you must first type the “@” sign and then start typing the organization’s name. Be sure to tag NCPTA and we will like and share your posts!

  o Facebook: @NorthCarolinaPTA
  o Twitter: @PTA4AllKids
  o Instagram: @ncpta

Healthy Meals = Successful Students
SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

- Ever wondered how best to improve school meals? Come out to the School Meal Challenge and watch as volunteers attempt to make the best school meals! Samples will be provided.
  #healthyschoolmeals
  #NCSchoolMeals
  @NorthCarolinaPTA

- Does making a healthy school lunch leave you stumped? Come out to the School Meal Challenge to see creative ideas to keep meals fun and nutritious!
  #healthyschoolmeals
  #NCSchoolMeals
  @NorthCarolinaPTA

DON'T FORGET TO KEEP THE STATE PTA OFFICE IN THE LOOP OF YOUR EVENTS SO WE CAN HELP PROVIDE RESOURCES AND PUBLICITY

Healthy Meals = Successful Students
GREETINGS!

Our school is hosting a School Meal Challenge, where we hope to raise awareness about school nutrition and how to find creative school meal recipes. We are reaching out to see if you’d like to participate in this challenge as a chef! Your role would be to cook a dish according to school nutrition guidelines and provide samples of the dish to attendees. We will provide the materials and the kitchen, and you will provide your time and excellent cooking skills. Please let us know if this event interests you or if you have further questions. Thank you!

SINCERELY,
THE PTA
SAMPLE
SAVE THE DATE

SCHOOL MEAL CHALLENGE

Join us on September 25 at the Greensboro Children's Museum for our School Meal Challenge event! Watch as volunteers work to create innovative and healthy school meals while following National School Lunch Program guidelines. Samples will be provided. We hope to see you there!

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25
5:00PM
GREENSBORO CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
220 N CHURCH ST. GREENSBORO NC

Healthy Meals = Successful Students