

**Michigan Team Nutrition  
Smarter Lunchroom Moves Success Story Compendium**

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## **Smarter, Brighter, and more Inviting Salad Bars**

Marshall Public Schools

At Marshall Public Schools, the salad bars were redesigned. Food service staff made some adjustments to their salad bar in effort to draw more students in, and encourage them to eat more fruits and vegetables. One change that was made at Marshall was making the salad bar items more colorful and appealing. Handmade salad bar items were also added. This change helped attract students to the salad bar area, making them more likely to choose fruits and vegetables with their meal. Another improvement that was made at Marshall was adding bright and engaging signage around the lunch line and throughout the cafeteria. Food service staff had noticed that the new signs encouraging students to choose fruits and vegetables has really made a positive impact in the lunchroom. Marshall Public Schools also partnered with MSU Extension staff to conduct pre and post lunchroom surveys. Students were able to fill about the surveys and voice what they liked and disliked about their school lunches and lunchroom. The MSU Extension staff then shared their recommendations to the school and together they help make the changes they see necessary.

For more information, contact Paul Yettaw, Food Service Director, Marshall Public Schools, Michigan.

Facebook post:

How a few simple changes in the salad bar made a world of difference for students at Marshall Public Schools, Mich. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-reko3bYH8&index=3&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmlqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a>

Tweet:

How a few simple changes in the salad bar made a world of difference for students at Marshall Public Schools, Mich. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-reko3bYH8&index=3&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmlqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a> #TeamNutritionMI

## **Impact of Smarter Lunchroom Coaches**

Grand Rapids Public Schools

At Palmer Elementary School, they have been selling more fruits and vegetables than ever before with the help of MSU Extension staff and health educators. The school began by conducting a Smarter Lunchroom assessment. The food service staff and the MSU Extension staff then came up with a plan of action including what changes needed to be made in the lunchroom. Palmer Elementary also hosted a workshop for the food service staff about smarter lunchroom practices. By identifying a food service staff member at Palmer to be the Smarter Lunchroom Coach, Palmer Elementary noticed many positive changes. Once the MSU Extension staff left, the Smarter Lunchroom Coach worked to direct, keep up with the new changes that were made, and provide follow up to the MSU Extension staff. After the Smarter Lunchroom program was implemented at Palmer Elementary, students were making healthier choices more often, and choosing more fruits and vegetables with their meals.

For more information, contact Amy Klinkoski, Asst. Food Service Director, Grand Rapids Public Schools, Michigan.

Facebook post:

New and enthused Smarter Lunchroom Coaches use simple techniques to encourage students at Palmer Elementary make healthier lunch choices, watch here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCO9WYGV67o&index=4&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmIqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a>

Tweet:

Smarter Lunchroom Coaches use simple techniques to encourage students at Palmer Elementary make healthier lunch choices!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCO9WYGV67o&index=4&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmIqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a> #TeamNutritionMI

## **Partnerships Create Culture of Health**

Timbuktu Academy, Detroit MI

Timbuktu Academy utilizes its partnerships to engage and teach students about healthy living and eating through many fun, relevant, and empowering activities. FoodCorps Service Members, MSU Extension, and Detroit Black Community Food Security Network work at Timbuktu to implement and instruct a comprehensive wellness program that aims to shape a healthy school and community culture. The students at Timbuktu are able to learn about the importance of what they eat, where it comes from and how it impacts their health. These partnerships also help students learn about the importance of healthy eating by introducing taste testing of new healthy foods, along with connecting foods with history and culture by creating an interactive display board for the students. Since the partnerships with Timbuktu Academy, the students now have the knowledge and opportunity to make healthier choices.

For more information, contact Cha-Rhonda Edgeron, Principle at Timbuktu Academy, Detroit, Michigan.

Facebook post:

At Timbuktu Academy, partnerships through FoodCorps, MSU Extension, and Detroit Black Community Food Security Network help the students learn about the importance of what they eat, where it comes from and how it impacts their health

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7FhPitbKok&index=6&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmIqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a>

Tweet:

At Timbuktu Academy, partnerships through FoodCorps, MSU Extension, and Detroit Black Community Food Security Network help the students learn about the importance of what they eat, where it comes from and how it impacts their health

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7FhPitbKok&index=6&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmIqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a> #TeamNutritionMI

## **Partner to Power Smarter Lunchrooms**

Crystal Area Schools, Carson City, MI

With the help of MSU Extension Staff, Food Service Director Michael Wensel decided to conduct a Smarter Lunchrooms assessment at Crystal Area Schools to see where changes needed to be made and what methods would be most effective in Crystal Area Schools. The school then formed a Smarter Lunchrooms team made up of a select group of students, a teacher, Michael himself, and MSU Extension Nutrition Program Instructor Lindsay Padgett. Each month the team would meet to discuss what was successful and what was not. An example of the practices they implemented to encourage kids to make healthier food choices was smoothie taste tests. Crystal Area Schools would hand out smoothie samples and asked students which one they preferred, and would like to possibly see in the future.

For more information, contact Michael Wensel, Food Service Director, Crystal Area Schools, Carson City, Michigan.

Facebook post:

Crystal Area Schools encourages healthy food choices through a Smarter Lunchroom Team that includes students and healthy food samples such as smoothies.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rP73gmYKAqI&index=7&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmlqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a>

Tweet:

Crystal Area Schools encourages healthy food choices through a Smarter Lunchroom Team that includes students, and healthy food samples such as smoothies.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rP73gmYKAqI&index=7&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmlqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a> < #TeamNutritionMI

## **School Gardens Engage Students**

Traverse Heights Elementary School

At Traverse Heights Elementary School, they use their school garden program to teach students about the importance of healthy food and healthy eating. Their partnerships through FoodCorps and MSU Extension make their garden to table program a success. The partnerships staff work with students in all grades to help engage and teach them about growing food. Traverse Heights Elementary School has been conducting their gardening program for the past five years and through it they are not only able to teach children about nutrition, agriculture, and food systems, but also math, science, and language arts. Along with the gardening program, the partnerships also like to do taste tests with healthy items such as smoothies. Policy Specialist at Groundwork Center, Megan McDermott, says that if children plant, care for, and grow their own fruit and vegetables they are much more likely to eat those fruits and vegetables over students who don't grow their own.

For more information, contact, Megan McDermott, Policy Specialist at Groundwork Center, Traverse Heights Elementary School, Traverse City, Michigan.

Facebook post:

By conducting a gardening program, Traverse Heights Elementary School is not only able to teach children about nutrition, agriculture, and food systems through gardening, but also math, science, and language arts.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiZdrbMfDNY&index=5&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmlqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a>

Tweet:

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiZdrbMfDNY&index=5&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmlqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a> #TeamNutritionMI

## **Smarter Lunchroom Moves Work**

Grand Rapids Public Schools

In Grand Rapids Public Schools, Assistant Food Service Director, Amy Klinkoski, says that simple steps such as improving ascetics, prop placement, and placement of fruit are easy ways to increase the consumption of fruits in the lunchroom. Also things like moving food to more reachable places, providing taste testing, even placing the same fruit in two different spots on the serving line have all had positive outcomes for Grand Rapids Public Schools. At first Amy was skeptical of these tactics; and how well they would work. Fruit and vegetable consumption has been increasing ever since these simple improvements were implemented.

For more information, contact Amy Klinkoski, Assistant Food Service Director, Grand Rapids Public Schools, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Facebook post:

Simple steps like placement of fruit, signage, and props have made all the difference in Grand Rapids Public Schools. Even placing the same fruit at two different spots in the lunch line has increased the fruit consumption in schools.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwHennv9vc4&index=1&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmIqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a>

Tweet:

Simple steps to improve fruit and vegetable consumption in Grand Rapids Public Schools made a big difference

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwHennv9vc4&index=1&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmIqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a> < watch Grand Rapids in action #TeamNutritionMI

## **Smarter Lunchroom Student Teams**

Marshall Public Schools

Allowing students to be involved in the food service program at Walters Elementary School helped staff and MSU Extension Educators learn more about what the students like and don't like about school meals. Food Service Director Paul Yettaw, and MSU Extension Program Instructor Dana Wawrzyniec, were able to gauge the changes that should be made not only in the cafeteria at Walters Elementary, but throughout the school by using the Healthy School Assessment tool. Along with assessing the school, the food service staff also made changes in the lunchroom. Simply by placing the chocolate milk behind the white milk, so students had to reach over the white milk to get to the chocolate milk helped decrease the amount of chocolate milk consumed. Walters Elementary also tried to make the food in the lunchroom more inviting to student by coming up with creative titles for meals.

For more information, contact Paul Yettaw, Food Service Director, Walters Elementary, Marshall Public Schools, Michigan.

Facebook post:

Involving students in the food service program at Walters Elementary helped food service staff gauge the students interests. Walters Elementary was then able to find ways to encourage students to make healthy choices, and offer nutritious choices that students will enjoy. Watch how it was done at Walters Elementary.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PgKvbKpb2hw&index=2&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmlqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a>

Tweet:

Involving students in the food service program at Walters Elementary helped food service staff gauge the students interests and improve consumption of healthy foods –

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PgKvbKpb2hw&index=2&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmlqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a> < #TeamNutritionMI

## **Student Input Fuels Participation**

Crystal Area Schools

At Crystal Area Middle and High schools, Food Service Director Michael Wensel focuses on getting to know the students better each day, and has implemented whole fruit smoothie taste testing. Wensel believes engaging the students is critical to help them make healthy choices on their own. Smoothie taste tests are a quick, easy, and fun for the students. Food service staff along with MSU Extension Educators encourage students to try all 3 flavors of smoothies. The staff then plans on using the taste testing to take the most popular smoothie flavor and introduce it in school lunches as another option for a healthy choice at lunch time.

For more information, contact Michael Wensel, Food Service Director, Crystal Area Schools, Carson City, Michigan.

Facebook post:

Implement whole fruit smoothie taste testing to engage students, and offer another healthy and fun choice for students. Watch how Crystal Area Schools did it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yuSDNJo21B4&index=8&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmIqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a>

Tweet:

Implement whole fruit smoothie taste testing to engage students and receive input –

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yuSDNJo21B4&index=8&list=PLaqD6X6pQgmIqenvcvECyfKE0xw72Pz1a> < #TeamNutritionMI