
FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

CHESTER ~ DEEP RIVER ~ ESSEX ~ REGION 4

OCTOBER 3, 2019



Cafeteria

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PROGRAM HISTORY AND OVERVIEW

- The mission when I was hired was to change the quality of food provided in all schools and expand menu offerings to students and staff.
- The main focus area:
 - Expand menu offerings in all schools
 - Provide healthy food that is age appropriate, freshly prepared, nutritious, seasonal and local
 - Raise awareness of the positive impact of linking good nutrition with strong academic performance
 - Insurance to adhere to guidelines of the National School Lunch Program and its regulations and changing requirements



ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT

Main focus is to provide freshly prepared, healthy, nutritious, local food to students in our community to raise awareness of the positive impact of linking good nutrition with strong academic performance within the guidelines of the national school lunch program and its regulations and changing requirements.

- Initiatives to increase meal participation since 2010
 - Expanded and streamlined menu offerings by “inclusive” menu planning with managers and input from students and parents
 - Ongoing student focused meal events such as food tastings, sampling of new a la carte items
 - Implementation of Salad Bars in all schools (no cost for equipment)
 - Added vegetarian & special meal options to menu offering
 - Smarter Lunchroom program – layout and presentation of food, redesigned cafeteria layout
 - Application for Grants and have been awarded:
 - Salad Bars
 - Smoothie Infrastructure
 - Cooking Demonstration Equipment Grant
- Implementation of the National School Breakfast program in all districts
 - Implemented National School Breakfast Program in 14/15 to all elementary schools
 - Added Smoothie program to all schools (cost neutral)
 - Increased overall program participation
 - Linking nutrition to academic performance
- Successful completion of all triennial comprehensive State of Connecticut Child Nutrition Program Administrative Review of all districts



ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT (CONT'D)

- Maximized USDA/ State of Connecticut reimbursement and purchasing programs:
 - **“6 cent” certification in 2014** - The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act provides an additional 6-cents per lunch served reimbursement to school districts that certified to be in compliance with the new meal patterns
 - Healthy Food Certification - Districts that choose the healthy food option of HFC receive an additional 10 cents per lunch, based on the total number of reimbursable lunches (paid, free, and reduced) served in the prior school year.
 - **DOD Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program** - The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program allows schools to use USDA Foods entitlement dollars to buy fresh produce. Entitlement is based on the total number of reimbursable lunches (paid, free, and reduced) served in the prior school year.
 - **USDA commodities allocation** – shifted purchase of proceed foods to basic ingredients and in doing so was able to maximize purchasing volume
- Participation & Recognition for:
 - Chefs Move! to School Launch – invitation from Michelle Obama to visit White House and inaugural event - 2010
 - Person of the Week, Valley Courier, October 2011
 - Various news paper articles in Harford Curreant and New London Day in regards to healthy, local nutrition focusing on school meals
 - State of Connecticut General Assembly official citation in recognition of efforts to raise awareness and funds to promote nutrition and healthy lifestyles in Chester, Deep River and Essex

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT (CONT'D)

- Implemented Summer Meal Program:
 - 2016 & 2017 Deep River Elementary School
- Cafeteria Ad Hoc Committee
 - Comprehensive and detailed review of current structure and operations with recommendations to the joint BOE in regards to business structure (service versus business to the community)
- Community Events:
 - Get Fresh For School picnic at Platwood Park (all revenue was made available to the food service department)
 - Dinners at the Farm Donations to the Food Services Department
 - Provided food services during shelter operations in the aftermath of hurricanes Sandy and Irene and snow storms
 - Various “Community Dinners” to the residents of the Tri-Town are to highlight food service offerings
- Operational efficiencies:
 - Actively managed and reduced cost goods versus declining enrollment without CPI inflation adjustments
 - Reduced overall school labor hours and/or positions to operational needs to compensate for efficiency and declining enrollment
 - Increase meal & a la carte prices
 - Expanded the National School Lunch Program Offer vs. Serve to reduce food waste
 - Implemented and increased batch cooking techniques
 - Staff training classes and ongoing employee meetings

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES

- Operational efficiencies:
 - Actively managed and reduced cost goods versus declining enrollment without CPI inflation adjustments
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STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION

1. Offer Breakfast in all schools:
 - a. Expanded and streamlined menu offerings based on student input and sales on an ongoing basis
 - b. Added Smoothies to all schools through a grant (no cost for equipment)
2. Implementation of Salad Bars in all schools (no cost for equipment)
3. Added vegetarian & special meal options to menu offering
4. Added pre-made Sandwiches & Salads to lunch options (VRHS)
5. Ongoing food sampling of new menu items to students
6. Engaged Students & Cafeteria Staff in menu decision making to include student- approved items
7. Smarter Lunchroom program – layout and presentation of food, redesigned cafeteria layout



STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED TO INCREASE REVENUE & REDUCE COSTS

1. Secured grant funding:
 - a. Salad Bars
 - b. Smoothies
2. Implemented & participate in USDA offered extra meal re-imbursements:
 - a. "6 cent" certification
 - b. Healthy Food Certification
3. Gradually increase meal & a la carte prices
4. Participated in the DOD Fresh & Fruit Vegetable Program
5. Streamline USDA Commodities program and increased usage
6. Reduced overall labor hours or positions in all schools to compensate for lower enrollment
7. Expanded Offer vs. Serve to reduce food waste
8. Implemented and increased batch cooking techniques



DIRECT CERTIFICATION FOR FREE/REDUCED MEALS

Ways to receive Free or Reduced Meals:

1. APPLICATION

Parents submit household application material detailing income and household size and districts evaluate information based on USDA guidelines

2. DIRECT CERTIFICATION

Federal and State process to certify eligible children, in real time, without application automatically matching enrolled students To lists provided by the Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS)

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Temporary Family Assistance (TFA)
- Other (OT) – Foster Child, Homeless, Runaway or Head Start
- Reduced Medicaid (RM) added in April 2018
- Free Medicaid (FM) added in April 2018

NEW DIRECT CERTIFICATION CATEGORIES INCREASED F/R PERCENTAGE FROM 16% TO 24% DISTRICT-WIDE

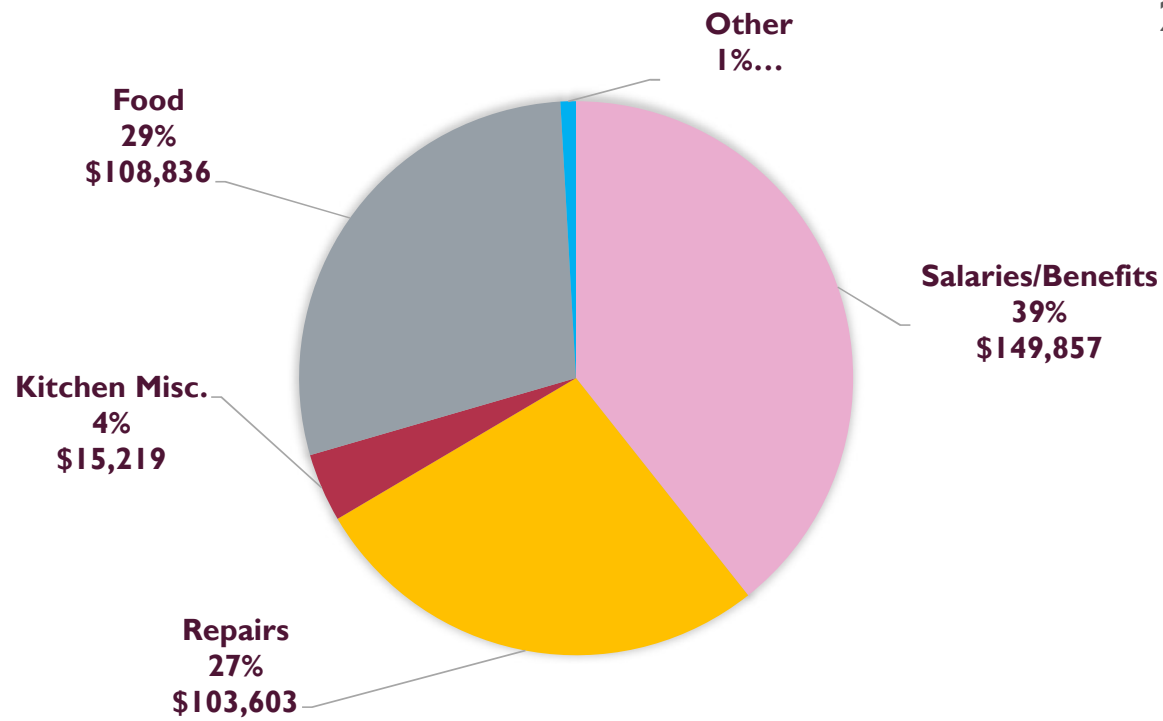
BUDGET DRIVERS

- EXPENDITURES
 - SALARY/BENEFITS
 - FOOD PURCHASES
 - Consumer price index (CPI) adjustments to allow for cost increase
 - Meeting mandated meal requirement standards
 - SUPPLIES
 - EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE/REPAIR
 - STATE & FEDERAL MANDATED TRAINING
 - SERVSAFE & LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT
 - CDES SPECIFIC (TRIENNIAL REVIEW)
 - CIVIL RIGHTS
 - TRIENNIAL CDES NUTRITION REVIEWS
- FUNDING/REVENUE
 - CASH SALES
 - USDA COMMODITIES
 - STATE/FEDERAL GRANTS/REIMBURSEMENT
- SUBSIDIES
 - STATE REGULATIONS
 - UNDER BUDGETING FOR KNOWN FIXED COSTS



REGION 4 EXPENDITURE EXAMPLE

2018-2019



CAFETERIA SUBSIDIES

- What is the Cafeteria Subsidy?
 - Each district budgets an amount each year to cover the salary and benefits of the cafeteria staff.
 - The individual towns are responsible for any balance not covered by the Board per state regulations.
- Why do we need subsidies?
 - The cafeteria is a service to our students by providing breakfast and lunch to our students. We never take food away from a student for any reason.
 - Research shows that students perform better when nutritious meals are consumed.
- Subsidy History

	2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019		
	Budgeted	Actual	Surplus/ Deficit	Budgeted	Actual	Surplus/ Deficit	Budgeted	Actual	Surplus/ Deficit
Chester	20,000.00	29,520.32	(9,520.32)	28,000.00	28,000.00	0.00	28,000.00	51,649.97	(23,649.97)
Deep River	20,000.00	17,735.78	2,264.22	26,000.00	9,000.00	17,000.00	26,000.00	43,903.63	(17,903.63)
Essex	25,000.00	33,339.97	(8,339.97)	37,000.00	37,000.00	0.00	35,000.00	57,097.21	(22,097.21)
Region 4	110,000.00	142,446.10	(32,446.10)	125,000.00	65,172.54	59,827.46	100,000.00	194,165.00	(94,165.00)

PAST CAFETERIA FINANCIAL PROCESSES

- PAST PROCEDURES
 - ONLY FOOD AND RELATED CAFETERIA EXPENSES WERE CHARGED TO THE CAFETERIA FUNDS
 - PAYROLL WAS RUN THROUGH THE BOARD OF EDUCATION GENERAL FUNDS
 - EACH TOWN WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR COVERING ANY COSTS THAT WERE NOT COVERED BY THE BUDGETED SUBSIDY
(Note: towns did not budget this expense and posted an “IOU” from the BOE to the town)
 - FINANCIAL REPORTING WAS DIFFICULT AND NOT TRANSPARENT; EXPENDITURES WERE LOCATED ACROSS VARIOUS BUDGETS

NEW CAFETERIA FINANCIAL PROCESSES

- DURING THE 2019-2020 FISCAL YEAR
 - ALL EXPENSES WILL BE CHARGED DIRECTLY TO THE INDIVIDUAL CAFETERIA FUNDS (Payroll, benefits, food, all related expenses)
 - INCREASED TRANSPARENCY IN FINANCIAL REPORTING
 - ALL CAFETERIA EXPENDITURES LOCATED IN ONE PLACE – CAFETERIA FUND
 - CLEAR TRANSFERS OF BOARD SUBSIDIES TO COVER EXPENDITURES
 - BETTER OVERALL VIEW OF THE COST TO OPERATE EACH INDIVIDUAL CAFETERIA
- DURING THE 2020-2021 BUDGET CYCLE
 - DISTRICTS WILL SUBMIT SEPARATE DETAILED BUDGET REQUESTS FOR ALL CAFETERIA EXPENDITURES