



REPORT ON CONNECTICUT'S Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover Pilot



January 2016

Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education
25 Industrial Park Road
Middletown, CT 06457

Report on Connecticut's SMARTER LUNCHROOMS MAKEOVER PILOT

Connecticut State Department of Education • January 2016

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/smartlunch/SLMPreport.pdf

Project Director
Susan S. Fiore, M.S., R.D.
Nutrition Education Coordinator

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut State Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. The Connecticut State Department of Education does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Inquiries regarding the Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, Connecticut State Department of Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457, 860-807-2071, Levy.Gillespie@ct.gov.

CONTENTS

About This Report	v
Acknowledgments	vi
Section 1 — Introduction	1
Smarter Lunchrooms Overview	1
SLMP Overview	2
SLMP Leadership Teams	2
Table 1. Summary of SLMP Leadership Teams	3
Action Plan	3
Budget	3
Technical Assistance	4
Site Visits	4
Table 2. Summary of Site Visits for SLMP Schools	5
Terms to Know	6
Section 2 — Data Collection	7
Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card	7
Table 3. Questions in each by Category of the Self-Assessment Score Card	8
Meal Participation Rates	8
Food Indicators	9
Data Considerations for Food Indicators	9
Table 4. Fruits and Vegetables Included in Pilot School Counts of Food Indicators	10
Plate Waste	11
Table 5. Plate Waste Data Collections at SLMP Schools	11
Procedures	12
Data Considerations for Plate Waste	12
Table 6. Proportion of Students Selecting Target Meal Components	13
Table 7. Percentage of Plate Waste for each Meal Component	14

CONTENTS

Section 3 — Pilot Profiles	15
Limitations	15
Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School	16
Focusing on Fruit.....	17
Promoting Vegetables and Salad	18
Moving More White Milk	18
Entree of the Day and Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals	19
Creating School Synergies.....	20
Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card.....	22
Figure 1. Score Cards for Bennie Dover Middle School.....	22
Meal Participation Rates	23
Figure 2. Meal Participation Rates for Bennie Dover Middle School.....	23
Food Indicators.....	23
Figure 3. Students’ Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables by Season at Bennie Dover Middle School	24
Figure 4. Students’ Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables at Bennie Dover Middle School	24
Plate Waste.....	25
Figure 5. Average Plate Waste at Bennie Dover Middle School.....	25
Table 8. Baseline Menu at Bennie Dover Middle School	26
Table 9. Intervention Menus at Bennie Dover Middle School	27
CREC International Magnet School.....	28
Focusing on Fruit.....	29
Promoting Vegetables and Salad	30
Moving More White Milk	30
Entree of the Day and Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals	31
Creating School Synergies.....	32
Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card.....	35
Figure 6. Score Cards for CREC International Magnet School.....	35
Meal Participation Rates	36
Figure 7. Meal Participation Rates for CREC International Magnet School	36
Food Indicators.....	36
Figure 8. Students’ Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables by Season at CREC International Magnet School.....	37
Figure 9. Students’ Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables at CREC International Magnet School.....	37
Plate Waste.....	38
Figure 10. Average Plate Waste at CREC International Magnet School.....	38
Table 10. Baseline Menu at CREC International Magnet School.....	39
Table 11. Intervention Menus at CREC International Magnet School	39

Cutler Middle School.....	41
Focusing on Fruit.....	42
Promoting Vegetables and Salad	42
Moving More White Milk.....	44
Entree of the Day and Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals	44
Creating School Synergies.....	45
Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card.....	47
Figure 11. Score Cards for Cutler Middle School	47
Meal Participation Rates	48
Figure 12. Meal Participation Rates for Cutler Middle School.....	48
Food Indicators.....	48
Figure 13. Students’ Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables by Season at Cutler Middle School.....	49
Figure 14. Students’ Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables at Cutler Middle School.....	49
Plate Waste.....	50
Figure 15. Average Plate Waste at Cutler Middle School	50
Table 12. Baseline Menu at Cutler Middle School.....	51
Table 13. Intervention Menus at Cutler Middle School.....	51
 East Hampton Middle School	 53
Focusing on Fruit.....	54
Promoting Vegetables and Salad	54
Moving More White Milk.....	55
Entree of the Day and Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals	55
Creating School Synergies.....	57
Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card.....	58
Figure 16. Score Cards for East Hampton Middle School	58
Meal Participation Rates	59
Figure 17. Meal Participation Rates for East Hampton Middle School	59
Food Indicators.....	59
Figure 18. Students’ Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables by Season at East Hampton Middle School.....	60
Figure 19. Students’ Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables at East Hampton Middle School	60
Plate Waste.....	61
Figure 20. Average Plate Waste at East Hampton Middle School	61
Table 14. Baseline Menu at East Hampton Middle School.....	62
Table 15. Intervention Menus at East Hampton Middle School.....	62

CONTENTS

Illing Middle School.....	64
Focusing on Fruit	65
Promoting Vegetables and Salad	66
Moving More White Milk.....	66
Entree of the Day and Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals	66
Creating School Synergies.....	67
Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card.....	69
Figure 21. Score Cards for Illing Middle School	69
Meal Participation Rates	70
Figure 22. Meal Participation Rates for Illing Middle School	70
Food Indicators.....	70
Figure 23. Students’ Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables by Season at Illing Middle School.....	71
Figure 24. Students’ Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables at Illing Middle School.....	71
Plate Waste.....	72
Figure 25. Average Plate Waste at Illing Middle School	72
Table 16. Baseline Menu at Illing Middle School.....	73
Table 17. Intervention Menus at Illing Middle School.....	73
New London High School.....	75
Focusing on Fruit.....	76
Promoting Vegetables and Salad	76
Moving More White Milk.....	77
Entree of the Day and Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals	77
Creating School Synergies.....	78
Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card.....	79
Figure 26. Score Cards for New London High School.....	79
Meal Participation Rates	80
Figure 27. Meal Participation Rates for New London High School	80
Food Indicators.....	80
Figure 28. Students’ Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables by Season at New London High School.....	81
Figure 29. Students’ Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables at New London High School.....	81
Plate Waste.....	82
Figure 30. Average Plate Waste at New London High School.....	82
Table 18. Baseline Menu at New London High School.....	83
Table 19. Intervention Menus at New London High School	83
Appendix.....	85
Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card (2013 Version)	85
Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card (2014 Version)	87

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The **Report on Connecticut's Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover Pilot** summarizes the results for the six schools that participated in the Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover Pilot (SLMP) through Connecticut's 2013 Team Nutrition grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). This report is available on the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) Smarter Lunchrooms Web page at www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=336028. For additional information, contact:

Susan S. Fiore, M.S., R.D., Nutrition Education Coordinator
2013 Team Nutrition Grant Project Director
Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education
25 Industrial Park Road
Middletown, CT 06457
860-807-2075
susan.fiore@ct.gov



For questions regarding the operation of Connecticut's school nutrition program, contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) conducted the **Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover Pilot** as part of a 2013 Team Nutrition grant from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service. This project has been funded at least in part with federal funds from the USDA. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the USDA, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

The CSDE extends its sincere appreciation to the individuals and organizations below for their assistance with the SLMP project.

- **Food service directors** and their **school staff** from the six SLMP schools:
 - Nick Aldi, Food Service Director, Manchester Public Schools
 - Ernie J. Koschmieder, Food Service Director, Groton Public Schools
 - Liz Paternostro, Food Services Manager, East Hampton Public Schools
 - Jeff Sidewater, M.B.A., Food Services Program Coordinator, Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)
 - Samantha Wilson, Director of Food Services, New London Public Schools

- **SLMP cadre team members** who worked with the SLMP schools:
 - Christine Wallace, S.N.S., Food Services Program Assistant, CREC Child Nutrition Consultant
 - Maraiah Popeleski, R.D.N., CLC, Culinary Nutritionist Executive Director of CLiCK, Inc.

- **Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity**, University of Connecticut, for conducting the plate waste collections and SLMP data analysis:
 - Marlene Schwartz, Ph.D., Director
 - Margaret Read, M.A., Research Associate

- **Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs (B.E.N. Center)** for providing training and technical support on Smarter Lunchrooms implementation:
 - Adam Brumberg, Deputy Director, Cornell Food & Brand Lab
 - Kathryn Hoy, M.F.N., R.D., CDN, Manager, Cornell B.E.N. Center

1 — Introduction

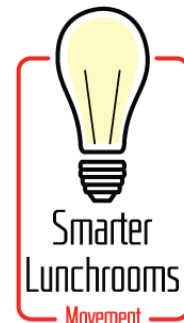
From January 2014 through June 2015, the CSDE conducted the Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover Pilot (SLMP) in six Connecticut schools, as part of a 2013 Team Nutrition grant from the USDA. The purpose of the SLMP was to identify effective strategies for changing the cafeteria environment to help students make healthy food choices.

The CSDE implemented the SLMP in collaboration with the University of Connecticut’s Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity, and Cornell’s B.E.N. Center. The Rudd Center conducted plate waste collections and SLMP data analysis. The B.E.N. Center provided training and technical support on Smarter Lunchrooms implementation.

This report provides an overview of the SLMP data components, and the results for each pilot school. Due to the unique nature of each pilot school and differences in local data collection, the SLMP results are presented as individual pilot profiles. Each school started in a different place, had different cafeteria operations, and chose different Smarter Lunchrooms implementation strategies. While all pilot schools made positive changes to improve the cafeteria and promote healthy choices for students, the Smarter Lunchrooms strategies and extent of implementation varied across schools. Due to these differences, data across schools are not always comparable. For more information on considerations for the SLMP results, see “[Limitations](#)” in section 3.

SMARTER LUNCHROOMS OVERVIEW

The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement was established as part of the B.E.N. Center in 2010, through a grant from the USDA. Smarter Lunchrooms uses **behavioral economics**, the science of how environmental cues influence decision-making, to promote healthy choices in school lunchrooms. Strategies focus on making small environmental changes – such as ambience, prompting and the packaging, order and placement of food items on the cafeteria line – to influence students’ daily food choices.



Smarter Lunchrooms strategies are evidence-based, simple, no cost or low-cost changes to the school lunchroom environment that:

- promote healthy eating behaviors and nudge children toward nutritious foods; and
- improve school meal participation and profits while decreasing waste.

Smarter Lunchrooms helps schools evaluate the lunchroom, determine what they are doing well, and identify opportunities for improvement. For information on implementing Smarter Lunchrooms, see the CSDE’s [Smarter Lunchrooms](#) Web page and [Smarter Lunchrooms Action Guide](#).

SLMP OVERVIEW

In fall 2014, the CSDE selected six pilot schools through a competitive application process. Each school received a \$5,000 stipend to support SLMP implementation, and complete all required activities. The pilots developed a SLMP leadership team, action plan and budget. A team of two SLMP cadre members helped each pilot school assess cafeteria operations, and develop and implement local Smarter Lunchrooms strategies. The CSDE and Rudd Center collected data at baseline (January through June 2014) and during the intervention year (August 2014 through June 2015). Data included scores from the B.E.N. Center's [Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#), meal participation rates, students' selection of specific meal components (food indicators), and plate waste.

SLMP Schools

- **Bennie Dover Middle School**, New London (Grades 6-8)
- **CREC International Magnet School**, South Windsor (Grades K-5)
- **Cutler Middle School**, Groton (Grades 6-8)
- **East Hampton Middle School**, East Hampton (Grades 6-8)
- **Illing Middle School**, Manchester (Grades 7-8)
- **New London High School**, New London (Grades 9-12)

SLMP Leadership Team

Each school's SLMP leadership team was required to include the food service director, cafeteria manager and school principal. Schools were encouraged to include other individuals as appropriate to local needs. All teams included at least one additional person beyond the required members. Table 1 summarizes the membership of each pilot school's SLMP leadership team.



Table 1. Summary of SLMP Leadership Teams

Pilot School	Number of Team Members	Required Team Members			Other Team Members
		Food Service Director	Cafeteria Manager	Principal	
Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School, New London	4	X	X	X	FoodCorps Service Member
CREC International Magnet, South Windsor	5	X	X	X	Building Food Service Coordinator School Nurse/Parent
Cutler Middle School, Groton	5	X	X	X	Cafeteria Assistant Manager Administrative Assistant
East Hampton Middle School, East Hampton	5	X	X	X	Business Manager Teacher
Illing Middle School, Manchester	5	X	X	X	Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Management Field Operations Manager
New London High School, New London	4	X	X	X	FoodCorps Service Member

Action Plan

Each school's SLMP leadership team identified the Smarter Lunchrooms strategies for their cafeteria, and developed an action plan for implementation. The action plan included specific steps for each strategy, identified needed resources, indicated who was responsible, and identified a target completion date for each task.

Budget

Each pilot school received a stipend of \$5,000 to support SLMP implementation, and complete all required activities. The budget aligned with the school's action plan strategies, and covered local costs such as:

- staff time and travel for Smarter Lunchrooms training, action planning and implementation;
- printing, laminating and purchasing posters and signage for serving and dining areas;
- purchasing cafeteria merchandising materials, e.g., plastic display frames, and colorful baskets and trays to highlight foods on the serving lines; and
- purchasing and printing nutrition education materials for students, e.g., handouts, stickers, bookmarks and magnets.

Technical Assistance

The SLMP included a cadre team to provide the schools with ongoing technical assistance for SLMP planning, implementation and assessment. The SLMP cadre team included a food service director and registered dietitian chef, with combined experience in school nutrition programs, Smarter Lunchrooms, food service management, and culinary skills.

The SLMP cadre team conducted five cafeteria site visits throughout the pilot period (see table 2). These visits were used to:

- conduct cafeteria assessments;
- provide staff training;
- assist the SLMP leadership team with developing their action plan and budget;
- check the progress of the Smarter Lunchrooms action plan;
- provide suggestions for implementation; and
- provide ongoing technical assistance.

During the baseline year, the SLMP cadre team conducted three site visits. The first site visit (spring 2014) focused on conducting a baseline assessment of cafeteria operations, identifying areas in need of change, and working with each pilot school's leadership team to develop their action plan and budget. During the second site visit (summer 2014), the SLMP cadre team provided a three-hour Smarter Lunchrooms workshop for all school food service staff. The third site visit (summer 2014) assisted schools with setting up their cafeteria's Smarter Lunchrooms strategies before the start of school.

During the intervention year, the SLMP cadre team conducted two assessment check-up site visits (fall 2014 and spring 2015) to review each school's progress and provide ongoing technical assistance. These site visits reviewed how well the pilot schools were implementing and sustaining their action plan strategies, and determined if any adjustments were needed.

During each site visit, the SLMP cadre team completed the B.E.N. Center's Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card and Diagnose, Prescribe, Implement, Evaluate (DPIE) General Observation Checklist, and took photos of cafeteria operations. The SLMP cadre team made recommendations based on their observations and the assessment results.

The SLMP cadre team members were available throughout the pilot, to provide ongoing phone and e-mail technical support for each SLMP school.



Table 2. Summary of Site Visits for SLMP Schools

Pilot School	BASELINE			INTERVENTION	
	Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3	Visit 4	Visit 5
	Baseline Assessment	Smarter Lunchrooms Workshop for Food Service Staff	Smarter Lunchrooms Implementation	First Check-up	Second Check-up
Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School, New London	4-22-14	8-14-14	8-19-14	10- 29-14	6-2-15
CREC International Magnet, South Windsor	4-24-14	7-21-14	8-21-14	10- 5-14	6-5-15
Cutler Middle School, Groton	4-3-14	6-12-14	8-22-14	10- 20-14	6-10-15
East Hampton Middle School, East Hampton	4-29-14	6-4-14	8-25-14	11- 6-14	6-9-15
Illing Middle School, Manchester	4-11-14	6-18-14	8-26-14	11- 19-14	6-16-15
New London High School, New London	4-25-14	8-14-14	8-18-14	10- 14-14	6-3-15



TERMS TO KNOW

The definitions below refer to the information in this report.

a la carte sales: Foods and beverages that are sold separately from reimbursable meals in the USDA school nutrition programs. A la carte foods are competitive foods.

behavioral economics: The science of how environmental cues – such as the packaging, order and placement of food items on the cafeteria line – influence decision-making, and help promote healthy choices in school lunchrooms.

competitive foods: Any foods and beverages sold to students anytime on school premises other than meals served through the USDA school meal programs. Competitive food sales include, but are not limited to, cafeteria a la carte sales, vending machines, school stores and fundraisers. For more information, see the CSDE's [Competitive Foods](#) Web page.

dining area: The area of the school cafeteria where students eat.

food components: The five food groups that comprise reimbursable meals in the NSLP (milk, fruits, vegetables, grains and meat/meat alternates), and the three food groups that comprise reimbursable breakfasts in the SBP (grains with optional meat/meat alternate substitutions, fruits with optional vegetable substitutions, and milk). For more information, see the CSDE's [Crediting Foods](#) Web page and *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals*.

grab and go: A type of meal service that offers preassembled reimbursable meals that can be easily and quickly selected by students. Grab-and-go meals may include traditional entrees (meat/meat alternates and grains) with fruits, vegetables and milk, or any meal components that together meet the meal pattern requirements of a reimbursable meal.

meal pattern: The required food components and minimum serving sizes that schools and institutions participating in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs must provide to receive federal reimbursement for meals and snacks served to children. For more information, see the CSDE's [Meal Patterns](#) Web page and *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals*.

National School Lunch Program (NSLP): The USDA's federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools, and residential child care institutions. The NSLP provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. For more information, see the CSDE's [National School Lunch Program](#) Web page.

point of service (POS) meal count: The point in the food service operation where staff can accurately determine that a reimbursable free, reduced-price or paid lunch has been served to an eligible child.

2 — Data Collection

The SLMP data for each pilot school include scores from the B.E.N. Center’s [Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#), meal participation rates, students’ selection of specific meal components (food indicators), and plate waste. This section describes each data component and summarizes the plate waste results.

LUNCHROOM SELF-ASSESSMENT SCORE CARD

The B.E.N. Center’s [Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#) provides information on each school’s implementation of Smarter Lunchrooms strategies in the following six areas:

- Focusing on Fruit
- Promoting Vegetables and Salad
- Moving More White Milk
- Entree of the Day
- Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals
- Creating School Synergies
 - Signage, Priming and Communication
 - Lunchroom Atmosphere
 - Student Involvement
 - Recognition and Support of School Food
 - A La Carte



The SLMP cadre team completed the score card three times for each pilot school, including the baseline assessment site visit (spring 2014) and the two assessment check-up site visits during the intervention year (fall 2014 and spring 2015). The scores include the average for each of the six categories, and the overall average of the six categories combined. [Section 3](#) contains the Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card results for each pilot school.

Data Considerations for Score Card Results

The B.E.N. Center revised the 2013 Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card several months after the SLMP cadre team completed the spring 2014 evaluations using the previous version. These changes resulted in some scoring differences from baseline (spring 2014) to intervention (school year 2014-15).

The total number of items remained the same, but the B.E.N. Center revised, added or deleted some items, and moved some items from one category to another. They also divided the “Creating School Synergies” category into six subcategories. Table 3 summarizes the number of questions in each category for the 2013 and 2014 Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Cards. Both versions are available in the [appendix](#).

Table 3. Questions in each Category of the Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card

Category	Number of Items	
	2013 Version	2014 Version
Focusing on Fruit	15	12
Promoting Vegetables and Salad	12	15
Moving More White Milk	11	9
Entree of the Day	9	8
Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals	13	16
Creating School Synergies		
• Signage, Priming and Communication	Not Applicable*	11
• Lunchroom Atmosphere	Not Applicable*	18
• Student Involvement	Not Applicable*	5
• Recognition and Support of School Food	Not Applicable*	3
• A La Carte	Not Applicable*	3
Creating School Synergies Subtotal	40	40
Total Points	100	100

* The B.E.N. Center divided the “Creating School Synergies” category of the 2014 score card into six subcategories.

MEAL PARTICIPATION RATES

The CSDE obtained meal count data for each pilot school from Connecticut’s online claiming system for Child Nutrition Programs. Data included the two school years prior to the SLMP (2012-13 and 2013-14) and the SLMP year (2014-15).

The Rudd Center conducted significance testing for changes in meal participation over time. Each school’s National School Lunch Program (NSLP) participation rates were calculated by dividing the total number of reimbursable school lunches served each month by the number of operating days. The Rudd Center compared the average daily meal participation per month for school years 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15. [Section 3](#) contains each pilot school’s results for meal participation rates.



FOOD INDICATORS

The B.E.N. Center identified three meal components to use as indicators of meal quality. Students' consumption of fruits, vegetables, and milk have been areas of concern, both in Connecticut and nationally. Therefore, the food indicators analysis in this report focuses on these three components.

Beginning in April 2014, the pilot schools tracked the number of students each day who selected the following food items as part of their reimbursable meal:

- fruit (fresh, frozen, canned and dried);
- vegetable (side dishes);
- plain milk; and
- flavored milk.

Each pilot school added cash register buttons to track these selections, except for Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School and New London High School. These schools did not have cash registers because New London Public Schools implemented Provision 2 in school year 2013-14 and CEP in school year 2014-15. Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School and New London High School developed an alternative tracking form for staff to check off each student's selection of fruits, vegetables and milk as they passed the point-of-service (POS). The POS is the point in the food service operation where staff can accurately determine that a reimbursable free, reduced-price or paid lunch has been served to an eligible child.



The Rudd Center conducted significance testing on the changes in students' selection of the different meal components by comparing the average at baseline (April through June 2014) with the average for the intervention year (school year 2014-15). [Section 3](#) contains each pilot school's results for food indicators.

Data Considerations for Food Indicators

During data analysis, the Rudd Center discovered that the pilot schools were not consistent in their interpretation of "fruit" and "vegetable" when tracking students' selection of meal components. Four schools included juice in their fruit counts, and three schools included entree vegetables (such as salad bars and chef's salads) in their vegetable counts (see [table 4](#)). Due to these differences, data across schools are not always comparable.

Table 4. Fruits and Vegetables Included in Pilot School Counts of Food Indicators

Pilot School	FRUIT COUNTS		VEGETABLE COUNTS	
	Fruit *	Juice	Side Dish Vegetables	Entree Vegetables **
Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School, New London	X	X	X	X
CREC International Magnet, South Windsor	X	X	X	X
Cutler Middle School, Groton	X		X	
East Hampton Middle School, East Hampton	X		X	
Illing Middle School, Manchester	X	X	X	
New London High School, New London	X	X	X	X

* Fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruit.
 ** Entree vegetables include meat/meat alternates and grains, and comprise the main reimbursable meal, e.g., salad bars and chef's salads.

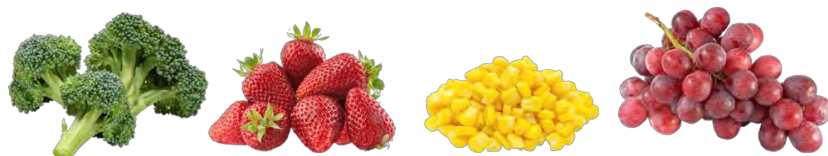


PLATE WASTE

The Rudd Center collected one day of plate waste data from each of the six schools at baseline (spring 2014). Six days of plate waste data collection occurred at each of the six schools during the intervention year, including three days in fall 2014 and three days in spring 2015. New London High School had only two spring 2015 data collection days due to a scheduling error.

Plate waste was collected for 1,063 trays at baseline, and 6,716 trays during school year 2014-15. Table 5 summarizes the plate waste data collection dates at each pilot school.

Table 5. Plate Waste Data Collections at SLMP Schools							
Pilot School	BASELINE	INTERVENTION					
	Spring 2014	Fall 2014			Spring 2015		
Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School, New London	6-5-14	10-10-14	11-7-14	12-5-14	3-11-15	3-31-15	4-22-15
CREC International Magnet, South Windsor	6-9-14	10-1-14	11-5-14	12-3-14	2-24-15	3-24-15	4-7-15
Cutler Middle School, Groton	6-6-14	10-22-14	10-29-14	11-19-14	2-24-15	3-18-15	4-8-15
East Hampton Middle School, East Hampton	6-4-14	10-8-14	11-12-14	12-10-14	3-12-15	4-23-15	5-14-15
Illing Middle School, Manchester	6-10-14	10-3-14	10-24-14	11-21-14	3-17-15	5-29-15	6-16-15
New London High School, New London	6-3-14	11-14-14	12-12-14	12-17-14	3-10-15	4-21-15	Did not occur due to scheduling error

Procedures

Upon arrival at the school, trained research staff from the Rudd Center took inventory of all food and beverage options offered in the cafeteria. After the students went through the lunch line and consumed their meals, approximately 100 students per school were asked to return their trays to research staff to measure.

The Rudd Center used the quarter-waste method to assess plate waste. This is a validated measurement strategy that has been used in other Smarter Lunchroom studies.* Research staff visually estimates whether none, one-quarter, one-half, three-quarters or all of a food or beverage item remains on the tray for disposal. A second researcher confirms each assessment.

On each student tray, the researchers evaluated waste for the entree (which typically included the meat/meat alternate and grain components), and the milk, fruit and vegetable components. If the student selected a second serving of milk, fruit, or vegetable, the researchers assessed this as a separate serving. Food and beverage items brought from home were not included.

Data Considerations for Plate Waste

Each school was asked to offer the same menu for each plate waste data collection. While schools made every effort to serve the same foods on all days that plate waste was measured, this was not always possible due to factors such as:

- inventory issues, e.g., needing to add certain fruits and vegetables to the menu before spoiling;
- delivery of orders, e.g., main entree items were delivered later than planned; and
- seasonal availability, e.g., availability of fresh fruits and vegetables.

The pilot profiles in [section 3](#) include the menus served at each school during each of the plate waste data collections.



* Hanks AS, Wansink B, Just DR. Reliability and accuracy of real-time visualization techniques for measuring school cafeteria tray waste: validating the quarter-waste method. *J Acad Nutr Diet*. 2014 Mar;114(3):470-4.

Students’ consumption of fruits, vegetables, and milk have been areas of concern, both in Connecticut and nationally. Therefore, the plate waste analysis in this report focuses on these three components. Table 6 summarizes the proportion of students at each school who selected the milk, fruit and vegetable components at baseline (spring 2014), and during the intervention year (fall 2014 and spring 2015). The cases where students selected a second serving of a particular meal component are indicated in the second column, labeled “second serving.”

Table 6. Proportion of Students Selecting Target Meal Components							
		BASELINE		INTERVENTION			
		Spring 2014		Fall 2014		Spring 2015	
		Took item	Second serving	Took item	Second serving	Took item	Second serving
Bennie Dover Middle School, New London	Milk	66%	2%	59%	1%	61%	1%
	Fruit	77%	30%	72%	4%	52%	0%
	Vegetable	46%	1%	61%	5%	64%	8%
CREC International Magnet, South Windsor	Milk	69%	0%	55%	9%	63%	1%
	Fruit	37%	0%	43%	2%	47%	1%
	Vegetable	96%	3%	92%	9%	87%	2%
Cutler Middle School, Groton	Milk	74%	2%	68%	1%	76%	7%
	Fruit	89%	8%	59%	7%	50%	9%
	Vegetable	93%	37%	96%	36%	96%	0%
East Hampton Middle School, East Hampton	Milk	83%	2%	73%	0%	65%	4%
	Fruit	34%	1%	53%	7%	52%	14%
	Vegetable	98%	91%	86%	90%	89%	82%
Illing Middle School, Manchester	Milk	61%	0%	64%	0%	63%	3%
	Fruit	71%	8%	70%	3%	64%	6%
	Vegetable	86%	12%	39%	3%	85%	10%
New London High School, New London	Milk	60%	5%	39%	1%	59%	0%
	Fruit	67%	10%	56%	1%	70%	6%
	Vegetable	12%	2%	23%	2%	44%	0%

The NSLP regulations require students to select a fruit or vegetable with each meal. These data show that in most cases, the sum of the percentage of students selecting a fruit and the

2 | DATA COLLECTION

percentage of students selecting a vegetable is well over 100 percent. This means that many students are choosing to take both a fruit and a vegetable.

Table 7 shows the mean and standard deviation (SD) for the proportion of plate waste for each meal component at each school during each time period.

Table 7. Percentage of Plate Waste for each Meal Component							
		BASELINE		INTERVENTION			
		Spring 2014		Fall 2014		Spring 2015	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School, New London	Milk	.35	.36	.34	.38	.35	.40
	Fruit *	.25	.39	.35	.43	.39	.44
	Vegetable *	.64	.36	.26	.37	.18	.31
CREC International Magnet, South Windsor	Milk	.43	.38	.49	.40	.42	.38
	Fruit	.42	.42	.45	.44	.34	.43
	Vegetable *	.20	.37	.21	.37	.34	.44
Cutler Middle School, Groton	Milk	.31	.39	.24	.32	.28	.36
	Fruit *	.44	.44	.36	.40	.22	.34
	Vegetable	.62	.47	.54	.44	.57	.43
East Hampton Middle School, East Hampton	Milk	.18	.36	.20	.34	.20	.31
	Fruit *	.32	.43	.43	.44	.30	.40
	Vegetable	.42	.43	.43	.43	.40	.42
Illing Middle School, Manchester	Milk *	.22	.31	.24	.34	.34	.39
	Fruit	.28	.38	.35	.42	.30	.39
	Vegetable	.11	.25	.23	.36	.18	.30
New London High School, New London	Milk *	.37	.42	.26	.38	.25	.37
	Fruit	.31	.41	.44	.44	.33	.41
	Vegetable *	.33	.37	.44	.41	.15	.32
* Significant difference between the baseline and the intervention levels of plate waste at $p < .05$ level.							

For additional information on the plate waste results at each school, see the pilot profiles in [section 3](#).

3 — Pilot Profiles

This section contains a pilot profile for each individual SLMP school. These profiles summarize each school’s data on the scores from the B.E.N. Center’s [Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#), meal participation rates, students’ selection of specific meal components (food indicators), and plate waste.

Due to the unique nature of each SLMP school and differences in local data collection, data across schools are not always comparable. Each school started in a different place, had different cafeteria operations, and chose different Smarter Lunchrooms implementation strategies. While all pilot schools made positive changes to improve the cafeteria and promote healthy choices for students, the Smarter Lunchrooms strategies and extent of implementation varied across schools.

LIMITATIONS

When reviewing the data presented in this report, the following limitations should be considered.

1. The socioeconomic status of the student body in each school varies, which changes the percentage of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals. It has been well established that the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals has a significant influence over a school’s total meal participation. Therefore, this should be taken into account when interpreting the changes in meal participation over time. Each pilot profile provides information on the school’s total student enrollment and percentage of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.
2. The schools were not consistent in their interpretation of “fruit” and “vegetable” when tracking meal components selected by students. Some schools included juice in their fruit counts, while others did not. Similarly, some schools included entree salads in their vegetable counts, while others did not. Due to these differences, the scores across schools are not always comparable. For more information, see “[Food Indicators](#)” in section 2.
3. While schools made every effort to serve the same foods on all days that plate waste was measured, this was not always possible due to inventory, delivery and seasonal factors. Therefore, menu variability should be taken into consideration when interpreting the plate waste data. The pilot profiles include the menus served during each school’s plate waste collections. For more information, see “[Plate Waste](#)” in section 2.
4. The B.E.N. Center revised the Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card several months after the SLMP cadre team completed the baseline evaluations using the previous version. These changes resulted in some scoring differences from baseline (spring 2014) to intervention (school year 2014-15). For more information, see “[Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#)” in section 2.

Bennie Dover Middle School

Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School New London, Connecticut

Grades: 6-8 Enrollment: 635 Average Daily Lunches: 596 Programs: NSLP, SBP, FFVP

School Lunches	Free	Reduced	Paid
Percentage of Eligible Students	91%	0%	9%
Meal Participation Rates	93%	0%	93%

October 2015

Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School offers universal feeding. The school implemented Provision 2 during school years 2012-13 and 2013-14, and became a Community Eligibility Program (CEP) school effective with school year 2014-15.

The school is a central prep site for several satellite schools, with a large staff and extensive production equipment pieces. Food production includes a significant amount of scratch cooking. Two long serving lines provide plenty of marketing and display space for menu items. A self-serve salad bar in the dining area provides a third reimbursable meal line.

Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School's SLMP action plan included:

- using new and extensive signage and posters;
- using decorative printed labels for food containers;
- adding additional serving line locations for fruits and vegetables;
- relocating the a la carte kiosk; and
- purchasing decorative containers for the serving line.



Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School Cafeteria

Bennie Dover Middle School

The following information summarizes the cafeteria operations during the SLMP for the six Smarter Lunchrooms areas of the B.E.N. Center’s Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card. The cafeteria’s strategies for “Entree of the Day” and “Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals” are presented together. For more information on the score card categories, see “[Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#)” in section 2, and the score cards in the [appendix](#).

Focusing on Fruit

The cafeteria added more fruit and vegetable locations on the serving lines. Triple-tiered wrought iron stands with ceramic bowls provide fruit and vegetable displays at each POS. New signage at the POS encourages students to take fruit free with their reimbursable meal.



Tiered POS fruit and vegetable display at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School



Fruit and vegetable selections on the serving line at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School

Bennie Dover Middle School

Promoting Vegetables and Salad

A salad bar serves as a separate reimbursable meal line outside the main serving area. The daily variety of vegetables includes at least four of the five vegetable subgroups. Prior to the SLMP, the cafeteria already offered appealing fresh vegetable choices, and a hot vegetable on some of the pre-plated trays. During the SLMP, more vegetable locations were added on the serving lines. The menu includes an additional daily vegetable choice.



Salad bar at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School

Moving More White Milk

The school's milk coolers are reach-down lowerators that hold four cases of milk. To increase visibility of white milk, the cafeteria staff placed white milk (two cases deep) before chocolate milk (one case deep).



Milk cooler at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School

Bennie Dover Middle School

Entree of the Day and Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals

“1 Terrific Tray” dry-erase menu boards in the hallway outside the cafeteria advertise daily entree offerings. The cafeteria offers cold entree choices (sandwiches and wraps) with hot entree choices on both inside serving lines.



Menu board and signage by cafeteria entrance at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School



Signs identifying sandwiches at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School

Bennie Dover Middle School

Creating School Synergies

- Signage, Priming and Communication:** Staff indicates the daily menu choices on a “1 Terrific Tray” dry-erase menu board in the hallway, located before each serving line. Small signs on the serving line identify entree sandwiches. A large vinyl banner that incorporates the school mascot decorates the dining area. Colorful nutrition education posters run along the walls of the serving and dining areas. A glassed-in bulletin board just outside the cafeteria entrance provides additional nutrition education messages.
- Lunchroom Atmosphere:** Custodians are prompt in removing trash. After each lunch wave, tables are wiped clean and chairs are straightened.
- Student Involvement:** On a monthly basis, cafeteria staff sits with selected students during lunch to get their input on school meals. FoodCorps staff members survey students about menu items and solicit students’ input during food tastings.
- Recognition and Support of School Food:** Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School received a HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSC) silver award in July 2011. Participation in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), Farm to School and an on-site FoodCorps staff member offer many opportunities to promote fresh fruits and vegetables. The school also participates in Cooking Matters classes and Fuel Up to Play 60.
- A La Carte Sales:** Snacks include bagged chip-type foods, cookies and ice cream. Prior to the SLMP, students entering the hallway to the serving lines passed in front of the a la carte snack kiosk before getting their reimbursable meal. To reduce visibility of a la carte items, the kiosk was moved to the far end of the dining area so it was no longer in the path of students going to the meal service area.



Colorful nutrition posters on the serving line wall at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School

Bennie Dover Middle School



Hallway bulletin board with nutrition messages at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School



FoodCorps staff making fruit smoothies for students to sample at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School

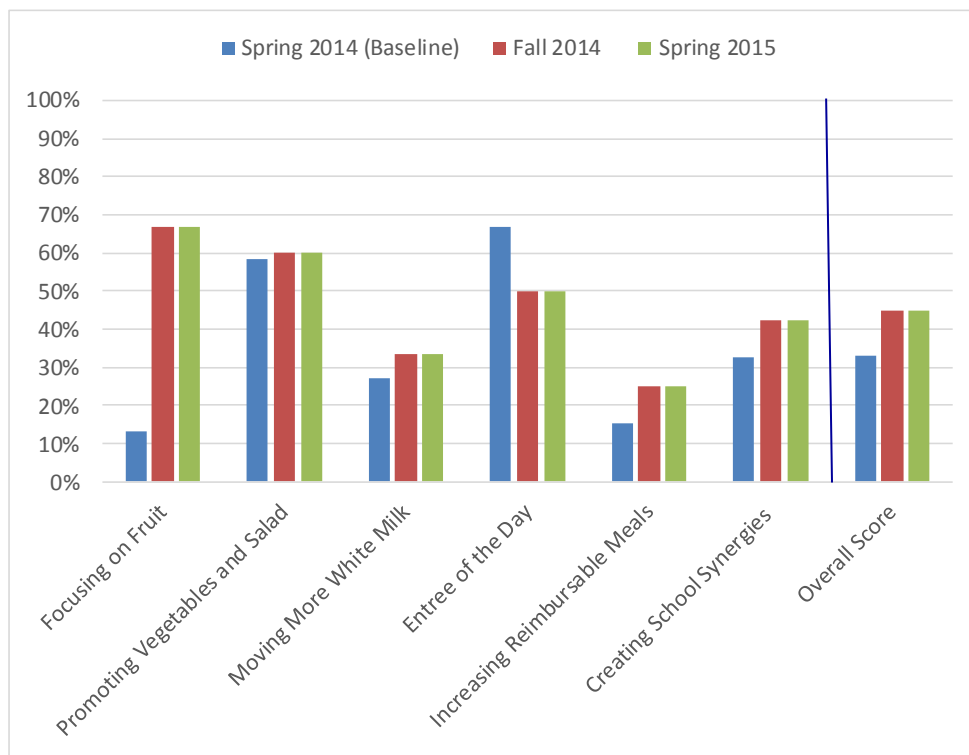
Bennie Dover Middle School

LUNCHROOM SELF-ASSESSMENT SCORE CARD

Figure 1 shows Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School’s Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card scores during baseline (spring 2014) and intervention (school year 2014-15). The school’s overall average score was 33 percent during baseline, which increased to 45 percent during fall 2014, and maintained at 45 percent during spring 2015.

Overall increases from baseline to spring 2015 occurred in the individual category scores for “Focusing on Fruit” (53 percent), “Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals” (10 percent), “Creating School Synergies” (10 percent), “Moving More White Milk” (6 percent), and “Promoting Vegetables and Salad” (2 percent). An overall decrease from baseline to spring 2015 occurred in the individual category score for “Entree of the Day” (17 percent).

Figure 1. Score Cards for Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School



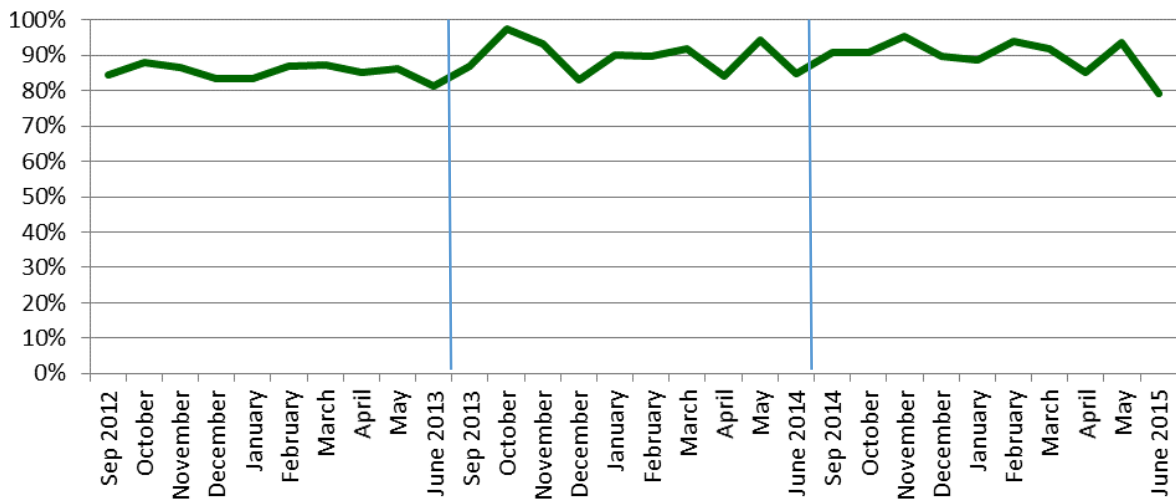
For information on the data collection process for score cards, see “[Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#)” in section 2. For information on the score card categories, see the score cards in the [appendix](#).

Bennie Dover Middle School

MEAL PARTICIPATION RATES

Figure 2 shows Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School’s meal participation rates for the intervention year (2014-15), and the prior two school years (2012-13 and 2013-14). There were no statistically significant changes in total meal participation over the three years. Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School’s meal participation rates were already very high due to universal feeding.

Figure 2. Meal Participation Rates for Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School



For information on the data collection process for meal participation rates, see “Meal Participation Rates” in section 2.

FOOD INDICATORS

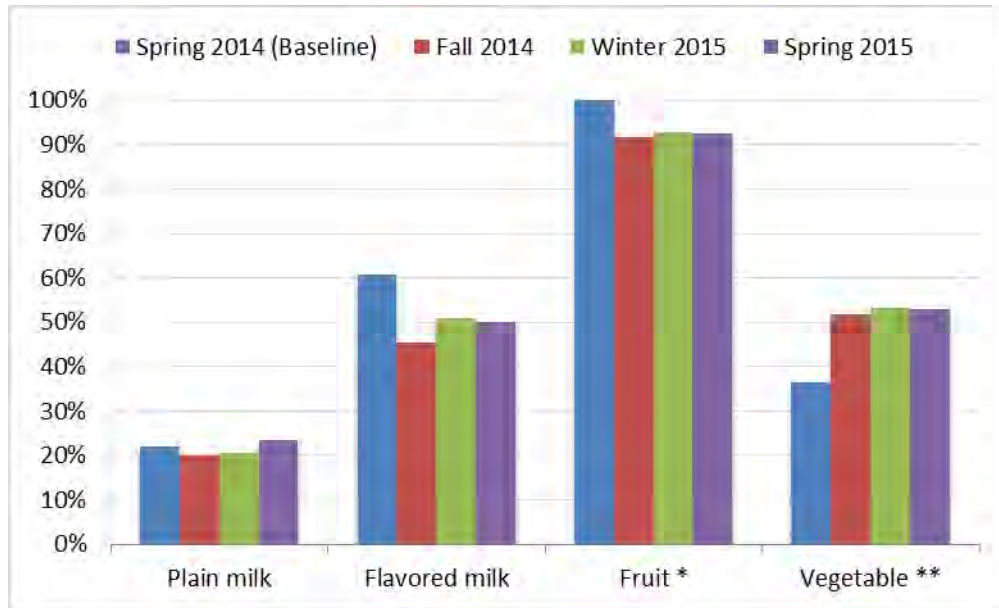
The figures on the next page show students’ average daily selection of fruits, vegetables and milk during baseline (April through June 2014) and intervention (school year 2014-15). Figure 3 shows the average daily selection by season (spring 2014, fall 2014, winter 2015 and spring 2015). Figure 4 shows the overall daily average for the baseline and intervention periods.

Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School had a statistically significant decrease in students’ selection of flavored milk (61 to 48 percent), and a statistically significant increase in students’ vegetable selections (36 to 53 percent). The school’s vegetable counts included side dish vegetables and main dish vegetable entrees, such as salad bar meals and chef’s salads. The school’s fruit counts included both fruit and fruit juice.

For information on the data collection process for food indicators, see “Food Indicators” in section 2.

Bennie Dover Middle School

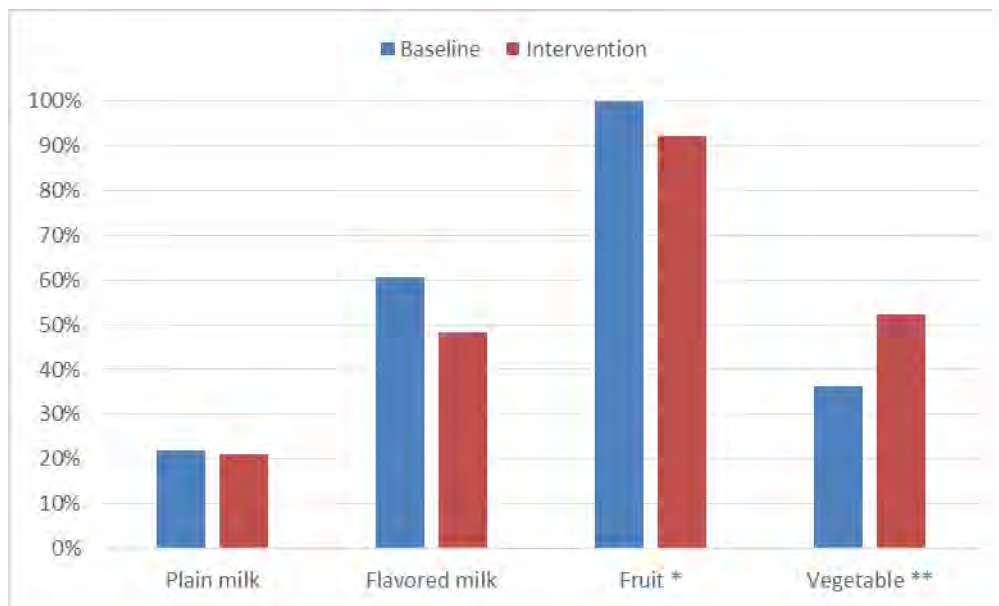
Figure 3. Students' Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables by Season at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School



* Includes fruit and fruit juice.

** Includes side dish vegetables and main dish vegetable entrees, e.g., salad bar meals and chef's salads.

Figure 4. Students' Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetable at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School



* Includes fruit and fruit juice.

** Includes side dish vegetables and main dish vegetable entrees, e.g., salad bar meals and chef's salads.

Bennie Dover Middle School

PLATE WASTE

Figure 5 summarizes the means (solid colored bars) and standard deviations (black lines) for the measure of plate waste at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School. Milk waste was consistent at baseline and intervention. There was a statistically significant decrease for vegetable waste, from 64 percent in spring 2014 to 18 percent in spring 2015. There was a statistically significant increase in fruit waste over time, from 25 percent in spring 2014 to 39 percent in spring 2015.

Figure 5. Average Plate Waste at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School *

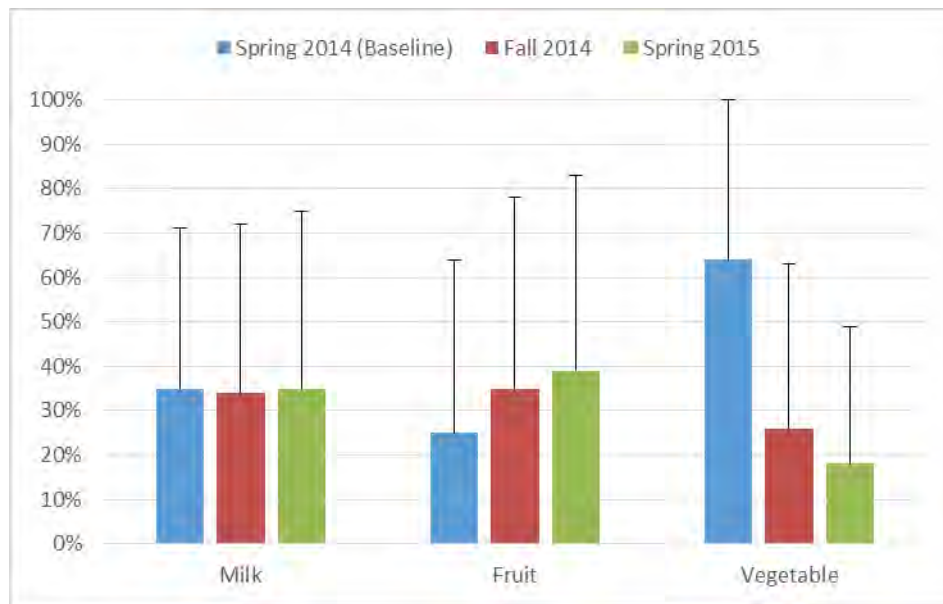


Table 8 summarizes Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School’s menu offered during the baseline plate waste collection. Table 9 summarizes the menus offered during the intervention plate waste collections. For information on the plate waste data collection process, see “[Plate Waste](#)” in section 2.

* The measures of plate waste range from 0 percent (no plate waste) to 100 percent (the entire portion is thrown away). The *mean* represents the average percentage of the food item wasted at that assessment period, and the *standard deviation* represents how spread out the values were. A large standard deviation indicates that there were as many students who wasted a lot of the item as there were students who wasted little of the item, so the mean does not capture the majority of the students. A small standard deviation indicates that the majority of students wasted about the same amount of the item, so the mean captures the majority of the students.

Bennie Dover Middle School

Table 8. Baseline Menu at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Spring 2014	Salad Bar: Choice of hard-boiled egg, turkey or black beans Hot dog with bun Sandwiches: Deli meat or peanut butter and jelly	Self-serve salad bar Sweet potato fries Corn Vegetable cup (carrots, cucumbers)	Canned fruit Plums Apples Applesauce Juice	Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk
* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich.				

Table 9. Intervention Menus at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 1	Salad Bar: Choice of hard-boiled egg, turkey, black beans or chicken ** Hot dog with bun Sandwiches: Deli meat or peanut butter and jelly	Self-serve salad bar Sweet potato fries Vegetable cup (carrots, cucumbers) Side salad **	Canned fruit Apples Juice Pears ** Strawberries **	Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 2	Salad Bar: Choice of hard-boiled egg, turkey or ham ** Hot dog with bun Sandwiches: Deli meat or peanut butter and jelly	Self-serve salad bar Sweet potato fries Corn Vegetable cup (carrots, cucumbers) Side salad **	Canned fruit Apples Juice Kiwi ** Oranges **	Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 3	Salad Bar: Choice of hard-boiled egg, turkey or black beans Sandwiches: Deli meat or peanut butter and jelly Pizza **	Self-serve salad bar Corn Vegetable cup (carrots, cucumbers) Side salad **	Canned fruit Apples Juice	Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk
* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich. ** Additional items not offered on baseline menu.				

Bennie Dover Middle School

Table 9. Intervention Menus at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School, continued				
Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Spring 2015 Data Collection 1	Salad Bar: Choice of hard-boiled egg Sandwiches: Deli meat or peanut butter and jelly Chicken and roll **	Self-serve salad bar Sweet potato fries Vegetable cup (carrots, cucumbers) Side salad **	Canned fruit Apples Juice Pears **	Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk Skim milk **
Spring 2015 Data Collection 2	Salad Bar: Choice of hard-boiled egg, turkey or black beans Hot dog with bun Sandwiches: Deli meat or peanut butter and jelly	Self-serve salad bar Sweet potato fries Vegetable cup (carrots, cucumbers) Side salad **	Canned fruit Apples Juice Pears ** Pineapples ** Oranges ** Raisins **	Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk
Spring 2015 Data Collection 3	Salad Bar: Choice of hard-boiled egg, turkey or black beans Sandwiches: Deli meat or peanut butter and jelly Macaroni and cheese ** Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick **	Self-serve salad bar Vegetable cup (carrots, cucumbers)	Canned fruit Plums Apples Applesauce Juice Pears ** Banana **	Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk Skim milk **
<p>* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich. ** Additional items not offered on baseline menu.</p>				

CREC International Magnet School

CREC International Magnet School South Windsor, Connecticut

Grades: K-5 **Enrollment: 481** **Average Daily Lunches: 252** **Programs: NSLP, SBP**

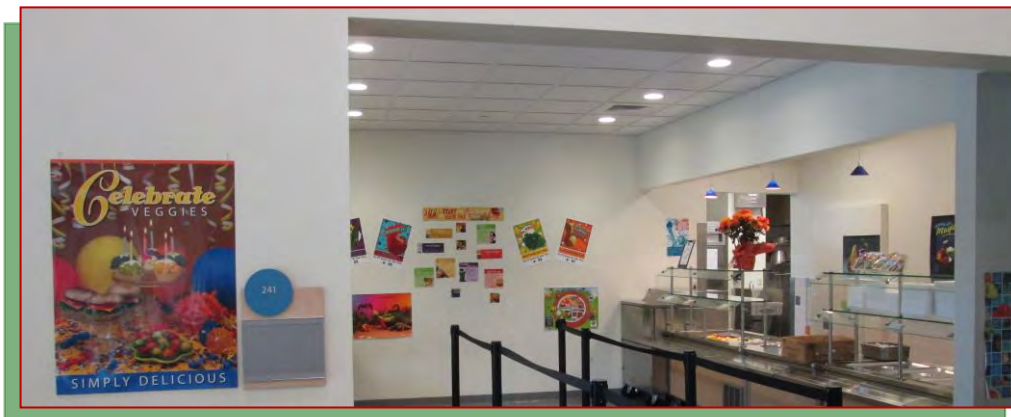
School Lunches	Free	Reduced	Paid
Percentage of Eligible Students	42%	5%	53%
Meal Participation Rate	86%	62%	25%

October 2015

CREC International Magnet School moved to a new building in January 2014, at the beginning of the SLMP. The previous cafeteria offered a basic daily menu, with meals provided from another food service site. The new cafeteria has a full production kitchen. The serving area has two short lines with lots of glass, good lighting and little metal obstruction. This provides good visibility for students, and easy access to self-serve foods.

CREC International Magnet School's SLMP action plan included:

- using a new menu board, nutrition signage and bulletin board displays;
- using decorative containers such as baskets and bowls on the serving line;
- moving the milk and retraining staff on stocking milk coolers;
- creating student artwork and a nutrition wall mural;
- using table tents to highlight new items, upcoming tastings and nutrition education;
- offering a "last chance tray" at the POS;
- conducting nutrition education and student tasting events to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables; and
- collaborating with parents and building staff.



Entrance to cafeteria serving lines at CREC International Magnet School

CREC International Magnet School

The following information summarizes the cafeteria operations during the SLMP for the six Smarter Lunchrooms areas of the B.E.N. Center’s Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card. The cafeteria’s strategies for “Entree of the Day” and “Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals” are presented together. For more information on the score card categories, see “[Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#)” in section 2, and the score cards in the [appendix](#).

Focusing on Fruit

The cafeteria purchased decorative containers to add a second location for whole fresh fruit on the serving lines. A “last chance tray” at the POS offers a selection of fruit, juice, vegetables and white skim milk, for students needing another food item to complete their reimbursable meal.



Fruit baskets on the serving line at CREC International Magnet School



“Last chance tray” with juice, vegetables and fat-free white milk at CREC International Magnet School

CREC International Magnet School

Promoting Vegetables and Salad

The cafeteria introduced a “Rainbow Veggie Tray” that includes daily offerings of sliced cucumbers, broccoli bites, baby carrots and chickpea salad. This daily variety increased the number of students who took a vegetable without prompting. Garden salads were moved to the steam table line, where the cafeteria staff pre-plates them on some trays. To provide greater visibility, the packaging for the chef’s salad was changed from styrofoam clamshell containers to clear plastic clamshell containers. The cafeteria collaborated with the PTO to conduct monthly taste-tests of less familiar vegetables like butternut squash, and used table tents to promote these events to students.



Vegetable choices on the “Rainbow Veggie Tray” at CREC International Magnet School



Promoting school recipes using local produce at CREC International Magnet School

Moving More White Milk

The milk cooler is a small eight-case reach-in cooler that accommodates four cases of milk in the front (two cases stacked on top of each other) and four cases of milk in the back. To increase visibility of white milk, the cafeteria staff initially moved all white milk to the front but had to revise this stocking method. The kindergartners were reaching into the back for chocolate milk, and spilling their tray contents into the cooler. The cooler is now stocked with chocolate milk in front, but second after a case of white milk so that white milk is seen first.

CREC International Magnet School

Entree of the Day and Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals

Prior to the SLMP, the cafeteria offered only one daily menu option. With the move to the new building and the start of the SLMP, the cafeteria now offers multiple hot and cold entree choices. New grab-and-go meals (bagels or soft pretzels, yogurt and string cheese) are also available. These popular meal choices represent up to 30 percent of daily reimbursable meals. A wide variety of sandwiches also captures reimbursable meal sales that were previously missed when only one entree option was served. The clear packaging for the entree chef's salad makes it more visible and attractive.



Vegetable choices and grab-and-go entree salads at CREC International Magnet School



School lunches at CREC International Magnet School

CREC International Magnet School

Creating School Synergies

- Signage, Priming and Communication:** A new illuminated wet-erase menu board draws students' attention to daily menu offerings. Attractive static-cling signs on the serving line direct students' attention to fruits, vegetables and entrees. Printed signs in clear plastic frames prompt students to take fruits and vegetables. Signs at the POS remind students that they can select a food item from the "last chance tray" to complete their reimbursable meal. The cafeteria has colorful nutrition posters and student artwork displayed in the serving and dining areas.

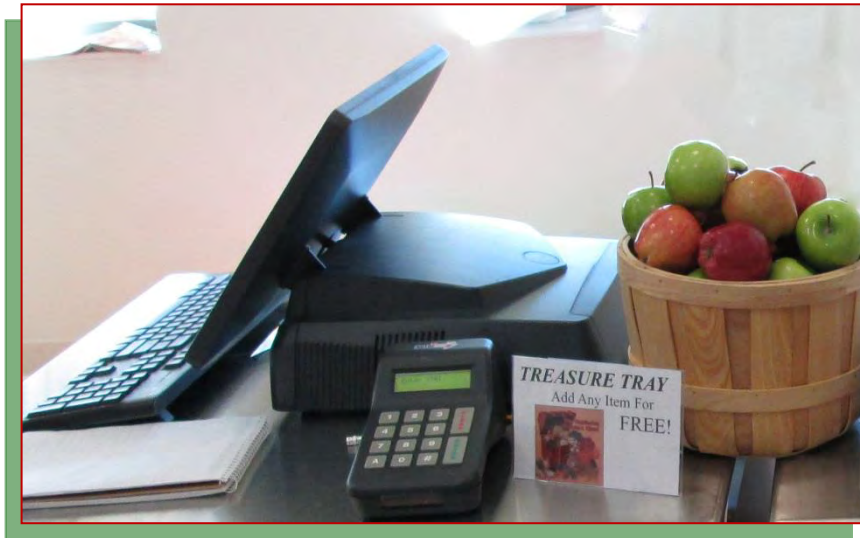


Static-cling vegetable signs on the serving line at CREC International Magnet School



Connecticut Grown posters promote local produce at CREC International Magnet School

CREC International Magnet School



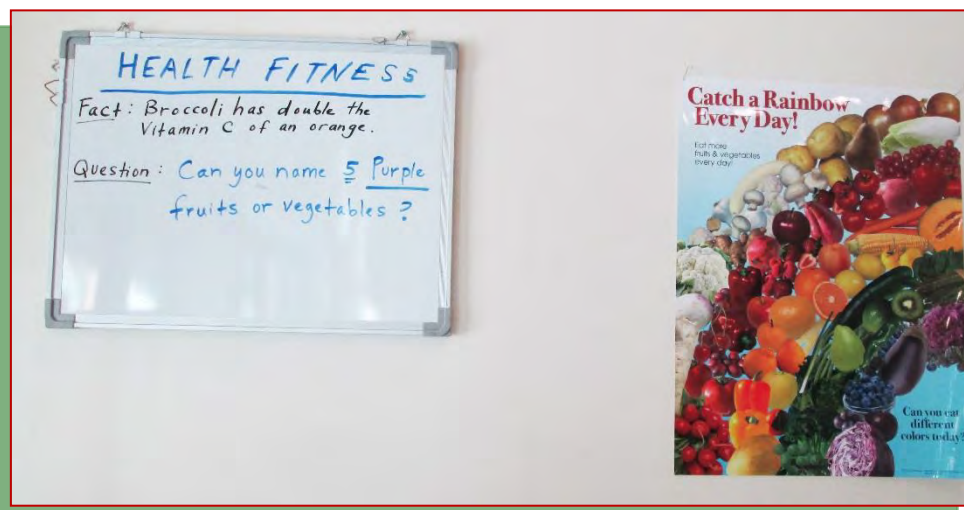
“Treasure Tray” sign at the cashier’s station at CREC International Magnet School

- Lunchroom Atmosphere:** The outside wall is all windows overlooking the play area, so the dining area is bright with a nice view. Tables have attached benches. The dining monitors are professional, calm and have a good rapport with students. The custodian is diligent about cleaning after each lunch wave so the dining area always looks neat and orderly.
- Student Involvement:** Students announce the daily menu with a wellness wake-up tip that provides nutrition information. Students are actively involved in providing menu suggestions, and developing artwork for the hallways and dining area. The fifth graders created two large wall murals with a healthy vegetables theme, using poster paint to make prints of their hands and feet. The physical education teacher became interested in the SLMP after observing a monthly food tasting. She voluntarily started posting a weekly “health fitness” question and tip on a whiteboard by the POS. When students came to their weekly physical education class, she talked about the question, and the importance of nutrition and physical activity.
- Recognition and Support of School Food:** The school participates in Farm to School events. During the SLMP, the food service department collaborated with the PTO to facilitate monthly tastings of new healthy vegetable side dishes. One class made a tasting suggestion of an African rice dish based on a book they were reading in their world culture lesson. Teachers sent home monthly tasting recipes and activity sheets with students.
- A La Carte Sales:** The school elects not to offer a la carte snack sales.

CREC International Magnet School



Student artwork decorating the cafeteria at CREC International Magnet School



Weekly nutrition question and tip at CREC International Magnet School

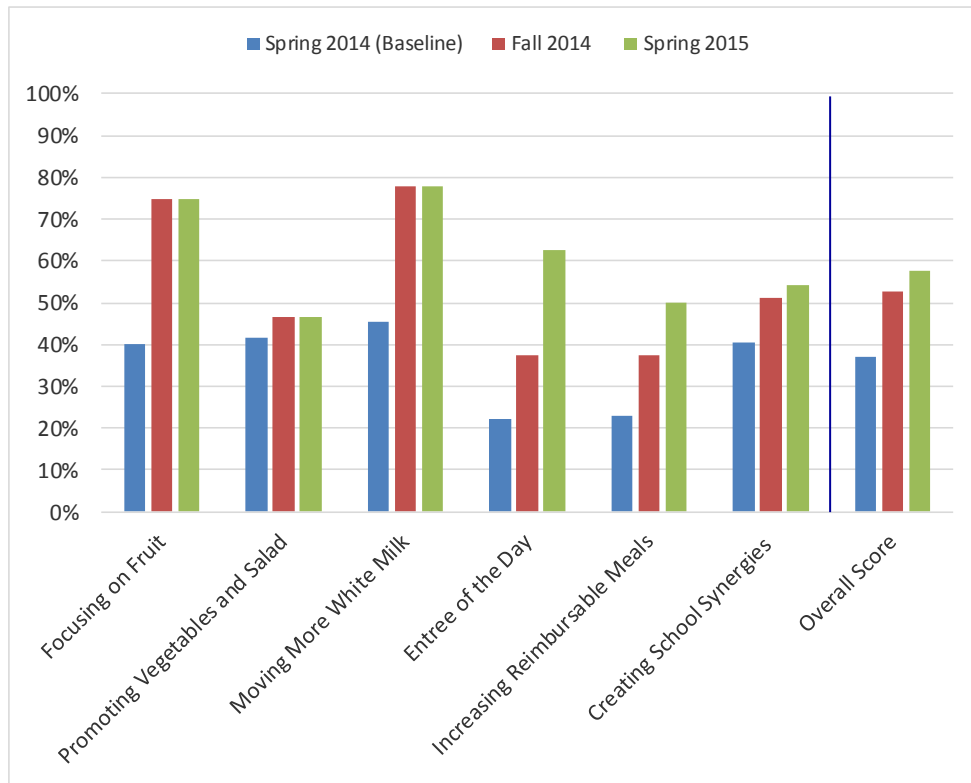
CREC International Magnet School

LUNCHROOM SELF-ASSESSMENT SCORE CARD

Figure 6 shows CREC International Magnet School’s Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card scores during baseline (spring 2014) and intervention (school year 2014-15). The school’s overall average score was 37 percent during baseline, which increased to 53 percent during fall 2014, and 58 percent during spring 2015.

All category scores increased from spring 2014 (baseline) to fall 2014 (intervention), and either maintained or increased for spring 2015 (intervention). The greatest overall increases from baseline to spring 2015 occurred in the individual category scores for “Entree of the Day” (40 percent), “Focusing on Fruit” (35 percent), “Moving More White Milk” (32 percent), and “Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals” (27 percent). “Creating School Synergies” increased by 14 percent and “Promoting Vegetables and Salad” increased by 5 percent.

Figure 6. Score Cards for CREC International Magnet School

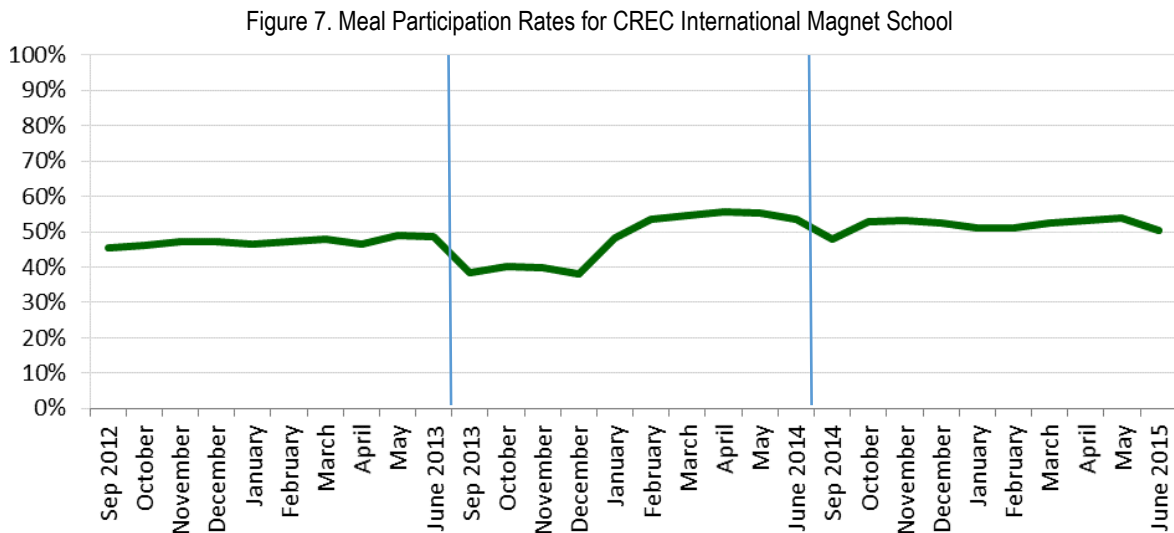


For information on the data collection process for score cards, see “[Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#)” in section 2. For information on the score card categories, see the score cards in the [appendix](#).

CREC International Magnet School

MEAL PARTICIPATION RATES

Figure 7 shows CREC International Magnet School’s meal participation rates for the intervention year (2014-15), and the prior two school years (2012-13 and 2013-14). There were no statistically significant changes in total meal participation over the three years.



For information on the data collection process for meal participation rates, see “[Meal Participation Rates](#)” in section 2.

FOOD INDICATORS

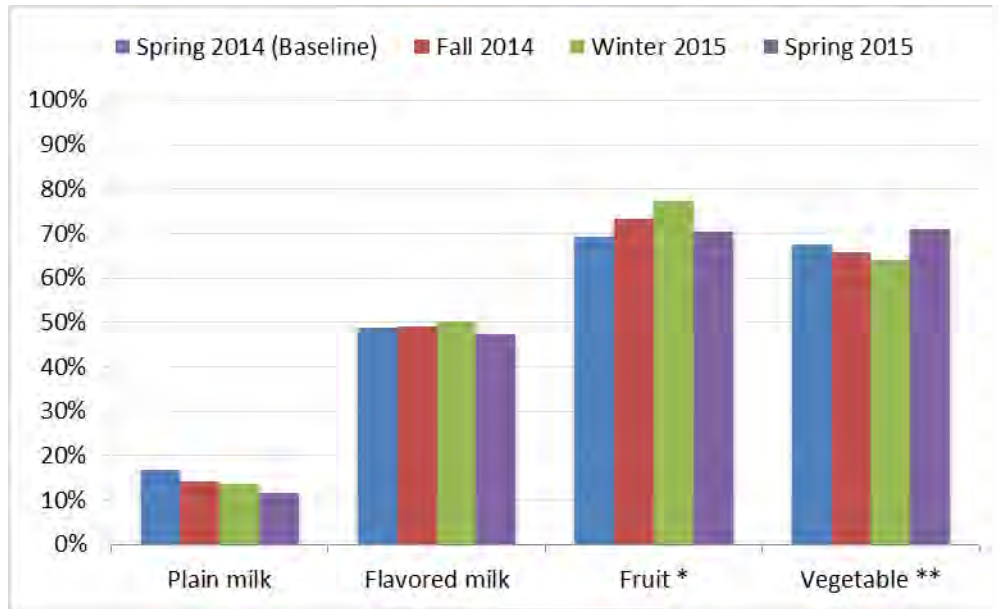
The figures on the next page show students’ average daily selection of fruits, vegetables and milk during baseline (April through June 2014) and intervention (school year 2014-15). Figure 8 shows the average daily selection by season (spring 2014, fall 2014, winter 2015 and spring 2015). Figure 9 shows the overall daily average for the baseline and intervention periods. CREC International Magnet School did not have any statistically significant changes for any food indicators.

The school’s fruit counts included both fruit and fruit juice. The school’s vegetable counts included only side dish vegetables (no main dish vegetable entrees, e.g., salad bar meals and chef’s salads).

For information on the data collection process for food indicators, see “[Food Indicators](#)” in section 2.

CREC International Magnet School

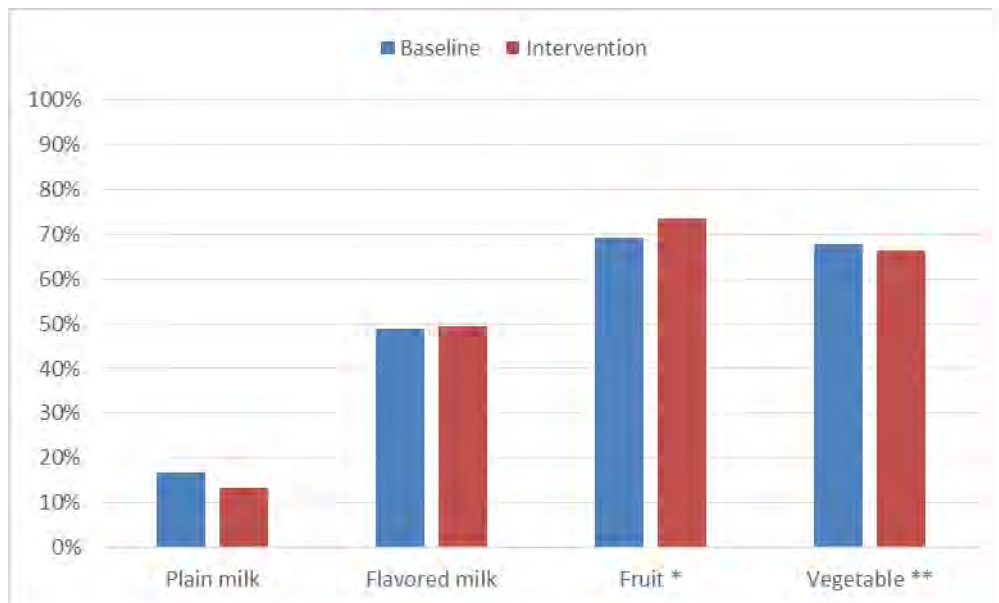
Figure 8. Students' Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables by Season at CREC International Magnet School



* Includes fruit and fruit juice.

** Includes only side dish vegetables (no main dish vegetable entrees, e.g., salad bar meals and chef's salads).

Figure 9. Students' Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetable at CREC International Magnet School



* Includes fruit and fruit juice.

** Includes only side dish vegetables (no main dish vegetable entrees, e.g., salad bar meals and chef's salads).

CREC International Magnet School

PLATE WASTE

Figure 10 summarizes the means (solid colored bars) and standard deviations (black lines) for the measure of plate waste at CREC International Magnet School. There was a statistically significant increase in vegetable waste over time, from 20 percent in spring 2014 to 34 percent in spring 2015. The changes for fruit waste and milk waste were not statistically significant.

Figure 10. Average Plate Waste at CREC International Magnet School *

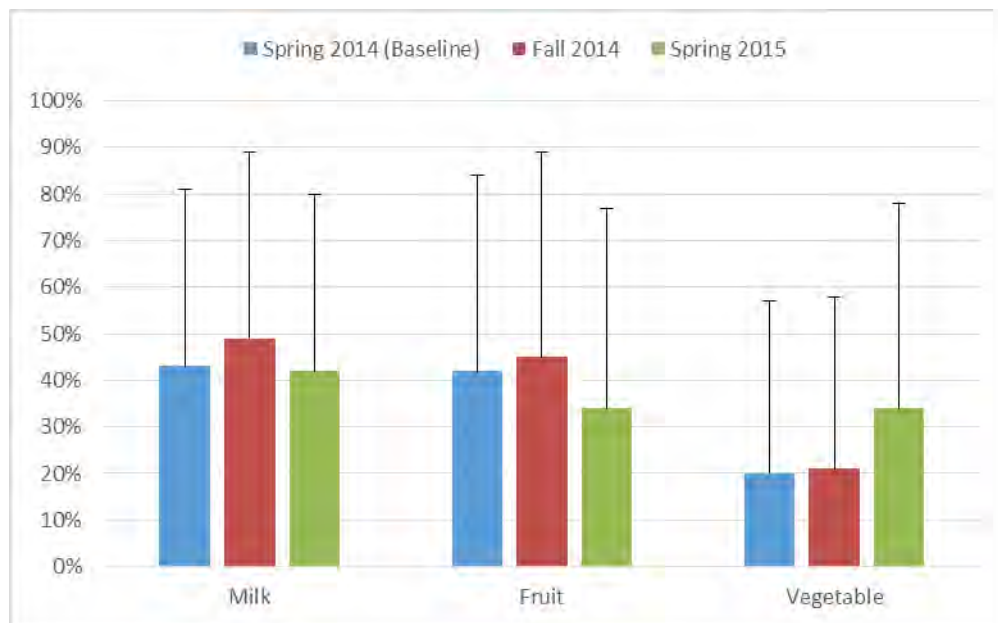


Table 10 summarizes CREC International Magnet School’s menu offered during the baseline plate waste collection. Table 11 summarizes the menus offered during the intervention plate waste collections. For information on the plate waste data collection process, see “[Plate Waste](#)” in section 2.

* The measures of plate waste range from 0 percent (no plate waste) to 100 percent (the entire portion is thrown away). The *mean* represents the average percentage of the food item wasted at that assessment period, and the *standard deviation* represents how spread out the values were. A large standard deviation indicates that there were as many students who wasted a lot of the item as there were students who wasted little of the item, so the mean does not capture the majority of the students. A small standard deviation indicates that the majority of students wasted about the same amount of the item, so the mean captures the majority of the students.

CREC International Magnet School

Table 10. Baseline Menu at CREC International Magnet School

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Spring 2014	Cheese omelet and french toast sticks Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick Packaged salads Deli meat sandwiches	Hash brown potatoes Cucumbers Broccoli Carrots Side salad	Canned fruit Apples Juice	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk

* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich.

Table 11. Intervention Menus at CREC International Magnet School

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 1	Cheese omelet and french toast sticks Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick Packaged salads Deli meat sandwiches	Hash brown potatoes Cucumbers Broccoli Carrots	Apples Juice Bananas **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 2	Cheese omelet and french toast sticks Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick Packaged salads Deli meat sandwiches	Hash brown potatoes Cucumbers Broccoli Carrots Side salad	Apples Juice	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 3	Cheese omelet and french toast sticks Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick Packaged salads Deli meat sandwiches	Hash brown potatoes Cucumbers Broccoli Carrots Side salad Chickpeas **	Canned fruit Juice Bananas ** Pears ** Oranges **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk

* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich.

** Additional items not offered on baseline menu.

CREC International Magnet School

Table 11. Intervention Menus at CREC International Magnet School, continued

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Spring 2015 Data Collection 1	Cheese omelet and french toast sticks Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick Packaged salads Deli meat sandwiches	Hash brown potatoes Cucumbers Broccoli Carrots	Apples Juice Bananas **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk
Spring 2015 Data Collection 2	Cheese omelet and french toast sticks Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick Packaged salads Deli meat sandwiches	Hash brown potatoes Cucumbers Broccoli Carrots	Apples Juice	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk
Spring 2015 Data Collection 3	Cheese omelet and french toast sticks Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick Packaged salads Deli meat sandwiches	Hash brown potatoes Cucumbers Broccoli Carrots Chickpeas **	Canned fruit Apples Juice Pears ** Oranges **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk
* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich.				
** Additional items not offered on baseline menu.				

Cutler Middle School

Cutler Middle School Groton, Connecticut

Grades: 6-8	Enrollment: 501	Average Daily Lunches: 317	Programs: NSLP, SBP
School Lunches	Free	Reduced	Paid
Percentage of Eligible Students	23%	9%	68%
Meal Participation Rate	81%	74%	56%

October 2015

Just prior to the SLMP, Cutler Middle School's kitchen was undergoing a serving line redesign. The school converted a one-line serving area into two serving lines that included a hot lunch line and a salad bar line. The cafeteria staff reworked their new daily production and line set-up routines to incorporate Smarter Lunchroom strategies as additional program improvements.

The cafeteria has an upbeat atmosphere, and provides a pleasant environment that invites students and staff to get a meal. Food items are appealingly prepared. Equipment is clean and well maintained. Cafeteria staff, building administrators, custodians, dining area monitors, and office staff have positive attitudes that support the school nutrition program.

Cutler Middle School's SLMP action plan included:

- using new signage and posters;
- using decorative containers on the serving line, e.g., baskets, and colored bowls and trays;
- painting cafeteria walls and hanging new menu boards *; and
- restructuring the serving line area to accommodate a new salad bar and steam table warmer. *

The following information summarizes the cafeteria operations during the SLMP for the six Smarter Lunchrooms areas of the B.E.N. Center's Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card. The cafeteria's strategies for "Entree of the Day" and "Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals" are presented together. For more information on the score card categories, see "[Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#)" in section 2, and the score cards in the [appendix](#).

* *Note: This work was completed by Groton Public Schools and was not part of the SLMP budget.*

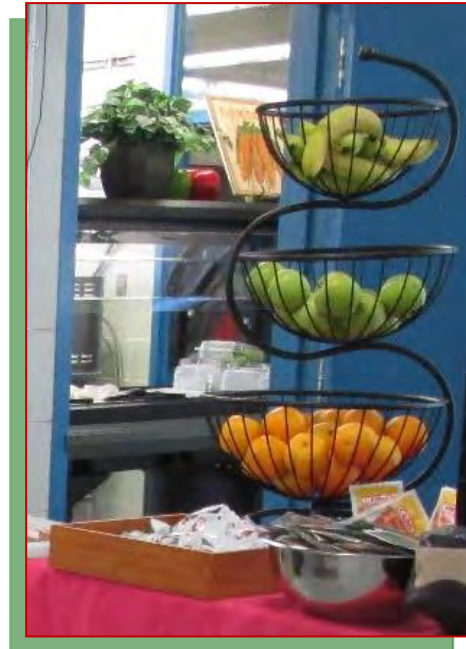
Cutler Middle School

Focusing on Fruit

The cafeteria offers a wide variety of daily fruit choices attractively displayed on long, narrow, colorful trays on the serving line, and in a tiered metal basket at the POS. Daily fruit choices are clearly written on each menu board.

Promoting Vegetables and Salad

The cafeteria staff pre-plates a hot vegetable on some trays as they are served. The cafeteria has a popular salad bar as a reimbursable meal line, with consistently high participation regardless of the season. Staff pre-portion leafy greens and protein choices in clear plastic containers to ensure proper serving sizes and speed up the serving line. The variety of vegetables is colorful and appealing, and includes at least four of the five vegetable subgroups. The cafeteria staff constantly restocks the salad bar during each lunch wave so it always looks full for all students.



Tiered fruit display at Cutler Middle School



Fruit and vegetable choices on the serving line at Cutler Middle School

Cutler Middle School



Cutler Middle School's salad bar



A table full of students' salad bar lunches at Cutler Middle School

Cutler Middle School

Moving More White Milk

The cafeteria uses two round insulated barrels for milk. To increase visibility of white milk, the barrel located inside the serving line area contains white milk, so it is the first milk choice that students see. The barrel with chocolate milk is located outside the serving area next to the POS.



Milk coolers inside and outside the serving line at Cutler Middle School

Entree of the Day and Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals

The cafeteria staff lists the daily entree item on each menu board. Alternate entree choice sandwiches are bundled with vegetables to make a reimbursable meal. The hot lunch line and salad bar line both offer reimbursable meal components.



Menu board announces daily lunch choices at Cutler Middle School

Cutler Middle School

Creating School Synergies

- Signage, Priming and Communication:** Beautiful nutrition posters are on display in the serving and dining area, and the cafeteria staff rotates them throughout the school year. A colorful vinyl “Healthy Tray” banner camouflages a cooking hood in the kitchen. The cafeteria staff made colorful, attractive and easy-to-read signs that direct students to the hot and cold lunch serving lines.



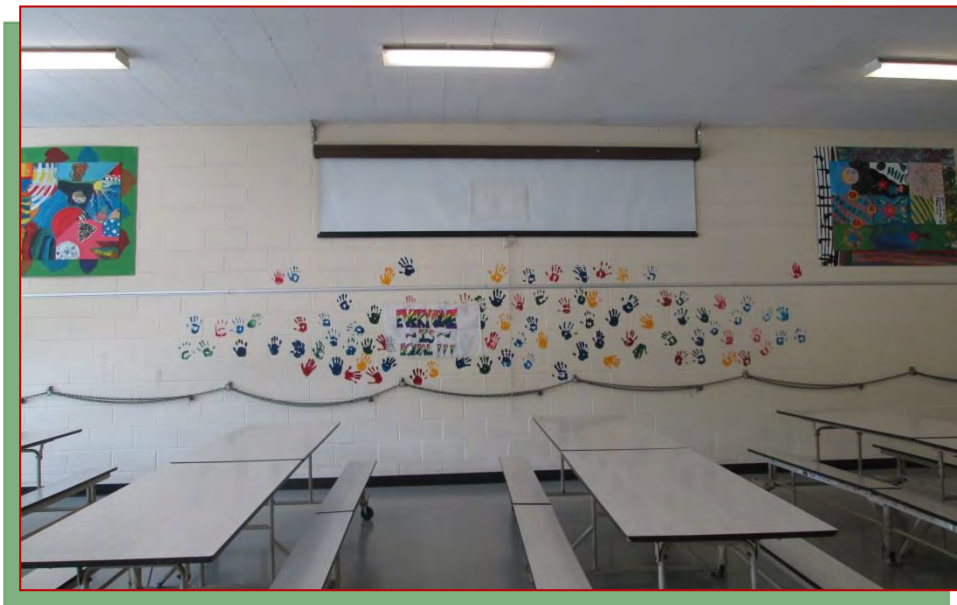
Attractive staff-made posters direct students to the hot and cold lunch lines at Cutler Middle School.



“Healthy Tray” Banner in Cutler Middle School’s kitchen

Cutler Middle School

- **Lunchroom Atmosphere:** The dining area is clutter-free and bright, with student artwork displayed. The cafeteria staff and dining area monitors have positive interactions with students. The principal or assistant principal is present in the cafeteria during meal periods, and assists assigned students with wiping tables. Custodians are vigilant about removing trash and debris between lunch waves.
- **Student Involvement:** The food service program periodically conducts student surveys. Daily announcements let students know the menu choices for the day.
- **Recognition and Support of School Food:** The food service director engages in several activities that promote interaction with students, such as Cooking Matters classes and open house. The school participates in Farm to School events and Fuel Up to Play 60. Other collaborations include the New England Dairy & Food Council, Whole Foods and the school's PTO.
- **A La Carte Sales:** The school elects not to offer a la carte snack sales. Prior to the SLMP, a la carte snack sales included bagged chip-type foods and ice cream.



Posters and student-created artwork in Cutler Middle School cafeteria

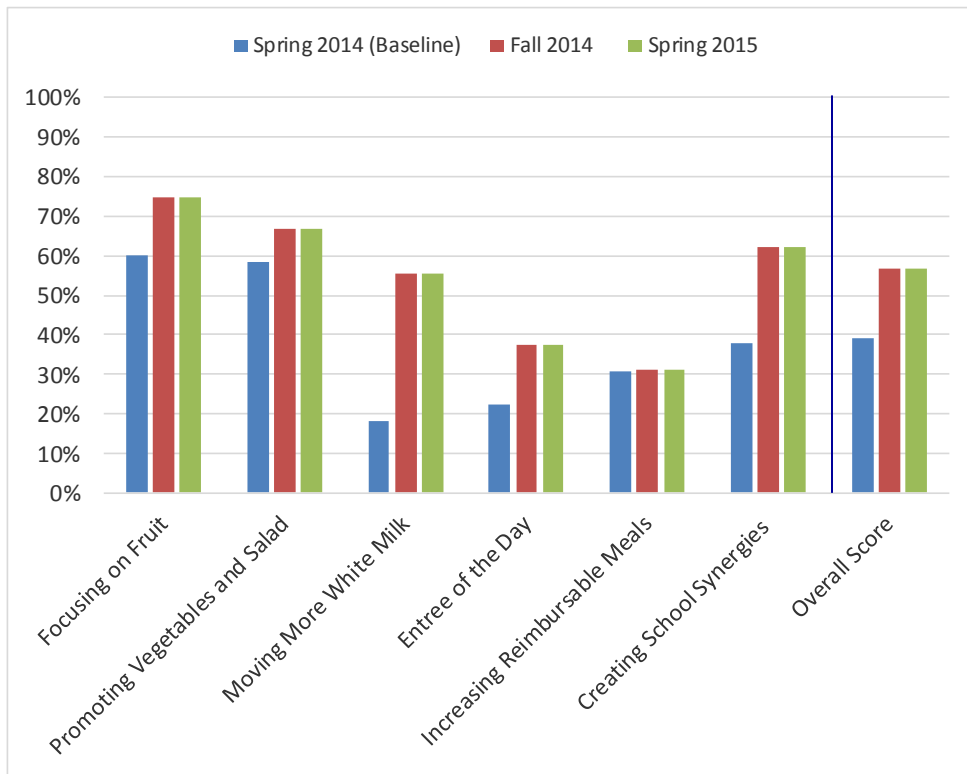
Cutler Middle School

LUNCHROOM SELF-ASSESSMENT SCORE CARD

Figure 11 shows Cutler Middle School’s Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card scores during baseline (spring 2014) and intervention (school year 2014-15). The school’s overall average score was 39 percent during baseline, which increased to 57 percent during fall 2014, and maintained at 57 percent during spring 2015.

All category scores increased from spring 2014 (baseline) to fall 2014 (intervention), and maintained for spring 2015 (intervention). The greatest overall increases from baseline to spring 2015 occurred in the individual category scores for “Moving More White Milk” (37 percent), “Creating School Synergies” (24 percent), “Entree of the Day” (15 percent) and “Focusing on Fruit” (15 percent). “Promoting Vegetables and Salad” increased by 8 percent and “Increasing Reimbursable Meals” increased by 1 percent.

Figure 11. Score Cards for Cutler Middle School



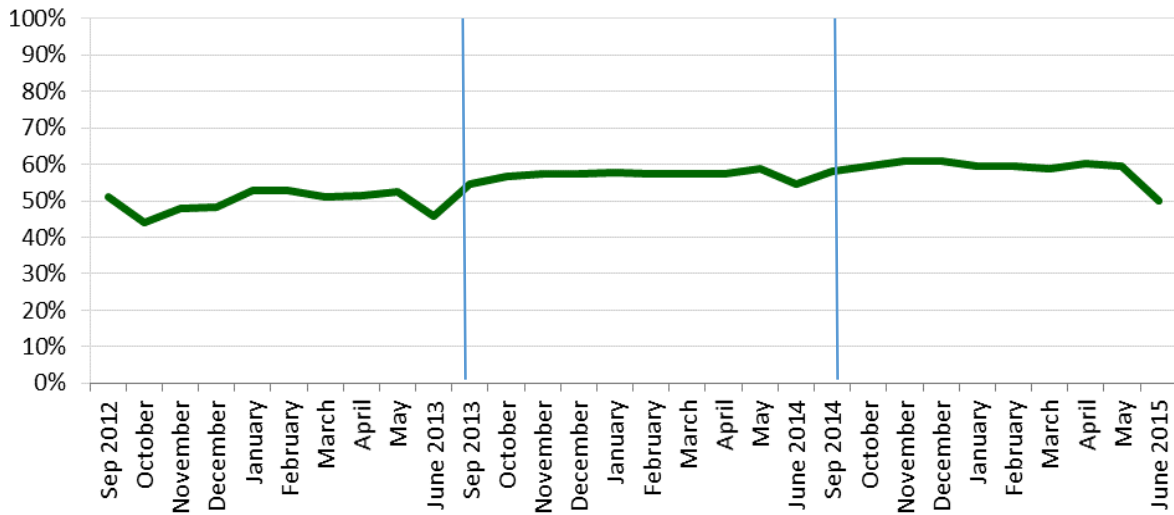
For information on the data collection process for score cards, see “[Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#)” in section 2. For information on the score card categories, see the score cards in the [appendix](#).

Cutler Middle School

MEAL PARTICIPATION RATES

Figure 12 shows Cutler Middle School’s meal participation rates for the intervention year (2014-15), and the prior two school years (2012-13 and 2013-14). There was a statistically significant increase in meal participation over the two years prior to the SLMP. This increase was sustained during the intervention year.

Figure 12. Meal Participation Rates for Cutler Middle School



For information on the data collection process for meal participation rates, see “[Meal Participation Rates](#)” in section 2.

FOOD INDICATORS

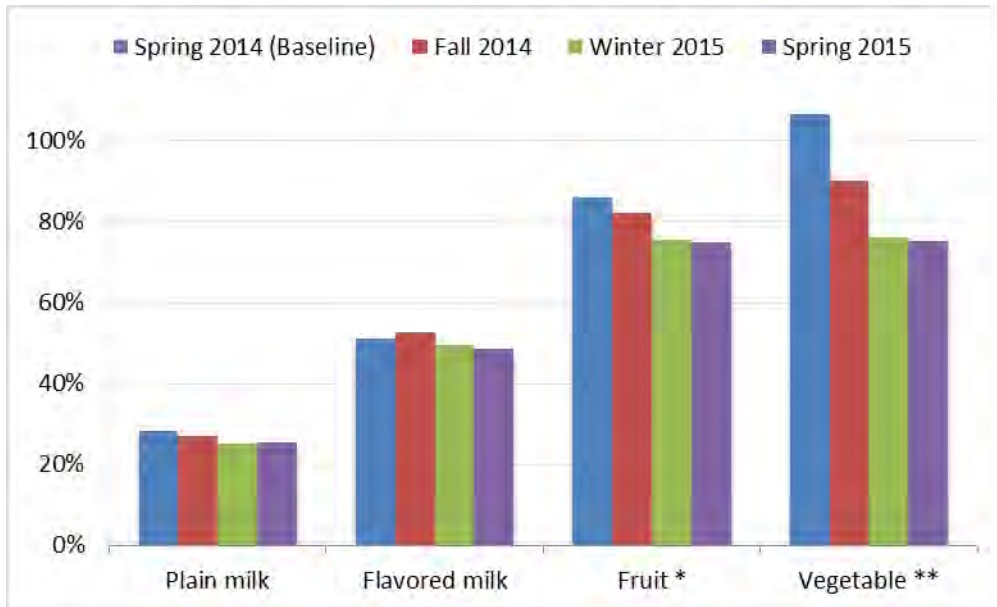
The figures on the next page show students’ average daily selection of fruits, vegetables and milk during baseline (April through June 2014) and intervention (school year 2014-15). Figure 13 shows the average daily selection by season (spring 2014, fall 2014, winter 2015 and spring 2015). Figure 14 shows the overall daily average for the baseline and intervention periods.

Cutler Middle School had a statistically significant decrease in students’ selections of vegetables (107 to 81 percent). This is likely due to the new salad bar line and increase in reimbursable salads during the intervention, since reimbursable salads were not included in Cutler’s vegetable counts. The school’s vegetable counts included only side dish vegetables (no main dish vegetable entrees, e.g., salad bar meals and chef’s salads). The school’s fruit counts included only fruit (no juice). Note: Vegetable percentages exceed 100 percent due to some students’ selections of additional servings of vegetables.

For information on the data collection process for food indicators, see “[Food Indicators](#)” in section 2.

Cutler Middle School

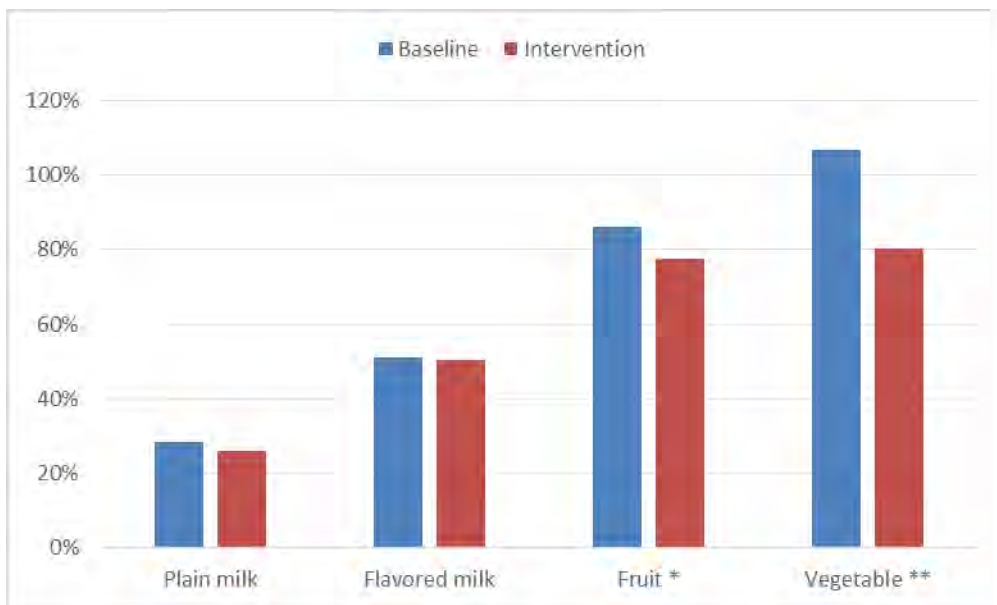
Figure 13. Students' Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables by Season at Cutler Middle School



* Includes only fruit (no juice)

** Includes only side dish vegetables (no entree vegetables, e.g., salad bar meals and chef's salads). Vegetables exceed 100 percent due to some students' selection of additional vegetable servings.

Figure 14. Students' Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetable at Cutler Middle School



* Includes only fruit (no juice)

** Includes only side dish vegetables (no entree vegetables, e.g., salad bar meals and chef's salads). Vegetables exceed 100 percent due to some students' selection of additional vegetable servings.

Cutler Middle School

PLATE WASTE

Figure 15 summarizes the means (solid colored bars) and standard deviations (black lines) for the measure of plate waste at Cutler Middle School. Milk waste remained consistent at baseline and intervention. There was a statistically significant decrease in fruit waste from 44 percent in spring 2014 (baseline) to 22 percent in spring 2015 (intervention). The changes for milk waste and vegetable waste were not statistically significant.

Figure 15. Average Plate Waste at Cutler Middle School *

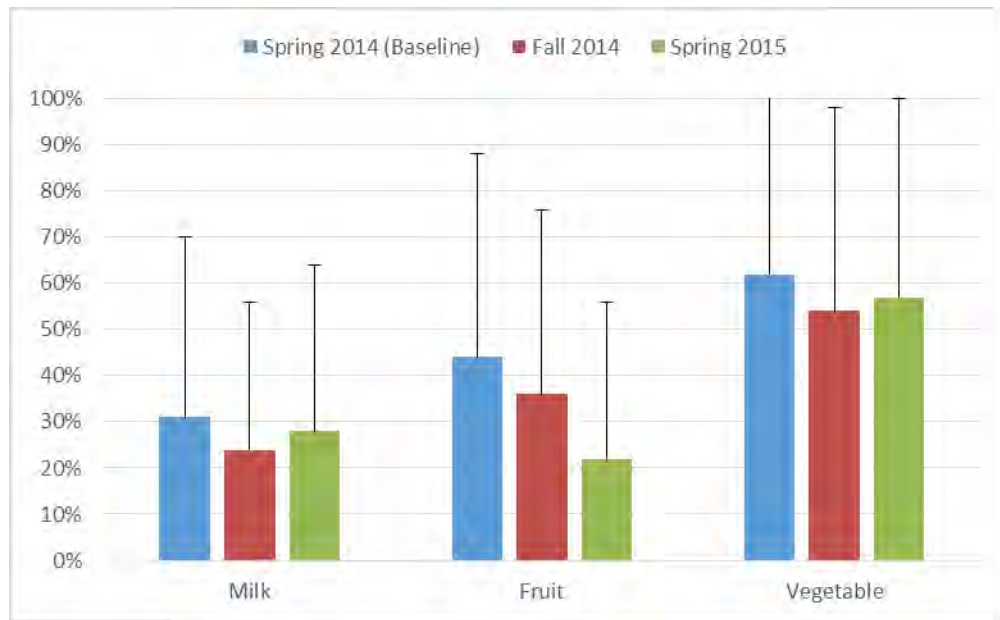


Table 12 summarizes Cutler Middle School’s menu offered during the baseline plate waste collection. Table 13 summarizes the menus offered during the intervention plate waste collections. For information on the plate waste data collection process, see “Plate Waste” in section 2.

* The measures of plate waste range from 0 percent (no plate waste) to 100 percent (the entire portion is thrown away). The *mean* represents the average percentage of the food item wasted at that assessment period, and the *standard deviation* represents how spread out the values were. A large standard deviation indicates that there were as many students who wasted a lot of the item as there were students who wasted little of the item, so the mean does not capture the majority of the students. A small standard deviation indicates that the majority of students wasted about the same amount of the item, so the mean captures the majority of the students.

Cutler Middle School

Table 12. Baseline Menu at Cutler Middle School

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Spring 2014	Hot dog with bun Deli meat sandwich Peanut butter sandwich	Seasoned green beans Baked beans Cucumbers Red bell peppers Carrots	Apples Juice	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk

* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich.

Table 13. Intervention Menus at Cutler Middle School

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 1	Hot dog with bun Deli meat sandwich Peanut butter sandwich Salad bar meal **	Seasoned green beans Baked beans Carrots	Apples Juice Strawberries ** Bananas ** Grapes ** Craisins ** Pears **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 2	Peanut butter sandwich Cheeseburger with bun ** Salad bar meal **	Carrots Corn ** Potatoes ** Tomatoes **	Apples Juice Bananas ** Craisins **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 3	Hot dog with bun Peanut butter sandwich Salad bar meal **	Seasoned green beans Baked beans Red bell peppers Carrots	Apples Juice	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk

* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich.

** Additional items not offered on baseline menu.

Cutler Middle School

Table 13. Intervention Menus at Cutler Middle School, continued

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Spring 2015 Data Collection 1	Hot dog with bun Peanut butter sandwich Salad bar meal **	Seasoned green beans Baked beans Red bell peppers Carrots Celery **	Apples Juice Oranges ** Bananas ** Fruit Cup ** Raisins **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk
Spring 2015 Data Collection 2	Hot dog with bun Peanut butter sandwich Salad bar meal **	Seasoned green beans Baked beans Cucumbers Red bell peppers Carrots	Apples Juice Oranges ** Fruit Cup **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk
Spring 2015 Data Collection 3	Hot dog with bun Deli meat sandwich Peanut butter sandwich Salad bar meal **	Seasoned green beans Baked beans Cucumbers Red bell peppers Carrots	Apples Juice Pears **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk
<p>* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich. ** Additional items not offered on baseline menu.</p>				

East Hampton Middle School

East Hampton Middle School East Hampton, Connecticut

Grades: 6-8	Enrollment: 433	Average Daily Lunches: 140	Programs: NSLP, SBP
School Lunches	Free	Reduced	Paid
Percentage of Eligible Students	12%	3%	86%
Meal Participation Rate	70%	58%	27%

October 2015

Prior to the SLMP, East Hampton Middle School had one serving line that included reimbursable meal components, and a large display of self-serve a la carte items near the cashier. Alternate meal choice components were available throughout the serving line, but were not bundled into grab-and-go meals.

During the SLMP, the cafeteria added a large wooden farmer's cart as a second serving line in the dining area. This cart provides prepackaged, reimbursable grab-and-go meals, and a la carte fresh fruits, vegetables and milk. The cafeteria serving areas use attractive merchandising props such as heat-resistant tiles for the steam table, wrought-iron display racks, a large reach-in cooler for salads, yogurts, fruits and vegetables, and some smaller baskets and shelving for fruits and vegetables.

East Hampton Middle School's action plan included:

- adding a menu board in the cafeteria before the serving line;
- adding colorful nutrition posters to the serving area and cafeteria;
- adding a second location for fruit to the serving line;
- creating a location in the cafeteria away from serving area for grab-and-go items;
- moving snacks behind the serving line so they are less visible, and students must request them;
- creating grab-and go reimbursable meals with large pretzels and hummus cups; and
- creating a bulletin board display in the cafeteria.

The following information summarizes the cafeteria operations during the SLMP for the six Smarter Lunchrooms areas of the B.E.N. Center's Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card. The cafeteria's strategies for "Entree of the Day" and "Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals" are presented together. For more information on the score card categories, see "[Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#)" in section 2, and the score cards in the [appendix](#).

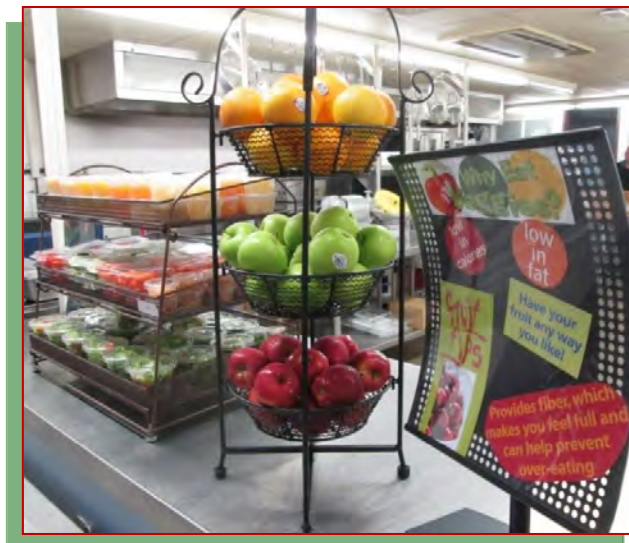
East Hampton Middle School

Focusing on Fruit

Separate displays for fruit appear at multiple locations on the serving line, with small signs identifying each area. Decorative baskets and wire holders offer several different kinds of fresh fruit daily.

Promoting Vegetables and Salad

Prior to the SLMP, the cafeteria already had a nice selection of fresh vegetable choices with good merchandising. During the SLMP, the cafeteria made these choices available in multiple locations on the serving line with corresponding signage, and an increased selection of entree salads in the reach-in cooler. Reimbursable grab-and-go salad meals and vegetable side dish choices are also available on the new farmer's cart serving line in the dining area.



Tiered fruit basket at East Hampton Middle School



Vegetable and fruit selections at East Hampton Middle School

East Hampton Middle School

Moving More White Milk

The milk cooler is a nontraditional tall, glass front, two-door reach-in cooler. To increase visibility of white milk, staff changed the proportion and location of white and chocolate milk. White milk is placed at eye level, with chocolate milk two shelves below. Fruit juices and a la carte water are stocked above and below the milk. A large “Sugar Shockers” floor banner next to the cooler provides nutrition education messages for students about healthy beverage choices outside of school.

Entree of the Day and Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals

Entrees were moved to the first well of the steam table on the serving line. The farmer’s cart in the dining area provides a second serving line for prepackaged, reimbursable grab-and-go meals, and a la carte fresh fruits, vegetables and milk.

The cafeteria highlights main entrees on the daily menus. A new electronic neon menu board outside the serving line identifies the day’s entree salad and sandwich, along with available sides. It also highlights the offerings on the farmer’s cart.

The cafeteria converted a popular a la carte choice – soft pretzels – into reimbursable meals by packaging them with a variety of meal component items, such as bagged apple slices, baby carrots, cheese sticks, hummus and juice. These meals are available on both serving lines to create fast grab-and-go choices for students, and make reimbursable meal identification easier for staff.

The grab-and-go meal concept appeals to students, and is quick and convenient. Having grab-and-go meals outside of the regular serving line streamlines student movement on the hot line, and increases selection of healthier salad and sandwich meals.



Milk Cooler at East Hampton Middle School



Grab-and-go cart at East Hampton Middle School

East Hampton Middle School



Serving line cooler with grab-and-go meals and healthy a la carte choices at East Hampton Middle School



Grab-and-go turkey sandwich meal at East Hampton Middle School

East Hampton Middle School

Creating School Synergies

- **Signage, Priming and Communication:** The new signage and neon menu board capture students' interest and attention. Colorful signage directly inside and outside the serving area directs students' attention to featured menu items. Colorful posters hang inside the serving area, and directly over each entrance and exit doorway. A floor banner with healthy beverage information is located at the beginning of the serving line near the milk cooler. A "Building a Healthy Tray" floor banner is located at end of the serving line. The building administrators provided several hallway bulletin boards for the food service program to use for rotating nutrition education messages.
- **Lunchroom Atmosphere:** The dining and serving areas are bright and well-lit. At the end of each lunch wave, selected students take brooms, mops and cloths to clean their table area. Monitors have a good rapport with students, are vigilant during the meal period, and are attentive to the condition of the area prior to student dismissal. Trash barrels are kept at the edge of the room until the end of the meal periods when students clear the tables. The dining area is a multi-purpose area used throughout the day and evening by study halls, family events and afterschool activities.
- **Student Involvement:** The cafeteria conducts student surveys about student menu preferences and suggestions.
- **Recognition and Support of School Food:** Not currently involved.
- **A La Carte Sales:** As part of the SLMP, snack racks were moved behind the cashier. Snacks are only available upon request, and include bagged chip-type foods and ice cream. New healthier a la carte offerings, such as hummus with vegetables and yogurt parfaits, are displayed in the reach-in cooler on the inside serving line, and outside on the farmer's cart. Signage focuses students on healthier items.

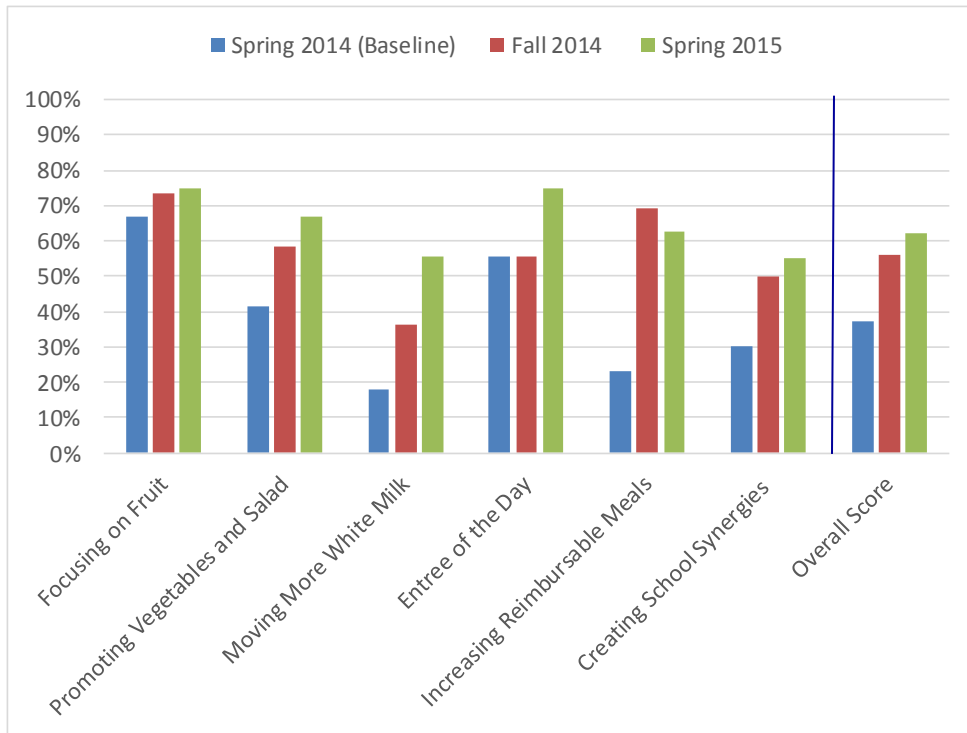
East Hampton Middle School

LUNCHROOM SELF-ASSESSMENT SCORE CARD

Figure 16 shows East Hampton Middle School’s Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card scores during baseline (spring 2014) and intervention (school year 2014-15). The school’s overall average score was 37 percent during baseline, which increased to 56 percent during fall 2014, and 62 percent during spring 2015.

All category scores increased from spring 2014 (baseline) to fall 2014 (intervention), and either maintained or increased for spring 2015 (intervention). The greatest overall increases from baseline to spring 2015 occurred in the individual category scores for “Increasing Reimbursable Meals” (39 percent), “Moving More White Milk” (37 percent), “Promoting Vegetables and Salad” (25 percent), and “Creating School Synergies” (25 percent). “Entree of the Day” increased by 19 percent and “Focusing on Fruit” increased by 8 percent

Figure 16. Score Cards for East Hampton Middle School



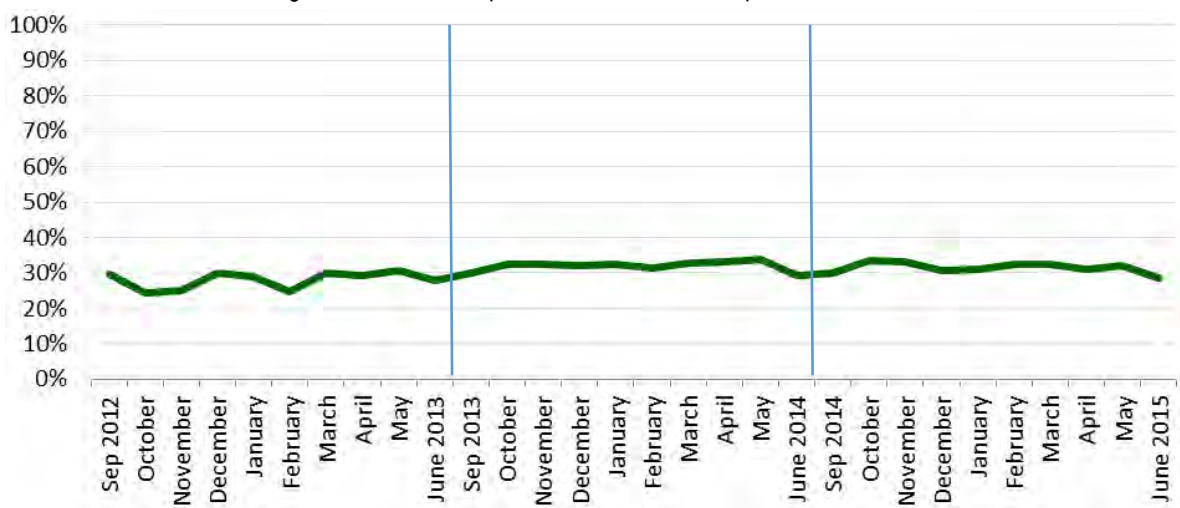
For information on the data collection process for score cards, see “[Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#)” in section 2. For information on the score card categories, see the score cards in the [appendix](#).

East Hampton Middle School

MEAL PARTICIPATION RATES

Figure 17 shows East Hampton Middle School's meal participation rates for the intervention year (2014-15), and the prior two school years (2012-13 and 2013-14). There were no statistically significant changes in total meal participation during the intervention year.

Figure 17. Meal Participation Rates for East Hampton Middle School



For information on the data collection process for meal participation rates, see “[Meal Participation Rates](#)” in section 2.

FOOD INDICATORS

The figures on the next page show students' average daily selection of fruits, vegetables and milk during baseline (April through June 2014) and intervention (school year 2014-15). Figure 18 shows the average daily selection by season (spring 2014, fall 2014, winter 2015 and spring 2015). Figure 19 shows the overall daily average for the baseline and intervention periods.

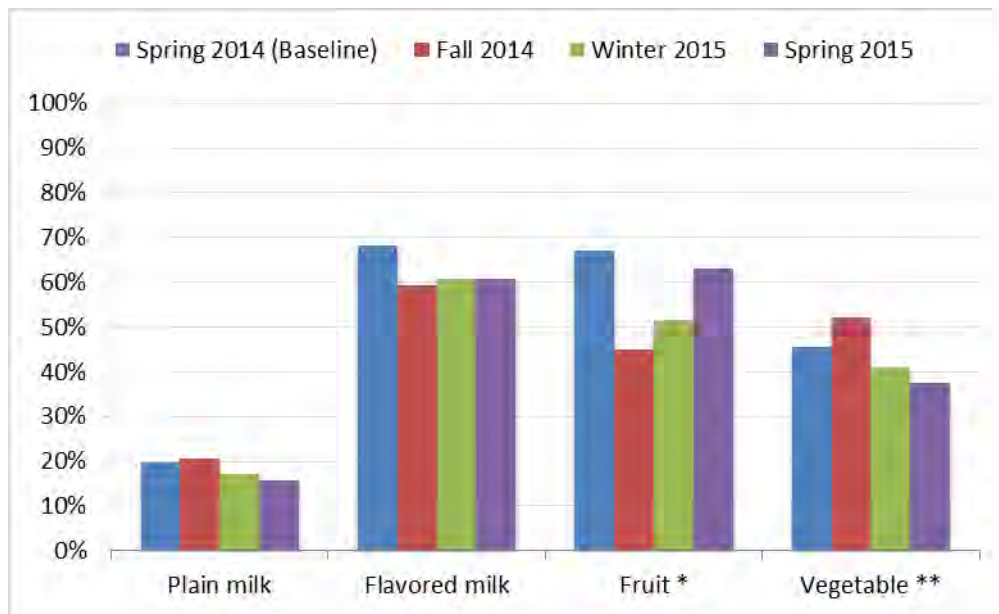
East Hampton Middle School had a statistically significant decrease in students' selection of flavored milk (68 to 60 percent). There was a statistically significant decrease in fruit selections (68 to 52 percent), but this was due to a strong seasonal effect. Many more students chose fruit in the spring, both the year before the intervention and the year of the intervention. Students' selection rates for fruit went back up in spring 2015.

The school's fruit counts included only fruit (no fruit juice). The school's vegetable counts included only side dish vegetables (no main dish vegetable entrees, e.g., salad bar meals and chef's salads).

For information on the data collection process for food indicators, see “[Food Indicators](#)” in section 2.

East Hampton Middle School

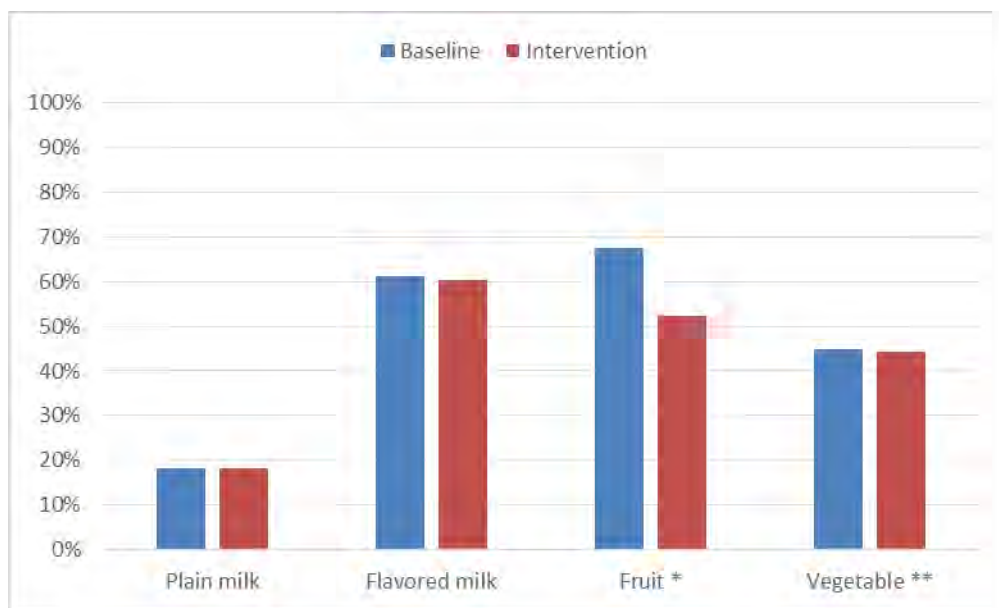
Figure 18. Students' Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables by Season at East Hampton Middle School



* Includes only fruit (no juice).

** Includes only side dish vegetables (no entree vegetables, e.g., salad bar meals and chef's salads).

Figure 19. Students' Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetable at East Hampton Middle School



* Includes only fruit (no juice).

** Includes only side dish vegetables (no entree vegetables, e.g., salad bar meals and chef's salads).

East Hampton Middle School

PLATE WASTE

Figure 20 summarizes the means (solid colored bars) and standard deviations (black lines) for the measure of plate waste at East Hampton Middle School. There was a statistically significant increase in fruit waste during the intervention. However, this increase occurred in the fall, then returned to baseline levels in the spring. The changes for milk waste and vegetable waste were not statistically significant.

Figure 20. Average Plate Waste at East Hampton Middle School *

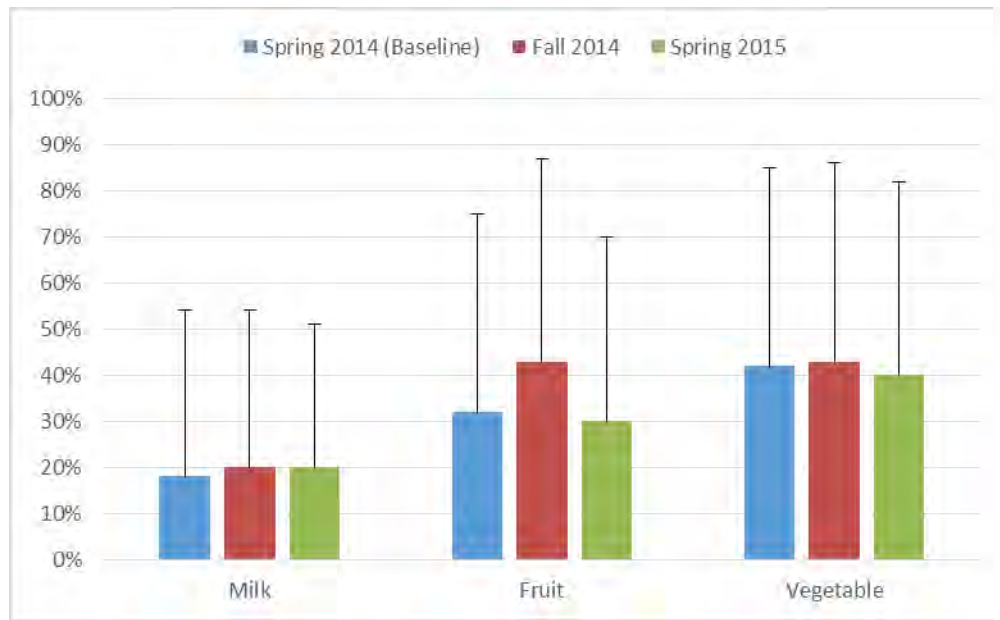


Table 14 summarizes East Hampton Middle School’s menu offered during the baseline plate waste collection. Table 15 summarizes the menus offered during the intervention plate waste collections. For information on the plate waste data collection process, see “Plate Waste” in section 2.

* The measures of plate waste range from 0 percent (no plate waste) to 100 percent (the entire portion is thrown away). The *mean* represents the average percentage of the food item wasted at that assessment period, and the *standard deviation* represents how spread out the values were. A large standard deviation indicates that there were as many students who wasted a lot of the item as there were students who wasted little of the item, so the mean does not capture the majority of the students. A small standard deviation indicates that the majority of students wasted about the same amount of the item, so the mean captures the majority of the students.

East Hampton Middle School

Table 14. Baseline Menu at East Hampton Middle School

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Spring 2014	Pizza Chicken tenders with roll Packaged salads with tuna or deli meat Chicken patty with bun Deli meat sandwiches Yogurt with fruit and granola	Squash French fries Vegetable cup (red bell peppers, cucumbers or carrots)	Apples Oranges Juice	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) milk Fat-free chocolate milk

* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich.

Table 15. Intervention Menus at East Hampton Middle School

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 1	Pizza Chicken tenders with roll Packaged salads with tuna or deli meat Deli meat sandwiches Yogurt with fruit and granola Soft pretzel with hummus and carrots **	French fries Vegetable cup (red bell peppers, cucumbers or carrots) Broccoli **	Apples Oranges Juice Plums ** Raisins ** Applesauce **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) milk Fat-free chocolate milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 2	Pizza Chicken tenders with roll Packaged salads with tuna or deli meat Deli meat sandwiches Yogurt with fruit and granola Soft pretzel with hummus and carrots **	French fries Vegetable cup (red bell peppers, cucumbers or carrots) Broccoli **	Apples Oranges Juice Applesauce **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) milk Fat-free chocolate milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 3	Pizza Chicken tenders with roll Packaged salads with tuna or deli meat Deli meat sandwiches Yogurt with fruit and granola Soft pretzel with hummus and carrots **	French fries Vegetable cup (red bell peppers, cucumbers or carrots) Broccoli **	Apples Oranges Juice Applesauce **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) milk Fat-free chocolate milk

* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich.

** Additional items not offered on baseline menu.

East Hampton Middle School

Table 15. Intervention Menus at East Hampton Middle School, continued

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Spring 2015 Data Collection 1	Pizza Chicken tenders with roll Packaged salads with tuna or deli meat Deli meat sandwiches Yogurt with fruit and granola Soft pretzel with hummus and carrots **	French fries Vegetable cup (red bell peppers, cucumbers or carrots) Broccoli **	Apples Oranges Juice Bananas **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk **
Spring 2015 Data Collection 2	Pizza Chicken tenders with roll Packaged salads with tuna or deli meat Deli meat sandwiches Yogurt with fruit and granola Soft pretzel with hummus and carrots **	French fries Vegetable cup (red bell peppers, cucumbers or carrots) Broccoli **	Apples Oranges Juice Bananas *	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk **
Spring 2015 Data Collection 3	Chicken tenders with roll Packaged salads with tuna or deli meat Deli meat sandwiches Yogurt with fruit and granola Soft pretzel with hummus and carrots **	French fries Vegetable cup (red bell peppers, cucumbers or carrots) Broccoli **	Apples Oranges Juice Applesauce ** Bananas **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk **
<p>* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich. ** Additional items not offered on baseline menu.</p>				

Illing Middle School

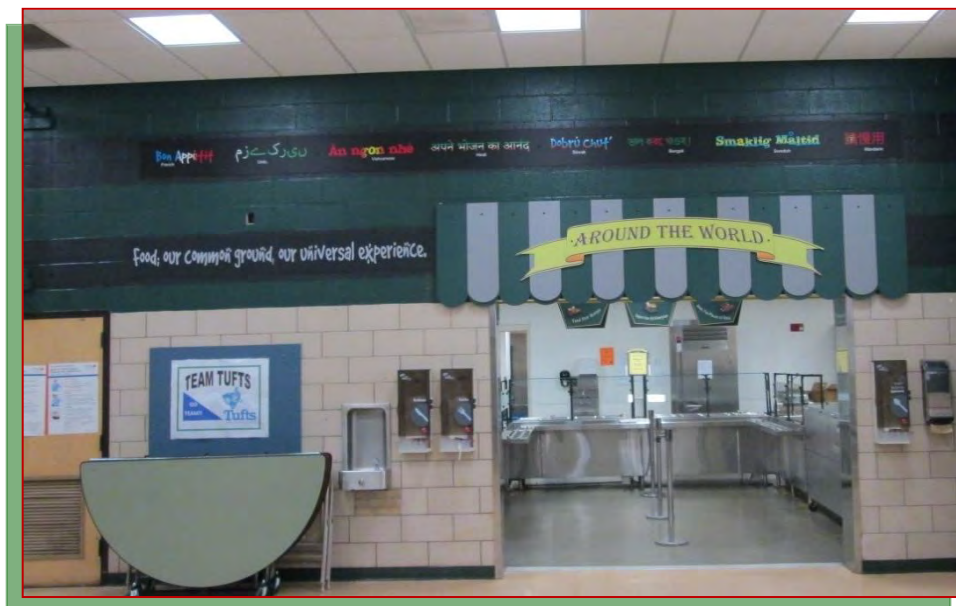
Illing Middle School Manchester, Connecticut

Grades: 6-8	Enrollment: 780	Average Daily Lunches: 592	Programs: NSLP, SBP
School Lunches	Free	Reduced	Paid
Percentage of Eligible Students	53%	9%	38%
Meal Participation Rate	79%	69%	73%

October 2015

Illing Middle School has bright, clean, and organized serving and dining areas. The serving lines are well spaced with smooth traffic flow to accommodate the large lunch waves. Serving line shelves are mostly glass, which provides maximum visibility for menu items. Daily work routines for each employee are clearly organized.

As part of the SLMP, the school district's maintenance staff gave the serving line entrances a face-lift with new paint and designed panels. The new design integrates nutrition messages with the school's mascot and colors, and instantly grabs students' attention when they enter the dining area.



Cafeteria entrance at Illing Middle School

Illing Middle School

Illing Middle School's SLMP action plan included:

- giving the cafeteria entrance a face-lift to support the Smarter Lunchrooms concept *;
- providing interior signage and menu boards to promote healthy eating habits through the Smarter Lunchrooms concepts;
- purchasing multi-tiered baskets to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables on the serving line; and
- creating a grab-and-go serving line to increase sales of alternate main meal choices.

The following information summarizes the cafeteria operations during the SLMP for the six Smarter Lunchrooms areas of the B.E.N. Center's Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card. The cafeteria's strategies for "Entree of the Day" and "Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals" are presented together. For information on the score card categories, see "[Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#)" in section 2, and the score cards in the [appendix](#).

Focusing on Fruit

The cafeteria offers a wide variety of fruit choices on the serving lines. A triple-tiered wrought iron basket provides additional fresh fruits at the POS on each of the four serving lines.



Fruit Selections at Illing Middle School



Tiered fruit display at Illing Middle School

* Note: This work was completed by Manchester Public Schools and was not part of the SLMP budget.

Illing Middle School

Promoting Vegetables and Salad

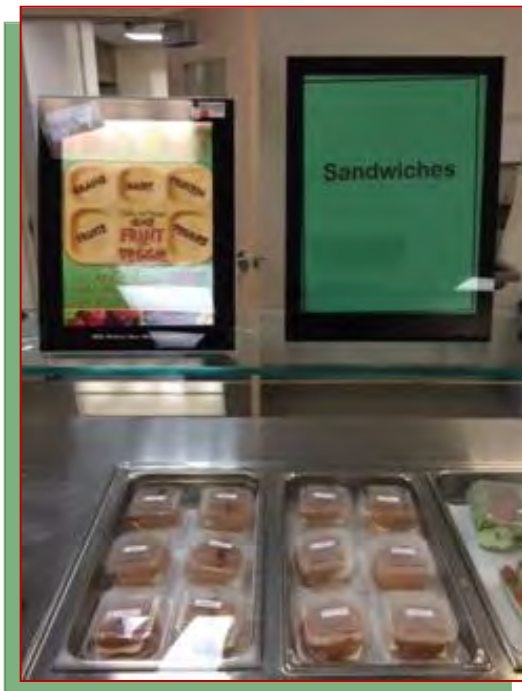
Pre-made chef's salads are available daily on a grab-and-go line to encourage speedy checkout for students. Bagged baby carrots are available daily, and are packaged with sandwiches to make a reimbursable meal on the grab-and-go line. A vegetable of the day is also available.

Moving More White Milk

Sixteen-case movable milk coolers on each serving line include all beverages available for sale as part of reimbursable meals and a la carte. To increase visibility of white milk, the cafeteria staff placed milk in the first half of the coolers, with white milk in front and chocolate milk in back. The last part of the coolers are stocked with a la carte beverage choices, e.g., juice and water.

Entree of the Day and Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals

One serving line is dedicated to grab-and-go bundled reimbursable meal choices. Packaged grab-and-go meals are clearly labeled, allowing students to make selections quickly. This speeds up the pace on the other three hot lunch lines. Hot line signage clearly indicates the daily entree to students at each section of the serving line. Steam table choices are easily seen from the students' side of the serving line. Each hot entree section uses two servers to keep the line moving smoothly.



Grab-and-go sandwiches at Illing Middle School



Grab-and-go salad meal at Illing Middle School

Illing Middle School

Creating School Synergies

- **Signage, Priming and Communication:** Instead of traditional menu boards, the cafeteria uses daily signs to identify specific hot items and keep students informed of available choices. Colorful, kid-friendly signs also let students know what items are included with their meal. Signs with nutrition education messages hang from the ceiling.



Nutrition education messages on the serving line at Illing Middle School



Signs promoting fruits and vegetables on the serving line at Illing Middle School

Illing Middle School

- **Lunchroom Atmosphere:** All serving line equipment is immaculate and well-kept. Food service staff have a good rapport with students. The monitoring staff moves throughout the dining area and have a good relationship with students. Custodians routinely wipe tables, clear the floor of debris, and empty trash barrels between lunch waves. The dining area is used for individual student tutoring during the school day, and bus dismissal at the end of the day.
- **Student Involvement:** Students make daily announcements that promote the lunch menus.
- **Recognition and Support of School Food:** The school participates in Farm to School activities.
- **A La Carte Sales:** The cafeteria sells a limited selection of la carte snack foods, such as bagged chip-type foods and cookies. Students must request a la carte snack items, which are on racks behind the cashiers.

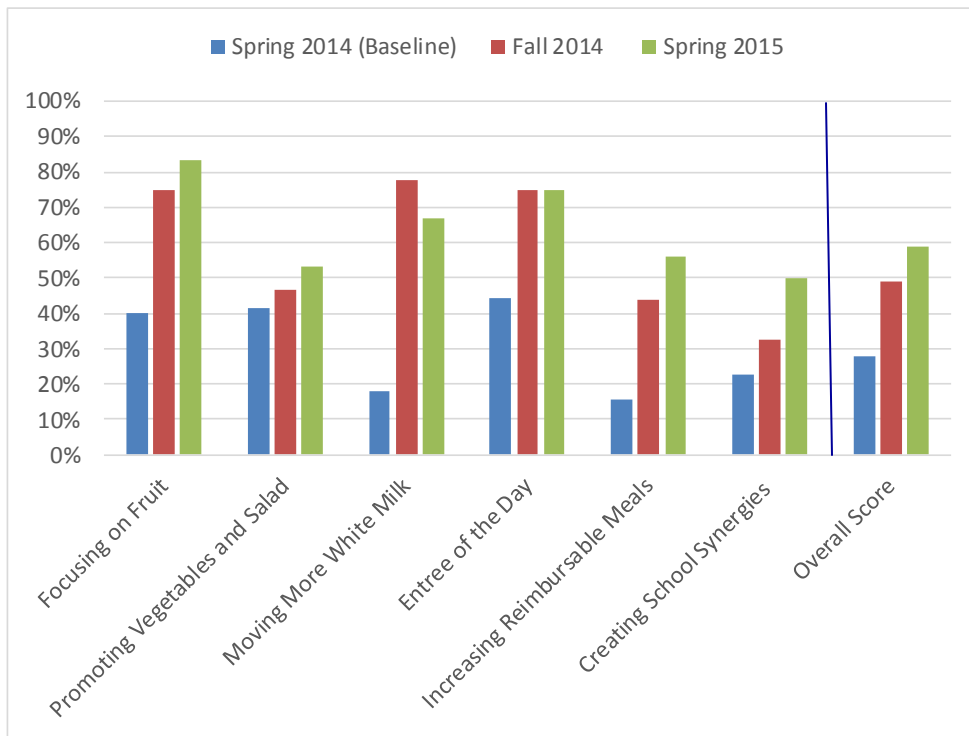
Illing Middle School

LUNCHROOM SELF-ASSESSMENT SCORE CARD

Figure 21 shows Illing Middle School’s Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card scores during baseline (spring 2014) and intervention (school year 2014-15). The school’s overall average score was 28 percent during baseline, which increased to 49 percent during fall 2014, and 59 percent during spring 2015.

All category scores increased from spring 2014 (baseline) to fall 2014 (intervention). The greatest overall increases from baseline to spring 2015 occurred in the individual category scores for “Moving More White Milk” (49 percent), “Focusing on Fruit” (43 percent), “Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals” (41 percent), and “Entree of the Day” (30 percent). “Creating School Synergies” increased by 28 percent and “Promoting Vegetables and Salad” increased by 12 percent.

Figure 21. Score Cards for Illing Middle School



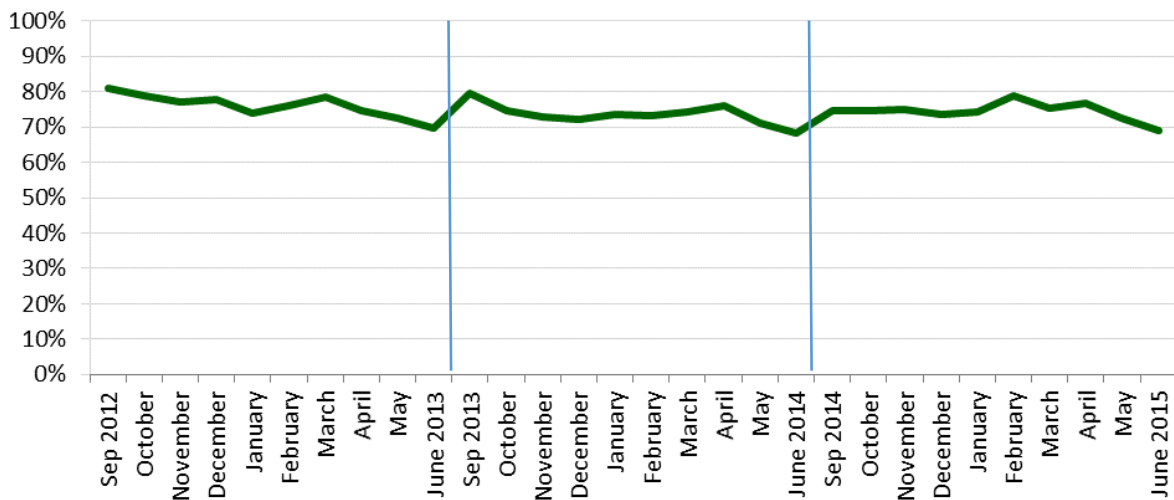
For information on the data collection process for score cards, see “[Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#)” in section 2. For information on the score card categories, see the score cards in the [appendix](#).

Illing Middle School

MEAL PARTICIPATION RATES

Figure 22 shows Illing Middle School’s meal participation rates for the intervention year (2014-15), and the prior two school years (2012-13 and 2013-14). There had been a statistically significant downward trend in meal participation over the previous two years. This turned around and improved significantly when the SLMP started, and held steady during school year 2014-15.

Figure 22. Meal Participation Rates for Illing Middle School



For information on the data collection process for meal participation rates, see “[Meal Participation Rates](#)” in section 2.

FOOD INDICATORS

The figures on the next page show students’ average daily selection of fruits, vegetables and milk during baseline (April through June 2014) and intervention (school year 2014-15). Figure 23 shows the average daily selection by season (spring 2014, fall 2014, winter 2015 and spring 2015). Figure 24 shows the overall daily average for the baseline and intervention periods.

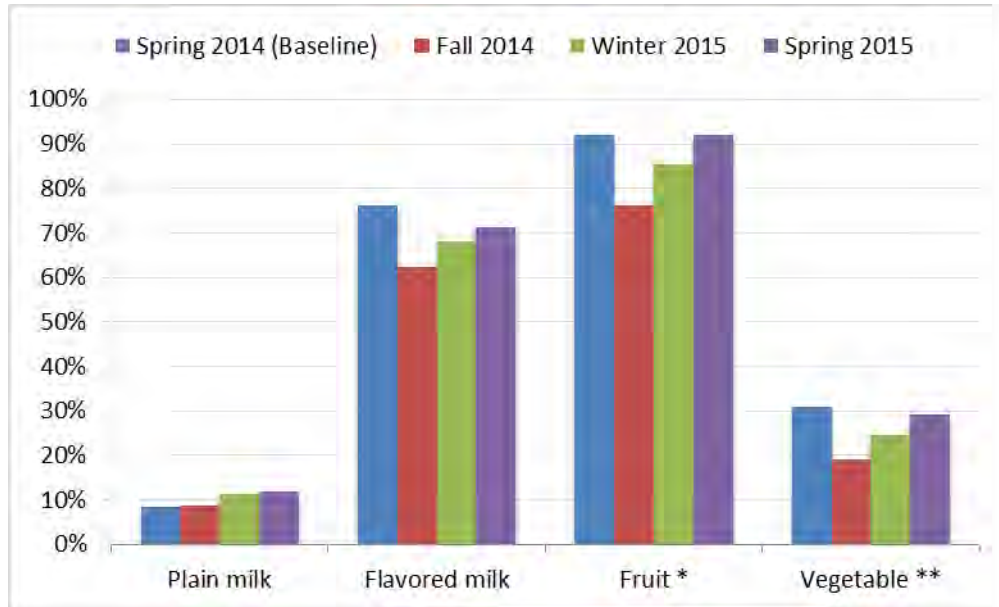
Illing Middle School had a trend for an increase in selection of plain milk after the intervention (8 to 10 percent). Selection of flavored milk had a statistically significant decrease (76 to 67 percent).

There was also trend for a decrease in fruit selections (92 to 84 percent). The school’s fruit counts included fruit and juice. The school’s vegetable counts included only side dish vegetables (no main dish vegetable entrees, e.g., salad bar meals and chef’s salads).

For information on the data collection process for food indicators, see “[Food Indicators](#)” in section 2.

Illing Middle School

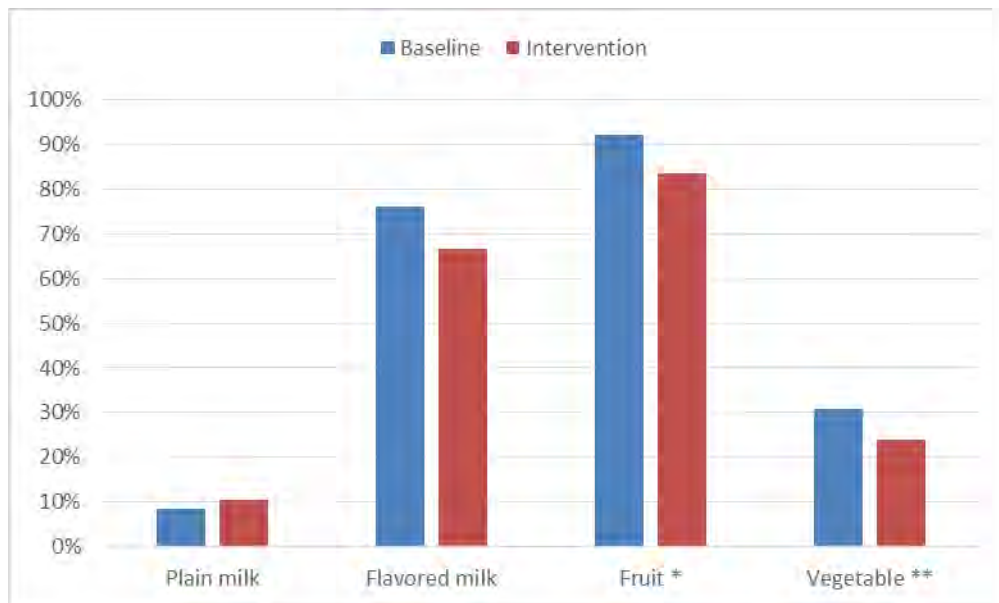
Figure 23. Students' Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables by Season at Illing Middle School



* Includes fruit and juice.

** Includes only side dish vegetables (no entree vegetables, e.g., salad bar meals and chef's salads).

Figure 24. Students' Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetable at Illing Middle School



* Includes fruit and juice.

** Includes only side dish vegetables (no entree vegetables, e.g., salad bar meals and chef's salads).

Iling Middle School

PLATE WASTE

Figure 25 summarizes the means (solid colored bars) and standard deviations (black lines) for the measure of plate waste at Iling Middle School. There was a statistically significant increase in milk waste, from 22 percent in spring 2014 (baseline) to 34 percent in spring 2015 (intervention). The changes for fruit waste and vegetable waste were not statistically significant.

Figure 25. Average Plate Waste at Iling Middle School *

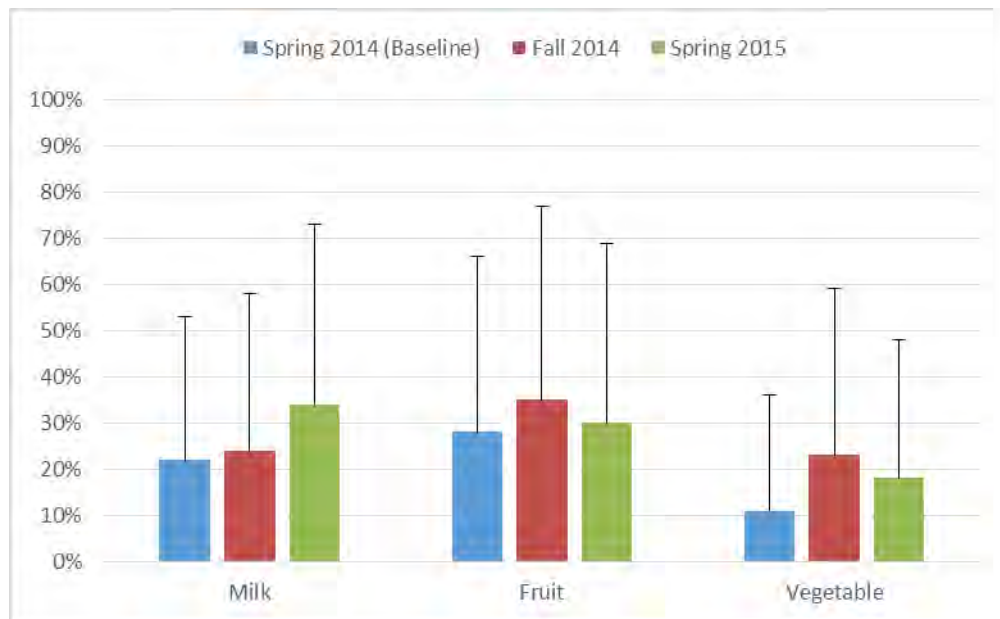


Table 16 summarizes Iling Middle School’s menu offered during the baseline plate waste collection. Table 17 summarizes the menus offered during the intervention plate waste collections. For information on the plate waste data collection process, see “Plate Waste” in section 2.

* The measures of plate waste range from 0 percent (no plate waste) to 100 percent (the entire portion is thrown away). The *mean* represents the average percentage of the food item wasted at that assessment period, and the *standard deviation* represents how spread out the values were. A large standard deviation indicates that there were as many students who wasted a lot of the item as there were students who wasted little of the item, so the mean does not capture the majority of the students. A small standard deviation indicates that the majority of students wasted about the same amount of the item, so the mean captures the majority of the students.

Illing Middle School

Table 16. Baseline Menu at Illing Middle School

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Spring 2014	Ground beef in marinara sauce and breadsticks Deli meat sandwich Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick Chicken patty with bun Cheese quesadilla	Spinach salad Side salad	Apple Grapes Watermelon Fruit cup Applesauce Dried cranberries Juice	Skim milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk

* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich.

Table 17. Intervention Menus at Illing Middle School

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 1	Ground beef in marinara sauce and breadsticks Deli meat sandwich Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick Cheese quesadilla	Spinach salad Carrots	Apple Grapes Watermelon Fruit cup Applesauce Dried cranberries Juice Honeydew melon** Peach cup**	Skim milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 2	Ground beef in marinara sauce and breadsticks Deli meat sandwich Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick Chicken patty with bun Cheese quesadilla	Spinach salad Carrots Side salad	Apple Grapes Watermelon Fruit cup Applesauce Dried cranberries Juice Honeydew melon** Peach cup**	Skim milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 3	Ground beef in marinara sauce and breadsticks Deli meat sandwich Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick Chicken patty with bun Cheese quesadilla	Spinach salad Carrots Side salad	Apple Grapes Watermelon Fruit cup Applesauce Dried cranberries Juice	Skim milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk

* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich.

** Additional items not offered on baseline menu.

Illing Middle School

Table 17. Intervention Menus at Illing Middle School, continued

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Spring 2015 Data Collection 1	Ground beef in marinara sauce and breadsticks Deli meat sandwich Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick Chicken patty with bun Cheese quesadilla	Spinach salad Carrots Side salad	Apple Grapes Watermelon Fruit cup Applesauce Juice	Skim milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk Low-fat (1%) milk **
Spring 2015 Data Collection 2	Ground beef in marinara sauce and breadsticks Deli meat sandwich Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick Chicken patty with bun Cheese quesadilla	Spinach salad Carrots Side salad	Apple Grapes Watermelon Fruit cup Applesauce Dried cranberries Juice Strawberries **	Skim milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk Low-fat (1%) milk **
Spring 2015 Data Collection 3	Ground beef in marinara sauce and breadsticks Cheese quesadilla	Spinach salad	Apple Grapes Watermelon Fruit cup Applesauce Dried cranberries Juice Pears**	Skim milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk Low-fat (1%) milk **
<p>* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich.</p> <p>** Additional items not offered on baseline menu.</p>				

New London High School

New London High School New London, Connecticut

Grades: 9-12 **Enrollment: 961** **Average Daily Lunches: 792** **Programs: NSLP, SBP**

School Lunches	Free	Reduced	Paid
Percentage of Eligible Students	91%	0%	9%
Meal Participation Rate	82%	0%	82%

October 2015

New London High School offers universal feeding. The school implemented Provision 2 during school years 2012-13 and 2013-14, and became a CEP school effective with school year 2014-15.

The cafeteria has five serving lines including a deli line, two identical hot entree lines, an alternate hot choice line and a salad bar. Universal feeding means high participation, which requires efficient traffic flow and well-marked, stocked and ready-to-go reimbursable meal items.

New London High School's SLMP action plan included:

- using new signage and posters in the serving lines and dining area;
- using decorative containers on the serving line and at cash registers, e.g., baskets and colored bowls and trays;
- moving trash cans and custodial items away from the serving lines;
- displaying fruits and vegetables on serving lines at students' eye level;
- changing milk cooler stocking;
- adding a grab-and-go area with reimbursable salad and sandwich meals; and
- printing decorative labels for prepacked food items.

The following information summarizes the cafeteria operations during the SLMP for the six Smarter Lunchrooms areas of the B.E.N. Center's Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card. The cafeteria's strategies for "Entree of the Day" and "Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals" are presented together. For more information on the score card categories, see "[Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#)" in section 2, and the score cards in the [appendix](#).

New London High School

Focusing on Fruit

The cafeteria staff placed multiple fruit choices in decorative containers at the two POS stations. Due to their location, size and equipment configuration, it was not possible to add multiple fruit locations on the five existing serving lines. Alternatively, the cafeteria staff strategically placed signage on the serving lines to encourage students to take fruit. Posters focused on fruit were placed in the serving line waiting areas, and dining area.



Fruit selections at New London High School

Promoting Vegetables and Salad

A reimbursable meal salad bar entree line is available. The daily variety of vegetables includes at least four of the five vegetable subgroups.



Salad bar at New London High School

New London High School

Moving More White Milk

The serving area has four serving lines around the walls with four milk coolers boxed together in the center. Two coolers are used for storage and two coolers are used for daily meal service. The two service coolers are used for reimbursable meal beverages and a la carte beverages. To increase visibility of white milk, the cafeteria staff stocks white milk in the first section with chocolate milk behind, and a la carte beverages (e.g., water and juice) in the last section.

Entree of the Day and Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals

Grab-and-go sandwich meals are available from a glass-front merchandiser between the two POS stations. The cafeteria added a new grab-and-go reimbursable meal choice of bagel, yogurt and string cheese.



Grab-and-go reimbursable meals cooler at New London High School

New London High School

Creating School Synergies

- **Signage, Priming and Communication:** A large colorful, mascot-themed banner hangs over the main hot serving lines. A large “Grab ‘N Go” banner directs students’ attention to the location for grab-and-go foods. Signage on the serving lines encourages students to take fruit.
- **Lunchroom Atmosphere:** The cafeteria environment is pleasant, neat and well-controlled for this age group. The dining area contains students’ artwork. Interactive dining monitors have a good rapport with students. There is a positive relationship between custodial staff and food service staff. Cleaning supplies and trash barrels are kept in one corner until needed. Students must seat themselves before being released to enter the serving area. This contributes to a quieter atmosphere, but can sometimes hold up students from getting meals and shorten their available eating time.
- **Student Involvement:** On a monthly basis, cafeteria staff sits with selected students during lunch to get their input on school meals.
- **Recognition and Support of School Food:** The school participates in Fuel Up to Play 60. Participation in Farm to School, an on-site FoodCorps staff member and a school garden offer many opportunities to promote fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **A La Carte Sales:** The cafeteria sells a la carte snack items after the main lunch lines have emptied. Students are required to pay cash for snacks, which consist of bagged chip-type foods and ice cream.

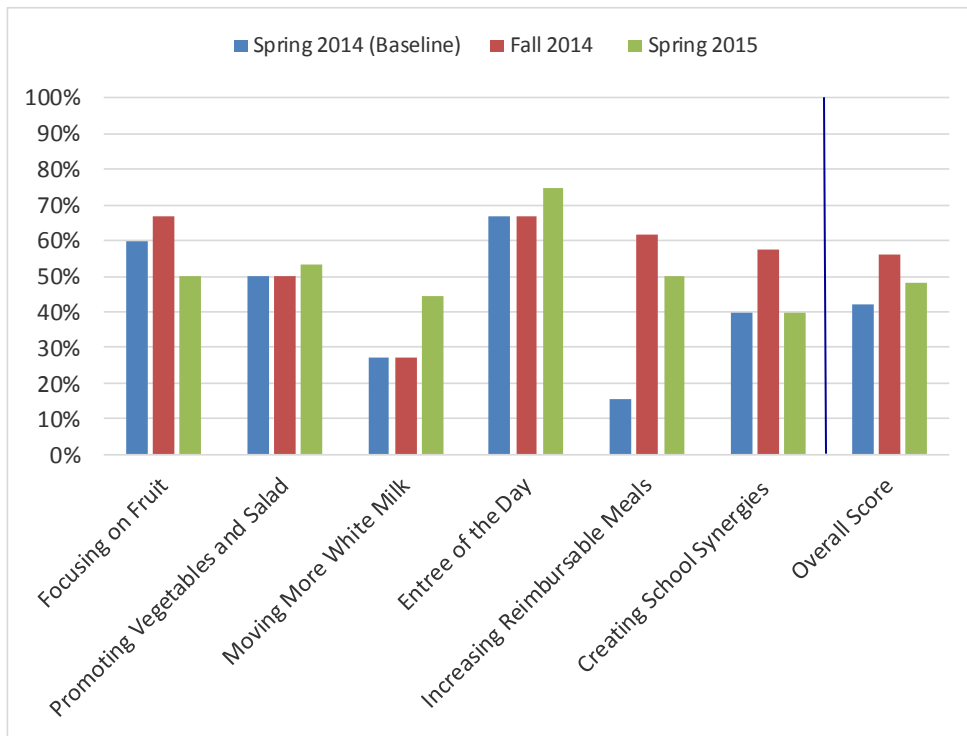
New London High School

LUNCHROOM SELF-ASSESSMENT SCORE CARD

Figure 26 shows New London High School’s Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card scores during baseline (spring 2014) and intervention (school year 2014-15). The school’s overall average score was 42 percent during baseline, which increased to 56 percent during fall 2014, and decreased to 48 percent during spring 2015.

Overall increases from spring 2014 (baseline) to spring 2015 (intervention) occurred in the individual category scores for “Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals” (35 percent), “Moving More White Milk” (17 percent), and “Entree of the Day” (8 percent). “Promoting Vegetables and Salad” increased by 3 percent. An overall decrease from baseline to spring 2015 occurred in the score for “Focusing on Fruit” (10 percent). The overall category score for “Creating School Synergies” increased by 18 percent in fall 2014, but returned to baseline in spring 2015.

Figure 26. Score Cards for New London High School



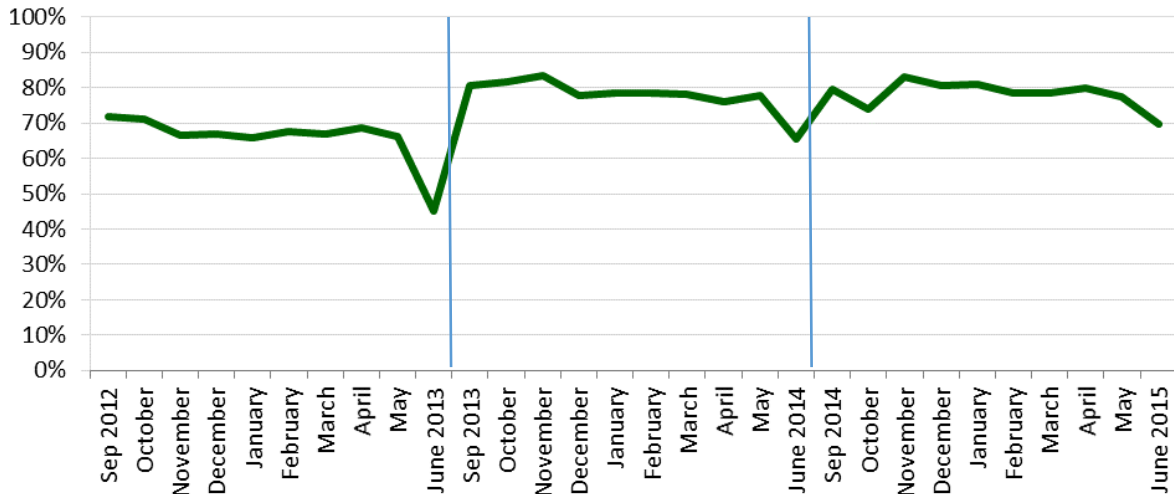
For information on the data collection process for score cards, see “[Lunchroom Self-Assessment Score Card](#)” in section 2. For information on the score card categories, see the score cards in the [appendix](#).

New London High School

MEAL PARTICIPATION RATES

Figure 27 shows New London High School’s meal participation rates for the intervention year (2014-15), and the prior two school years (2012-13 and 2013-14). There was a statistically significant increase in participation during the previous year (school year 2013-14). This increase held steady over the intervention year.

Figure 27. Meal Participation Rates for New London High School



For information on the data collection process for meal participation rates, see “[Meal Participation Rates](#)” in section 2.

FOOD INDICATORS

The figures on the next page show students’ average daily selection of fruits, vegetables and milk during baseline (April through June 2014) and intervention (school year 2014-15). Figure 28 shows the average daily selection by season (spring 2014, fall 2014, winter 2015 and spring 2015). Figure 29 shows the overall daily average for the baseline and intervention periods.

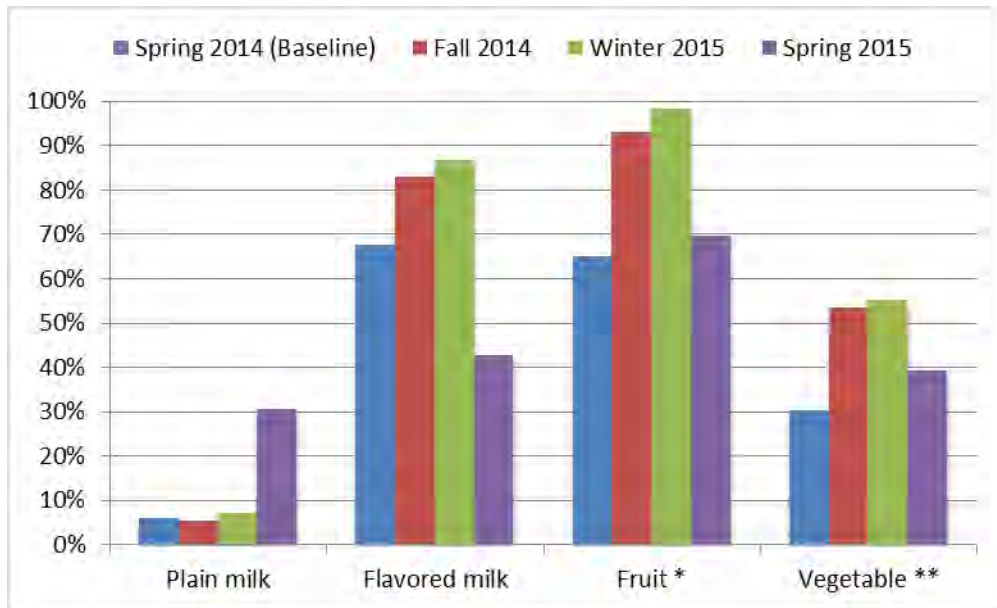
New London High School had a statistically significant increase in students’ selection of both fruits and vegetables.

- Fruit selections increased from 65 to 88 percent. The school’s fruit counts included both fruit and fruit juice.
- Vegetable selections increased from 30 to 50 percent. The school’s vegetable counts included side dish vegetables and main dish vegetable entrees, such as salad bar meals and chef’s salads.

For information on the data collection process for food indicators, see “[Food Indicators](#)” in section 2.

New London High School

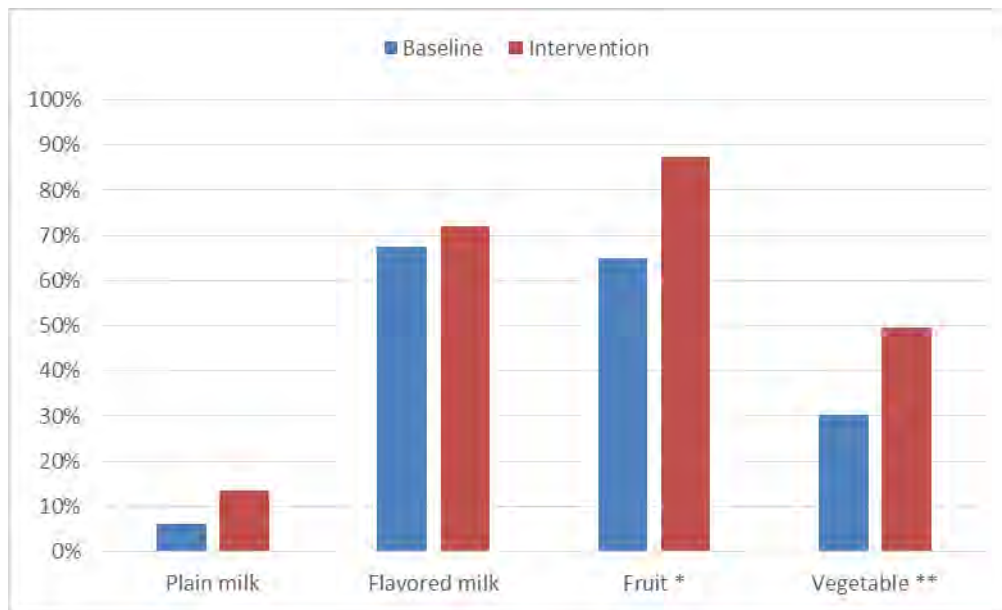
Figure 28. Students' Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetables by Season at New London High School



* Includes fruit and juice.

** Includes side dish vegetables and main dish vegetable entrees, e.g., salad bar meals and chef's salads.

Figure 29. Students' Average Daily Selection of Milk, Fruit and Vegetable at New London High School



* Includes fruit and juice.

** Includes side dish vegetables and main dish vegetable entrees, e.g., salad bar meals and chef's salads.

New London High School

PLATE WASTE

Figure 30 summarizes the means (solid colored bars) and standard deviations (black lines) for the measure of plate waste at New London High School. There was a statistically significant decrease in milk waste, from 37 percent in spring 2014 (baseline) to 25 percent in spring 2015 (intervention). There was also a statistically significant decrease in vegetable waste, from 33 percent in spring 2014 to 15 percent in spring 2015. The change for fruit waste was not statistically significant.

Figure 30. Average Plate Waste at New London High School *

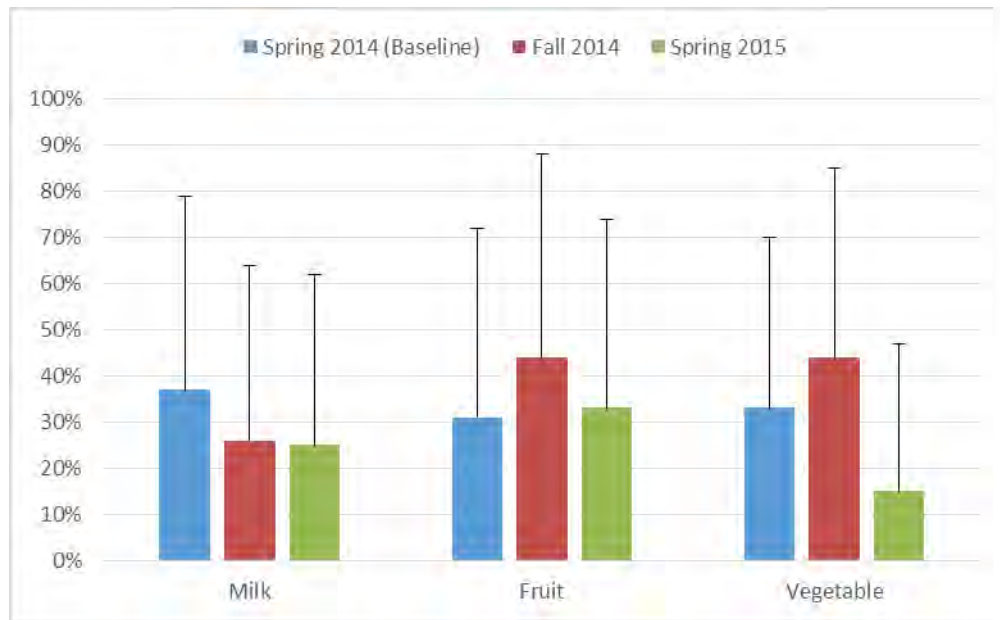


Table 18 summarizes New London High School’s menu offered during the baseline plate waste collection. Table 19 summarizes the menus offered during the intervention plate waste collections. For information on the plate waste data collection process, see “Plate Waste” in section 2.

* The measures of plate waste range from 0 percent (no plate waste) to 100 percent (the entire portion is thrown away). The *mean* represents the average percentage of the food item wasted at that assessment period, and the *standard deviation* represents how spread out the values were. A large standard deviation indicates that there were as many students who wasted a lot of the item as there were students who wasted little of the item, so the mean does not capture the majority of the students. A small standard deviation indicates that the majority of students wasted about the same amount of the item, so the mean captures the majority of the students.

New London High School

Table 18. Baseline Menu at New London High School

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Spring 2014	Nachos with beef and beans and brown rice Sandwich with deli meat Salad bar with egg, tuna or deli meat Chicken nuggets and roll Peanut butter and jelly sandwich	Corn Vegetable cup (carrots, cucumbers, or broccoli)	Fruit cup Plum Apple Applesauce Pear Orange Plum Juice	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk
* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich.				

Table 19. Intervention Menus at New London High School

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 1	Sandwich with deli meat Salad bar with egg, tuna or deli meat Peanut butter and jelly sandwich Pizza ** Yogurt, bagel and cheese stick **	Corn Vegetable cup (carrots, cucumbers, or broccoli)	Apple Pear Orange Plum Juice Banana ** Grapes **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 2	Nachos with beef and beans and brown rice Sandwich with deli meat Salad bar with egg, tuna or deli meat Peanut butter and jelly sandwich Hamburger	Corn Vegetable cup (carrots, cucumbers, or broccoli)	Apple Pear Orange Plum Juice	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk
* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich. ** Additional items not offered on baseline menu.				

New London High School

Table 19. Intervention Menus at New London High School, continued

Time Period	Entrees (Meat/Meat Alternates and Grains *)	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk
Fall 2014 Data Collection 3	Sandwich with deli meat Salad bar with egg, tuna or deli meat Chicken nuggets and roll Peanut butter and jelly sandwich	Corn Vegetable cup (carrots, cucumbers, or broccoli)	Apple Pear Orange Plum Juice Bananas **	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk
Spring 2015 Data Collection 1	Sandwich with deli meat Salad bar with egg, tuna or deli meat Chicken nuggets and roll Peanut butter and jelly sandwich Chicken casserole with bread *	Corn Vegetable cup (carrots, cucumbers, or broccoli)	Fruit cup Apple Pear Orange Plum Juice	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk
Spring 2015 Data Collection 2	Sandwich with deli meat Salad bar with egg, tuna or deli meat Peanut butter and jelly sandwich Macaroni and cheese with beef ** Cheeseburger **	Corn Vegetable cup (carrots, cucumbers, or broccoli) French fries ** Green beans **	Fruit cup Apple Applesauce Pear Orange Plum Juice	Skim milk Low-fat (1%) plain milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk
<p>* All grains offered were whole grain or whole grain-rich. ** Additional items not offered on baseline menu.</p>				

Appendix

2013 Scorecard



Smarter Lunchrooms Self-Assessment

Scorecard

Since its founding in 2009 the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement has championed the use of evidence-based, simple low and no-cost changes to lunchrooms which can simultaneously improve participation and profits while decreasing waste. This tool can help you to evaluate your lunchroom, congratulate yourself for things you are doing well and identify areas of opportunity for improvement.

Instructions

Read each of the statements below. Visualize your cafeteria, your service areas and your school building. Indicate whether the statement is true for your school by checking the box to the left. If you believe that your school does not reflect the statement 100% do not check the box on the left. After you have completed the checklist, tally all boxes with check marks and write this number in the designated area on the back of the form. This number represents your school's baseline score. The boxes which are not checked are areas of opportunity for you to consider implementing in the future. We recommend completing this checklist annually to measure your improvements!

It's not nutrition...until it's eaten!



Important Words

Service areas: Any location where students can purchase or are provided with food

Dining areas: Any location where students can consume the food purchased or provided

Grab and Go Meals: Any meal with components pre-packaged together for ease and convenience – such as a brown bag lunch or “Fun Lunch” etc.

Designated Line: Any foodservice line which has been specified for particular food items or concepts – such as a pizza line, deli line, salad line etc.

Alternative entrée options: Any meal component which could also be considered an entrée for students - such as the salad bar, yogurt parfait, vegetarian/vegan or meatless options etc.

Reimbursable “Combo Meal” pairings: Any reimbursable components available independently on your foodservice lines which you have identified as a part of a promotional complete meal – For example you decided your beef taco, seasoned beans, frozen strawberries and 1% milk are part of a promotional meal called the, “Mi Amigo Meal!” etc.

Non-functional lunchroom equipment: Any items which are either broken, awaiting repair or are simply not used during meal service – such as empty or broken steam tables, coolers, registers etc.

Good Rapport: Communication is completed in a friendly and polite manner

Focusing on Fruit

- Fruit is available in all food service areas
- Daily fruit options are available in two or more locations on the service lines
- At least one daily fruit option is available near all registers (If there are concerns regarding edible peel, fruit can be bagged or wrapped)
- At least two types of fruit are available daily
- Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing/hotel pans)



- A mixed variety of whole fruits are displayed together in bowls in all service areas
- Sliced or cut fruit is available daily
- Daily fruit options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students (Consider the average height of your students when determining line of sight)
- Daily fruit options are bundled into all grab and go meals available to students
 - All available fruit options have been given creative or descriptive names
- All fruit names are highlighted on all serving lines with name-cards or product IDs daily
- All fruit names are highlighted and legible on menu boards in all service and dining areas
 - Fruit options are not browning, bruised or otherwise damaged
- All fruit options are replenished so displays appear “full” continually throughout meal service and after each lunch period
- All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily fruit options with their meal

Promoting Vegetables & Salad

Vegetables are available in all food service areas

- Daily vegetable options are available in two or more locations in all service areas
- At least two types of vegetable are available daily
- Daily vegetable options are displayed in a location in the line of sight and reach of students (Consider the average height of your students when determining line of sight)
- Daily vegetable options are bundled into all grab and go meals available to students
 - A salad bar is available to all students
- All available vegetable options have been given creative or descriptive names
- All vegetable names are highlighted on all serving lines with name-cards or product IDs daily



- All vegetable names are highlighted and legible on menu boards in the service and dining areas
- Vegetables are not wilted, browning, or otherwise damaged
- All vegetable options are replenished so displays appear “full” continually throughout meal service and after each lunch period
- All staff members, especially those serving, have been trained to politely prompt students to select and consume the daily vegetable options with their meal

Moving More White Milk

- White milk is available in all service areas
- White milk is in two or more locations in all service areas
 - All beverage coolers have white milk available
 - White milk represents 1/3 of all visible milk in the lunchroom
 - White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers
 - White milk is eye-level and within reach of the students (Consider the average height of your students when determining eye-level)
 - White milk crates are placed so that they are the first beverage option seen in all milk coolers
- White milk is bundled into all grab and go meals available to students as the default beverage
- White milk is highlighted on all serving lines with a name-card or product ID daily
- White milk is highlighted and legible on the menu boards in all service and dining areas
- White milk is replenished so all displays appear “full” continually throughout meal service and after each lunch period



Entrée of the Day

- A daily entrée option has been identified to promote - a targeted entrée in each service area and for each designated line (deli-line, pizza-line etc.)



©The B.E.N. Center 2013

2013 Scorecard, continued

- Alternative entrée options (salad bar, yogurt parfaits etc.) are highlighted on posters or signs within all service and dining areas
- Daily targeted entrée is visible to students of average height for your school in all service areas and on each designated line
- Daily targeted entrée is placed as the first entrée option available in all service areas and on each designated line
- Daily targeted entrées have been provided with creative or descriptive names
- Targeted entrée name is highlighted on each respective serving line with a name-card or product ID daily
- Targeted entrée names are highlighted and legible on menu boards within all service and dining areas
- Daily targeted entrées are replenished so all displays appear "full" continually throughout meal service and after each lunch period
- A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (salad bars, snack rooms, speed lines, speed windows, dedicated service lines etc.)

Increasing Sales Reimbursable Meals



- Reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairings have been determined for each service area (i.e. - a targeted entrée, fruit, vegetable and milk or targeted entrée, milk and fruit etc.)
- All components of a reimbursable meal are available in two or more locations in the service areas
- A reimbursable meal has been bundled into a grab and go meal available to students
- Grab and go reimbursable meals are available in all service and dining areas (at a carte windows etc.)
- Grab and go reimbursable meals are available by all registers
- Grab and go reimbursable meals are within reach of students of average height for your school in all service areas
- Grab and go reimbursable meals are replenished so all displays appear "full" continually throughout meal service and after each lunch period
- Reimbursable meals can be created using alternative entrees (salad bar, yogurt parfait etc.)
- Reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairings have been provided creative or descriptive age-appropriate names (i.e. - Hungry Kid Meal, Meal Deal, Athlete's Meal, Bobcat Meal etc.)
- Names for reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairings are highlighted on serving lines with name-cards or product IDs daily (i.e. - "Crunchy Carrots - part of the Hungry Kid Meal!)
- Names for reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairings are highlighted and legible on menu boards within the service and dining areas

Reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairings are promoted on posters or signs within the lunchroom, along the lunch-line and within the school building

All components for reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairings are replenished so all displays appear "full" continually throughout meal service and after each lunch period

Creating School Synergies



- Posters displaying healthful foods are visible and readable from all points in the service and dining space
- Menu boards featuring today's meal components are visible and readable from all points in the service and dining space
- A dedicated space/menu board is visible and readable from 5ft away within the service and dining area where students can see tomorrow's menu items

Signage/posters/floor decals are available to direct students toward all service areas

Trash on the floors, in, or near garbage cans is removed between each lunch period

Cleaning supplies and utensils are returned to a cleaning closet or are not visible during service and dining

Compost/recycling/tray return and garbage cans are tidied between lunch periods

Compost/recycling/tray return and garbage cans are at least 5 feet away from dining students

Dining and service areas are clear of any non-functional lunchroom equipment or tables during service

Sneeze guards in all service areas are clean

Trays and cutlery are within arm's reach to the student of average height within your school

Obstacles and barriers to enter service and dining areas have been removed (i.e. - garbage cans, mop buckets, cones, lost and found etc.)

Clutter is removed from service and dining areas promptly (i.e. - empty boxes, shipments of foods, empty crates, pans, lost and found etc.)

- Self-serve salad bar utensils are at the appropriate portion size or larger
- Student artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas
- All lights in dining and service areas are currently functional and on
- Dining space is branded to reflect student body or school (i.e. - school lunchroom is named for a school mascot or local hero/celebrity
- Milk coolers and service lines are decorated with decals/magnets etc. wherever possible
- Students must ask to purchase a la carte items from staff members

Students must use cash to purchase a la carte items which are not reimbursable

Half portions are available for at least two dessert options

A monthly menu is provided to all student families, teachers, and administrators

A monthly menu is visible and readable within all communal spaces within the school building

The monthly menu highlights creative and descriptive names which were provided for the menu items

Posters or signs highlighting the creative and descriptive names and respective menu items are visible in the service and dining areas

Student groups are involved in the development of creative, descriptive and names for menu items

Student groups are involved in the creation of artwork promoting menu items within the dining space and school building

Student groups are involved in modeling good behavior to others (i.e. - high school students eating in the middle school lunchroom once a month) at least quarterly

Student surveys are used to inform menu development, dining space décor and promotional ideas

Teachers and administrators are involved in the development and implementation of promotional ideas

Teachers and administrators dine in the lunchroom with students at least quarterly

Cafeteria monitors have good rapport with students and lunchroom staff

The dining space is used for other learning activities beyond meal service (i.e. - measuring, cooking or school garden activities) at least quarterly

Students, teachers, and or administrators announce daily meal deals or targeted items in daily announcements

The school participates in other food program promotions such as: Farm to School, Chefs Move to School, Fuel Up to Play 60, Share our Strength etc.

The school has applied or been selected for in the Healthier US School Challenge

Staff is trained to smile and greet students upon their entering the service line

Staff is encouraged to eat in the lunchroom with students when on break quarterly

All promotional signs and posters are rotated, updated or changed at least quarterly

All creative and descriptive names are rotated, updated or changed at least quarterly



Total Checked: _____

2014 Scorecard



Smarter Lunchrooms Self-Assessment

2014
Scorecard

©The B.E.N. Center 2014

Since its founding in 2009 the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement has championed the use of evidence-based, simple low and no-cost changes to lunchrooms which can simultaneously improve participation and profits while decreasing waste. This tool can help you to evaluate your lunchroom, congratulate yourself for things you are doing well and and identify areas of opportunity for improvement

Instructions

Read each of the statements below. Visualize your cafeteria, your service areas and your school building. Indicate whether the statement is true for your school by checking the box to the left. If you believe that your school does not reflect the statement 100% do not check the box on the left. After you have completed the checklist, tally all boxes with check marks and write this number in the designated area on the back of the form. This number represents your school's baseline score. The boxes which are not checked are areas of opportunity for you to consider implementing in the future. We recommend completing this checklist annually to measure your improvements!

It's not nutrition...until it's eaten!

Important Words

Service areas: Any location where students can purchase or are provided with food

Dining areas: Any location where students can consume the food purchased or provided

Grab and Go Meals: Any meal with components pre-packaged together for ease and convenience - such as a brown bag lunch or "Fun Lunch" etc.

Designated Line: Any foodservice line which has been specified for particular food items or concepts - such as a pizza line, deli line, salad line etc.

Alternative entrée options: Any meal component which could also be considered an entrée for students - such as the salad bar, yogurt parfait, vegetarian/vegan or meatless options etc.

Reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairings: Any reimbursable components available independently on your foodservice lines which you have identified as a part of a promotional complete meal - For example you decided your beef taco, seasoned beans, frozen strawberries and 1% milk are part of a promotional meal called the, "Mi Amigo Meal!" etc.

Non-functional lunchroom equipment: Any items which are either broken, awaiting repair or are simply not used during meal service - such as empty or broken steam tables, coolers, registers etc.

Good Rapport: Communication is completed in a friendly and polite manner

All Points of Sale: Any location where a register/pin-pad is located for example: deli-line, snack window, a la carte line, hot line, kiosks/carts etc.

Focusing on Fruit

- At least two types of fruit are available daily
- Sliced or cut fruit is available daily
- Fruit options are not browning, bruised or otherwise damaged
- Daily fruit options are given creative, age-appropriate names



- Fruit is available at all points of sale (deli-line, snack windows, a la carte lines etc.)
- Daily fruit options are available in at least two different locations on each service line
- At least one daily fruit option is available near all registers (If there are concerns regarding edible peel, fruit can be bagged or wrapped)
- Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chafing/hotel pans)
- A mixed variety of whole fruits are displayed together
- Daily fruit options are easily seen by students of average height for your school
- Daily fruit options are bundled into all grab and go meals available to students
- Daily fruit options are written legibly on menu boards in all service and dining areas

Promoting Vegetables & Salad

- At least two types of vegetable are available daily
- Vegetables are not wilted, browning, or otherwise damaged
- At least one vegetable option is available in all foodservice areas
- Individual salads or a salad bar is available to all students
- The salad bar is highly visible and located in a high traffic area
- Self-serve salad bar utensils are at the appropriate portion size or larger for all fruits and vegetable offered
- Self-serve salad bar utensils are smaller for croutons, dressing and other non-produce items
- Daily vegetable options are available in at least two different locations on each service line
- Daily vegetable options are easily seen by students of average height for your school
- A daily vegetable option is bundled into grab and go meals available to students
- A default vegetable choice is established by pre-plating a vegetable on some of the trays



- Available vegetable options have been given creative or descriptive names
- All vegetable names are printed/written on name-cards or product IDs and displayed next to each vegetable option daily
- All vegetable names are written and legible on menu boards
- All vegetable names are included on the published monthly school lunch menu

Moving More White Milk

- All beverage coolers have white milk available
- White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers
- White milk crates are placed so that they are the first beverage option seen in all designated milk coolers
- White milk is available at all points of sale (deli-line, snack windows, a la carte lines etc.)
- White milk represents at least 1/3 of all visible milk in the lunchroom
- White milk is easily seen by students of average height for your school
- White milk is bundled into all grab and go meals available to students as the default beverage
- White milk is promoted on menu boards legibly
- White milk is replenished so all displays appear "full" continually throughout meal service and after each lunch period

**Entrée of the Day**

- A daily entrée option has been identified to promote as a "targeted entrée" in each service area and for each designated line (deli-line, snack windows, a la carte lines etc.)
- Daily targeted entrée options are highlighted on posters or signs
- Daily targeted entrée is easily seen by students of average height for your school
- Daily targeted entrées have been provided creative or descriptive names
- All targeted entrée names are printed/written on name-cards or product IDs and displayed next to each respective entrée daily



2014 Scorecard, continued

- └ All targeted entrée names are written and legible on menu boards
- └ All targeted entrée names are included on the published monthly school lunch menu
- └ All targeted entrees are replenished so as to appear "full" throughout meal service

Increasing Sales Reimbursable Meals



- └ A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (salad bars, snack windows, speed lines, speed windows, dedicated service lines etc.)
- └ Reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairings are available and promoted daily
- └ A reimbursable meal has been bundled into a grab and go meal available to students
- └ Grab and go reimbursable meals are available at a convenience line/speed window
- └ The convenience line offers only reimbursable grab and go meals with low-fat non-flavored milk fruit and/or vegetable.
- └ Grab and go reimbursable meals are easily seen by students of average height for your school
- └ The School offers universal free lunch
- └ A reimbursable combo meal pairing is available daily using alternative entrees (salad bar, fruit & yogurt parfait etc.)
- └ Reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairings have been provided creative or descriptive age-appropriate names (i.e. - The Hungry Kid Meal, The Athlete's Meal, Bobcat Meal etc.)
- └ Reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairing names are written/printed on name-cards, labels, or product IDs and displayed next to each respective meal daily
- └ All reimbursable "Combo Meal" names are written and legible on menu boards
- └ All reimbursable "Combo Meal" names are included on the published monthly school lunch menu
- └ Reimbursable "Combo Meal" pairings are promoted on signs or posters
- └ The named reimbursable "Combo Meal" is promoted during the school's morning announcements
- └ Students have the option to pre-order their lunch in the morning or earlier
- └ The cafeteria accepts cash as a form of payment

Creating School Synergies Signage, Printing & Communication



- └ Posters displaying healthful foods are visible and readable within all service and dining areas
- └ Signage/posters/floor decals are available to direct students toward all service areas

- └ Signs promoting the lunchroom and featured menu items are placed in other areas of the school such as the main office, library or gymnasium
- └ Menu boards featuring today's meal components are visible and readable within all service and dining areas
- └ A dedicated space/menu board is visible and readable from 5ft away within the service or dining area where students can see tomorrow's menu items
- └ Dining space is branded to reflect student body or school (i.e. - school lunchroom is named for school mascot or local hero/celebrity)
- └ All promotional signs and posters are rotated, updated or changed at least quarterly
- └ All creative and descriptive names are rotated, updated or changed at least quarterly
- └ A monthly menu is available and provided to all student families, teachers and administrators
- └ A monthly menu is visible and readable within the school building
- └ A weekly "Nutritional Report Card" is provided to parents detailing what their student has purchased during the previous week.

Lunchroom Atmosphere

- └ Trash on floors, in, or near garbage cans is removed between each lunch period
- └ Cleaning supplies and utensils are returned to a cleaning closet or are not visible during service and dining
- └ Compost/recycling/tray return and garbage cans are tidied between lunch periods
- └ Compost/recycling/tray return and garbage cans are at least 5ft away from dining students
- └ Dining and service areas are clear of any non-functional equipment or tables during service
- └ Sneeze guards in all service areas are clean
- └ Obstacles and barriers to enter service and dining areas have been removed (i.e. - garbage cans, mop buckets, cones, lost & found etc.)
- └ Clutter is removed from service and dining areas promptly (i.e. - empty boxes, supply shipments, empty crates, pans, lost & found etc.)
- └ Students artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas
- └ All lights in the dining and service areas are currently functional and on
- └ Trays and cutlery are within arm's reach to the students of average height for your school
- └ Lunchroom equipment is decorated with decals/magnets/signage etc. wherever possible

- └ Teachers and administrators dine in the lunchroom with students
- └ Cafeteria monitors have good rapport with students and lunchroom staff
- └ The dining space is used for other learning activities beyond meal service (i.e. - home economics, culinary nutrition education activities, school activities etc.)
- └ Staff is encouraged to model healthful eating behaviors to students (i.e. - dining in the lunchroom with students, encouraging students to try new foods etc.)
- └ Staff smiles and greets students upon entering the service line continually throughout meal service
- └ Students who do not have a full reimbursable meal are politely prompted to select and consume a fruit or vegetable option by staff

Student Involvement

- └ Student groups are involved in the development of creative and descriptive names for menu items
- └ Student groups are involved in creation of artwork promoting menu items
- └ Student groups are involved in modeling healthful eating behaviors to others (i.e. - mentors, high school students eating in the middle school lunchroom occasionally etc.)
- └ Student surveys are used to inform menu development, dining space décor and promotional ideas
- └ Students, teachers and/or administrators announce daily meal deals or targeted items in daily announcements

Recognition & Support of School Food

- └ The school participates in other food program promotions such as: Farm to School, Chefs Move to Schools, Fuel Up to Play 60, Share our Strength etc.)
- └ The school has applied or been selected for the Healthier US School Challenge
- └ A local celebrity (Mayor, sports hero, media personality) is invited to share lunch with student 3 to 4 time a year

A la Carte

- └ Students must ask to purchase a la carte items from staff members
- └ Students must use cash to purchase a la carte items which are not reimbursable
- └ Half portions are available for at least two dessert options

Total Checked	
Scoring Brackets	
70-100 - Smarter Lunchrooms Gold	
50-70 - Smarter Lunchrooms Silver	
30-50 - Smarter Lunchrooms Bronze	

It's not nutrition...until it's eaten!

©The B.E.N. Center 2014



CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION