

June 2012

To our school communities:

This fall, school dining programs across the country must adhere to new federal nutrition standards for school meals. These standards were interpreted from the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act (HHFKA) and adopted into law. Many of these new standards will take effect for the 2012-13 school year, while others are slated to go into effect in future years. Additional portions of the law are also still being interpreted and we expect them to be adopted in the near future.

The purpose of the HHFKA is to ensure that meals are healthy and well-balanced and provide students all the nutrition they need to succeed at school. The good news is that much of the components of the HHFKA final ruling have already been in place in our school cafeterias for some time, such as:

- Whole grain offerings
- Variety of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Focus on lean protein choices
- Smart Snack options
- Fat-free and low-fat milk
- Reduced sodium content

The most noticeable change you will see next year is to portion sizes. Starting in the 2012-13 school year, school lunches will have:

- age-appropriate calorie limits
- larger servings of vegetables and fruits
- increased vegetable protein offerings, such as beans
- smaller servings of proteins and carbohydrates

Many of the parents in our communities have already made these same changes in the foods they serve at home. However, some children will take some time to adjust to the increase in fruits and veggies and decrease in protein and carb portion sizes.



*Corporate Dining*

*School Nutrition*

*Delivered Meals*

*Vending Services*

*Residential Dining*

*Healthcare Services*

*Gourmet Catering*

There are also things parents can do at home this summer, in preparation for the new school year, to help ease this transition for your children:

- Encourage your children to try different vegetables and fruits
- “Make at least half your grains whole”
- Change up your meal plate to follow the USDA’s MyPlate ( see link below)
- Try out some bean dishes (make Mondays “meatless,” add beans to tacos, mix in with whole grain rice or toss with whole wheat pasta)

In addition to the above efforts, we continue to focus on additional nutrition initiatives, such as increasing our offerings of locally sourced products (we’ve gone from 42% locally sourced companywide to 52% over the last 2 years!), as well as working to remove high fructose corn syrup, artificial colors and flavors from many of the foods we serve.

School meals are a healthy option, a great value and a huge convenience for busy families! To get the facts about school meals visit [www.TrayTalk.org](http://www.TrayTalk.org). For MyPlate information, visit [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov). For additional information about the HHFKA, visit [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov).

Thank you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John Whitcomb", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Whitcomb, FMP  
Chief Operating Officer