

Superintendent's First Fuel School Breakfast Challenge



Port Huron Area School District
Mary Kurkowski, Food Service Director
mkurkowski@phasd.us

In Port Huron's Central and Holland Woods Middle Schools, challenges were great just a few years ago. Need was high enough that both schools qualified for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), meaning all students qualified for free meals. Meanwhile, both schools were listed as a Priority School by the Michigan Department of Education. At the time, breakfast was served in the cafeteria in both buildings, with less than 28% of the students choosing to eat the free breakfast at school.

At Central Middle School, teachers and administrators stood together and requested that breakfast be served in the classroom. Since that time, nearly 80% of the students now choose to eat breakfast at school. Ms. Kurkowski reports that she has hired an additional staff person to manage the increase in demand, as well as train and monitor teachers for compliance at point of sale. The food service department purchases trash bags and Clorox disinfecting wipes for the classrooms. Teachers place the trash bags outside the classroom and food service staff picks them up after breakfast is finished.

The most exciting part of the Central Middle School success is their increase in test scores. This increase has drawn the attention of those at Holland Woods Middle School, where administrators and teachers introduced a breakfast kiosk and have seen school breakfast participation soar. In this model, students will have the option of hot or cold breakfast options, which they will eat in their classrooms. Michigan Team Nutrition Consultant Chef, Dave McNamara, was on hand to test new recipes and build excitement over this new breakfast service option. Breakfast burritos and Banana Sun Wraps are just two of the items being tested with students.

What is a Priority School?

Priority Schools are those schools in the bottom 5% of a complete "top-to-bottom" list of schools that are now published every August. This placement is often indicative of minimal student outcomes in a number of subject areas over time, such as poor achievement coupled with dramatic declines in student performance or substantial achievement gaps, or all of these factors. As a result, Priority School districts need to develop a reform/redesign plan for the school that focuses on rapid turnaround as a way to dramatically improve student achievement.



Get your first fuel with School Breakfast!



This project was funded in part with funds from UDIM and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Team Nutrition Training Grant 2013. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

