

## What's New in our Cafeterias?

With significant local and national attention upon our childhood obesity and proper nutrition, the Voorheesville Central School District lunch program is pleased to offer numerous child-friendly, healthy food options at both the elementary and secondary levels.

A recently-convened Ad Hoc School Foods Committee (with parent representation from the three buildings) is in the process of discussing our lunch program. Through such conversations, it was discovered that there were not only a few widespread misconceptions, as well as other areas we have improved in which families were unaware.

Most recently, the elementary school has commenced offering whole wheat bagels, rather than only offering the white bread bagel option. *Yo Kids* Organic Yogurt also serves as the compliment to the bagel meal, replacing the *Trix* yogurt lunch option. It is also important to note that all meals are served with the child's choice of vegetable and whole fresh fruit. Students also have the daily option of a fresh Soup of the Day (ranging from Thanksgiving Feast to Homestyle Chicken Noodle).

Throughout the committee discussions, the availability of fresh fruit and vegetable salads has frequently surfaced, especially in reference to elementary school offerings. It is important to note that, each day, students have the option of purchasing a fresh salad (made that morning) from the display case as they first enter the lunch line. Students have the option of purchasing buffalo and grilled chicken salads, as well as chef, garden, and fruit salads each day. If students would prefer to purchase a turkey or ham sandwich, these options are also available in the display case. Whether it's the sandwich or grilled cheese lunch items, the district uses all whole wheat breads for its meals.

Over the course of the next few weeks, your child can expect to see the use of whole wheat pasta and brown rice, in place of our current starch offerings. This change, coupled with the aforementioned elements of our current program, illustrate that district's commitment to offering our children a healthy, balanced lunch that not only falls within the National School Lunch Program guidelines, but also a meal that is cost-reasonable for all families within our district.

In addition to our lunch program improvements and additions, a few misconceptions have surfaced regarding our ancillary snack offerings. Some answers to those questions are as follows:

### *When do students purchase snacks?*

At the elementary school, snacks are only offered after all lunches have been served, and some time has passed to allow for students to eat their regular lunch. If ample time does not exist for students to purchase a snack and eat their lunch, snack sales are not offered. At the middle school level, snacks can be purchased 20 minutes into each lunch period.

*Does Voorheesville use trans fats in their cooking of fried foods?*

Absolutely not! In fact, the use of trans fats in Albany County is prohibited. It is also important to note that all foods prepared at Voorheesville are baked using convection ovens.

*Tell us more about the slushy machines at both buildings. The color is quite pronounced, and since it's a slushy, it clearly contains a great deal of sugar and artificial ingredients for color and taste.*

The slushy machines use a mixture that is 100% pure fruit juice, and is made entirely from pears. The coloring, though dark, comes exclusively from a mixture of raspberry and blueberries. It is important to note that the mixture contains no artificial ingredients. In fact, a serving of slushy contains less sugar than one apple!

*I noticed we have stopped offering the sale of strawberry milk. What about chocolate milk?*

The district continues to look at the sale of chocolate milk, in that similar to strawberry milk, contains a significant amount of sugar. One half-pint of chocolate milk contains 25 grams of sugar (more than one can of soda)! This was the logic used in pulling the sale of strawberry milk. The district, in conjunction with the Ad-Hoc School Food Committee, will continue to explore the availability of chocolate milk to our students. Currently, the district does not sell whole milk, but does offer 2 %, 1%, and skim as other options.

*Can I find out what my child is purchasing at school?*

Absolutely! Our Nutrikids software allows families to view purchases, place money on accounts, and even place “blocks” on certain items (snacks, or other items you would prefer your child not purchase). For more information, please contact Christy Rivenburg at 765-3313 x109, visit

<http://www.vcsdk12.org/foodservice/NutriKids/MyNutriKids.htm> for more information.



**The Salad Display Case at the Elementary School, Containing a Variety of Daily Items for Student Purchase**