



REAL FOOD *for* KIDS



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FCPS to Move Forward with Food Improvement Plan Despite Recent Legislation

Despite a recent House vote on the provision that would allow school food programs to opt out of the school meal standards of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act, Fairfax County Public Schools has indicated that it plans to move forward with its strategic plan to make improvements in the quality of food served to its students.

That plan, unveiled in March, includes implementing fruit and vegetable bars in all middle and high schools over the next three years, eliminating additional artificial additives, dyes, and preservatives, providing more nutrition information to parents and students, implementing a local purchase preference policy, expanding the menu cycle, and developing a plan to phase out regular soda from student access areas in all schools.

Supporters of a provision, passed by the House Thursday, May 29, 2014, and debated in the Senate, contend that some school divisions are finding it difficult to comply with the standards for more fruits and vegetables, more whole grains and lower sodium levels, and are seeing increased waste with new foods being introduced. However, the majority of school systems have been able to meet or exceed the new standards.

The fresh food bar at George C. Marshall High School, The Statesmen Station, is one such example of positive reform. The Statesmen Station has been well received by students and is the model for food bars that will be rolled out in other schools.



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Students have responded enthusiastically to fresh food offerings such as self-select salads, wraps and yogurt parfaits. Meals served at the Statesmen Station not only comply with HHFKA but qualify for reimbursement on the USDA's Free and Reduced Lunch Program.

Dr. Karen Garza, Superintendent for the Fairfax County Public School system, has indicated that, regardless of changes that may happen in Congress with the HHFKA, Fairfax will continue to move forward with its progressive plan to improve the school food program.

Ryan McElveen, Fairfax County School Board Member At-Large, has been a strong leader in advocating for changes in the county. "Changes to a school food program take considerable time and effort. Students may not like some of the changes at first, and food and nutrition departments will need to re-work some of their offerings. This is all a part of the process. There have been many districts showing great success, and we will be one of those districts."

Real Food For Kids Executive Director, JoAnne Hammermaster, applauds the county for being a leader in this movement. "School food is an incredibly important determinant to children's health outcomes as well as their academic success, behavior and well-being in and out of school. We cannot afford to take steps back at this juncture. FCPS's commitment to changing school food signals their belief in what the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act is designed to achieve. We hope other school districts will see this commitment and follow."

Whitman MS Students Move Their Bodies!

WAT-AAH! Foundation Supports Event with Celebrity Performances



The McLain Sisters perform at Whitman's "Move Your Body"

On May 21, over 1000 Whitman Middle School students were invited to participate in the 4th Annual Move Your Body, an annual youth exercise event supporting First Lady Michele Obama's Let's Move! initiative. The event brought together more than 250,000 kids at 600 schools dancing simultaneously to Beyoncé's "Move Your Body" in a flash workout.

Whitman students worked with choreographers for a week prior to the event to synchronize their routine with others across the country. Real Food For Kids was invited to participate following their successful collaboration with Whitman, [WAT-AHH!](#) And [Fit Kids](#) at an event in April in which students were invited to the Longview Gallery in D.C. to learn from and work with street artists Tony Concepcion on a healthy hydration mural.



Fit Kids and RFFK at "Move Your Body"

The Move Your Body event also featured top music industry performers McClain ("A.N.T. Farm," Tyler Perry's "Daddy's Little Girls"), hip-hop sensation Soulja Boy and recording artist Drake Bell. Military families from Fort Belvoir were also invited along with Garrison Commander Col. Gregory D. Gadsen who has been a supporter of Whitman MS.

Move Your Body brought together schools in Atlanta Chicago

Boston, Philadelphia, San Diego, Phoenix, Portland and Jacksonville. The WAT-AAH! Works with youth-focused creative and physical activity groups to improve kid's health.

Rewriting the Recipe for School Food

"Cooking Up Change" Competition Brings Students to D.C. to Feed and Advocate to Lawmakers

The 2014 [Cooking Up Change](#) competition, run by the [Healthy Schools Campaign](#), brought teams from 10 culinary academies throughout the country, not only to compete for top honors in creating a winning fresh, healthy school meal, but to influence lawmakers to promote aggressive change in school food. With current legislation that could waive requirements of the 2010 Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act, their message was especially potent - school food under the new guidelines can taste good and be appealing to students with a progressive approach.

Competitors in Cooking Up Change, from culinary academies in Chicago, Houston, Jacksonville, Little Rock, Los Angeles, Memphis, Orange County, Orlando, Wichita and Winston-Salem, work directly with their school division's Food and Nutrition Services departments to develop freshly prepared meals that meet USDA requirements for a reimbursable meal. The dishes created must be incorporated into the division's menu for teams to qualify.

The team from Orange County, with their meal of Kickin' Taco, Zesta Fiesta Salad and Yummy Tummy Bananas took the [top prize](#) from a panel of prestigious judges. Second place went to the team from Los Angeles with BBQ Chicken Pizza, Spicy Bean Dip and Tropical "C" Burst. The team from Chicago took Third place with Curry Chicken, Caribbean Garden Salad and "Plantains."

On Tuesday following the Monday finals, student chefs took to the Hill to [visit lawmakers](#) in their districts to advocate for school food reform, spreading a message they know well: kids that eat healthy foods are better learners.

Do Gardens Grow Communities As Well As Vegetables?

See what our Real Food For Kids partner in Loudoun County has been up to on our [How the Start a School Garden](#) page.

Hammermaster Honored at Speak Life Tour



JoAnne Hammermaster, Executive Director of Real Food For Kids, received a "Speak Life Community Leader Award" on Saturday, May 17. The award is given by the [New Beginnings Youth Development & Coaching Program](#), who hosts the "Speak Life Tour". The organization was established in 2002 in Maryland. It is a movement to inspire a generation to be a positive role model and to speak life into their communities and to build a peer to peer mentoring program through the arts. The tour consist of a visual and

performing arts that kicked off earlier this year in Maryland.

Porter Named 2014 Lady Fairfax

Mary Porter, RFFK's Vice President, was honored by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors being named Lady Fairfax for 2014. The tradition of honoring Lords and Ladies Fairfax began in 1984 as part of Celebrate Fairfax to recognize individuals from each district who have demonstrated superior volunteer service, heroism or other special accomplishments.

Porter was recognized for her work with Real Food For Kids by Mount Vernon District Supervisor, Gerry Hyland. The Lords and Ladies were recognized at a Board of Supervisors meeting on June 3rd.



Camp4Real

Empowering Kids to Take Healthy Habits Home

As a physical education teacher for 10 years, Scott Williams thought he knew about healthy living. But after watching the 2008 documentary, [Food, Inc.](#), Scott eliminated all foods with artificial ingredients from his diet, a move that improved his immune system so significantly that he never missed a day of work in a year. That led Scott to not only become vegetarian, then vegan, but to become a nutrition advocate.

In 2012 Scott founded [Camp4Real](#), which teaches campers that eating healthy is not only easy but fun. By providing a range of healthy choices, campers can creatively explore healthy foods and put together their own meals with the expectation that the healthy habits they develop will be taken home and shared.

Fun fitness with experienced PE teachers is also part of the highly interactive day. Activities are designed to provide total body workout and build enthusiasm for physical activity that will hopefully generate a lifelong interest in fitness.

Camp4Real is looking to expand beyond the Charlottesville area through a network of other motivated PE professionals.

As the local face of the national wellness movement, Real Food for Kids is committed to working in collaborative ways to increase the quantities of healthy foods in Fairfax County Public Schools and supporting programs that educate our students and their families on making healthier lifestyle choices.

www.realfoodforkids.org

