

Giving Foods Catchy Names



Mustangs are off to a Healthy Start

Smarter Lunchroom Principals Used

1. Increase visibility
2. Increase convenience
3. Enhancing taste expectation
4. Suggestive selling

This past March, Covina-Valley Unified School Districts Food Service Director, Michael Burns, Assistant Director, Christina Funch, Nutrition and Marketing Consultant, Constance Montferret, lunchroom site lead Caren Medina and assistant Carol Edwards partnered with Candice Sainz, Community Nutrition Advisors for Dairy Council of California to make small changes using the Smarter Lunchroom Movement.

After assessing the formation of the lunchroom and focusing on issues that needed to be resolved, Manzanita's lunchroom staff made several changes to improve their system. Fruit and other healthy options were placed in baskets on the serving line and near the registers to give them a second chance to grab it before they bought their lunch. The coolers were stocked with at least 1/3 of white milk and were placed on top of the chocolate milk to make it easier to choose white milk. The use of fun and age appropriate catchy names like "Totally awesome Taconada" or "Brain Boosting Broccoli" were used to attract the students to the salad bar options and entrées. The principle and office staff also started including the daily meal options in the daily announcements.

School Site Profile

School Name: Manzanita

Elementary

Grade Levels Served: K-5

Enrollment: 296

Percent Free and Reduced: 85%

Foodservice Director: Michael Burns

School District Profile

District Name: Covina-Valley

Unified

Grade Levels: K-12

Number of Schools:

Enrollment: 12,558

Percent Free and Reduced: 68%

Average Participation: 8,432



Small improvements like signage and menu boards were also added to the lunchroom. The menu boards were used to write catchy names of the entrées and the targeted entrées were highlighted with name cards displayed next to them to attract the students. Signs were placed next to the register to promote the next day's targeted entrée. New posters were put up on targeted walls to promote healthy eating and more signage was put up to direct students towards the lunchroom. And finally, student's artwork was displayed near the serving line and will be rotated with new artwork to attract the students to look at the different food options.

As the school year was coming to an end and improvements to the lunchroom progressed the students started to notice all the fun changes to their lunchroom. Lunchroom site lead, Caren Medina reported, "The students noticed the new signage and posters that have been put up and were excited about them. They pointed and talked about them as they went through the serving line.

The Smarter Lunchroom team has conducted surveys and implementation data from February to May was provided by Covina-Valley Unified School District Nutrition Marketing Specialist. As a result of implementing Smarter Lunchrooms strategies, small improvements within the cafeteria led to a 32% participation increase for breakfast and a 78% participation increase for lunch. Manzanita Elementary plans to use the results as suggestion for upcoming changes to their lunchroom environment.

Smarter Lunchrooms TAP:

Name: Candice Sainz

Agency: Dairy Council of California

To learn more about Smarter Lunchrooms Movement trainings and for additional Smarter Lunchrooms resources, visit

<http://healthyeating.org/Schools/School-Foodservice/Smarter-Lunchrooms-Movement-of-California.aspx>.