



## Checklist for School Representatives

### School

- Is there a wellness committee open to parents that meets at least bimonthly?
- Is there a wellness policy for the school and if so, does it contain policies about:
  - Food served at fundraisers?
  - Food served at testing?
  - Food served at sports events?
  - Food served at special events?
  - Food served in parties?

### Setup of Cafeteria

- Is cafeteria arranged to encourage healthy eating?
- Is white milk in front of or more easily access than chocolate milk?
- Is fruit attractively arrayed and near register?
- Are unhealthy foods in less favored locations?
- Are fruits and vegetables ordered in sufficient quantities and available in all lines?
- Are there posters or nutritional information on display in cafeteria?
- Are there advertisements or posters promoting sugar sweetened beverages or a la carte items in the cafeteria?

### Time for Lunch

- Is there sufficient time for children to eat their lunch after waiting in line?
- How could this be changed/improved?
- Do children have to give up recess time if they want to finish their lunch?
- Is recess before lunch (leads to greater consumption of fruits and veggies and less plate waste)?

### Atmosphere in the Lunch Room

- Are children allowed to talk in quiet voices or is the cafeteria chaotic?
- Are they allowed to get up freely to get water?
- Does the atmosphere in the cafeteria contribute to a normal, healthy eating environment?
- How could it be improved?

### Share Table

- Is there a share table in the cafeteria?
- If so, is unhealthy food allowed on the share table (e.g., chocolate milk, etc.)?
- Could the healthy food from the share table be saved and given to needy children at the end of the day?

### Food Rewards

- Is principal aware of MCPS wellness policy discouraging the use of food as a reward?
- Are teachers told to avoid food rewards?
- Do teachers know about alternatives?

### Food Given or Sold at Special Events/During Testing/Sports Events

- Who picks this food?
- Could it be changed?
- Do people selecting food for testing understand connection between good nutrition and school performance?

### PTA

- Does PTA know about RFKM?
- Is PTA supportive of healthy food and RFKM?
- Has it signed the RFKM Healthy Kids PTA Pledge?
- What support could they offer to our mission?

- Are their fundraisers supportive of healthy eating?

### **Fundraisers**

- Are fundraisers all focused on unhealthy food or are other fundraisers used - including healthy food or exercise based fundraisers?

### **Vending Machines and à la Carte Items**

- Who selects the items offered in vending machines and the à la carte line? When and how can that be changed?
- Could a limited selection of more healthy items be requested?
- Does the school share a list of a la carte items sold at the school (other than foods also sold as part of the reimbursable meal) to parents once a year or on their web site?
- When and how often are parents informed of their ability to opt-out of letting their child buy à la carte items?
- Is this an easy process or could it be made easier (for example, an e-mail to cafeteria manager)?
- Are parents informed if their child is abusing à la carte privileges?
- Can a program be put in place to inform parents of excessive à la carte consumption?
- Are children allowed to buy/eat only à la carte items without buying a regular meal?
- Is there a school store or snack cart? If so, when is it available and what is sold on/in it?

### **Chocolate Milk**

- Can parents request that their child only be allowed white milk?
- If not, could this be implemented (it has in other schools with a message on screen)?
- How and when will parents be notified of this option?
- Would the Principal consider removing or limiting chocolate milk?

### **Nutrition Education Program in School**

- Does one exist? Who teaches it?
- Does it include information both on healthy food **and** unhealthy food?
- What grades does it reach?
- Do they ever discuss the food served/offered in school and whether it lives up to good nutrition?
- Does your school have a Healthy Eating Kids Club or something similar?

### **Salad and Burrito/Asian Bars**

- Is there a salad bar in the school?
- How many options are there (e.g., is it just lettuce and tomatoes or is there a good variety of fruits and vegetables)?
- There are salad bars available for schools that request them. Is principal supportive of getting one?
- What obstacles exist to putting one in?
- Has your school tried a burrito or Asian bar? Could it become a regular offering? Could it be piloted as a potential regular offering?

### **Water Available in the Cafeteria**

- Is there free water available to kids in the cafeteria itself (and not in the hall outside it)?
- Could an easier system be put in place for water (e.g., water bottles + cups and a large container)?
- Are water bottles included on supply lists and their use allowed and encouraged?
- Is the MCPS policy of giving a bottle of free water to elementary school children purchasing lunch made known to children?
- Are the principal and cafeteria manager aware of federal regulations about free, potable water?

### **U.S. Public Law 111-296 - SEC. 203. WATER.**

Section 9(a) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following: “(5) WATER.—Schools participating in the school lunch program under this Act shall make available to children free of charge, as nutritionally appropriate, potable water for consumption in the place where meals are served during meal service.”

### **Complaint Process**

- How can parents complain when they see something in contravention of best practices to promote healthy eating in school?
- Can a simple, anonymous complaint process be set up?
- Is there a chart of responsibility for various issues at the school?