



Appleton Central

THE FUTURE IS NOW

Appleton Central Nutrition

Why Health, Wellness and Nutrition?

School districts across the nation are looking for ways to improve their schools, but they often overlook an important influence on learning - good nutrition. The connection between nutrition, chronic disease, and learning is well established among scientists, and they are clearly aware that inadequate and/or unhealthy food intake limits children's ability to learn about their world.

Children of all socioeconomic levels are at risk for poor nutrition. Some children do not get enough to eat each day because their families lack money to buy sufficient food. Other children consume enough food but have diets high in fat, sugar, and sodium that put them at risk for obesity or heart disease and other chronic illnesses.

Students are faced with increasingly complex lifestyles that can affect health for themselves and their families. In the midst of these busy lifestyles, the use of convenience food and frequency of eating meals and snacks away from home continue to increase. Fewer students are consuming the recommended servings of the basic food groups appropriate for their caloric intakes; they do not realize they are at a very high risk of developing diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and other diseases at a much younger age.

Program Description

Appleton Central views nutrition as a priority to the extent that it facilitates our primary mission – educating every student every day toward fulfilling their potential. Realizing that the most productive ways for adolescents to make lifestyle changes that improve their health are to improve their diet and get adequate physical activity, our program strives to increase the knowledge and skills that affect food choices and physical activity patterns of at risk adolescents. This school-based nutrition and our wellness programs promote positive lifestyles and the development of effective decision-making skills.

Staff members, acting as positive role models, have created a total school environment that is supportive of healthful eating. Services go beyond the classroom by altering the school environment, including healthy and nutritious breakfast and lunch and the absence of competitive foods (i.e. no soda and snack vending machines). Students are encouraged to explore the social, cultural and personal influences on their food choices. The ultimate goal of our school-based nutrition program is to have students eating in a healthy way long after they leave school.

What are the demonstrated outcomes?

The nutrition program is one aspect of the total educational program at Central. Along with our nutrition program we have shorter class periods, a low student to staff ratio, a full time

professional therapist, school social worker and Police School Liaison. Our staff members are able to get to know each student on a personal level and differentiate their approaches to meet the social, academic and behavioral needs of our students. Meals are served in a pleasant eating environment and staff socialize and eat with the students.

In observing our students we have noted that our total educational program has assisted our students in demonstrating:

- An increased ability to concentrate in the school setting (more on-task behavior)
- Increased attendance
- Fewer disciplinary referrals
- Less moodiness and more calmness, ability to think more clearly, objectively, and rationally
- Fewer health complaints, i.e. headaches, stomach aches, general malaise
- Reduced feeling of hunger in mid-morning and/or mid-afternoon
- Increased practice of good nutrition outside of school

Program Basics

Appleton Central serves both a nutritious breakfast and lunch. Students are encouraged to participate but are not required to on any given day. There are no vending machines within the school and no carry-in food and/or beverages are allowed. Cups and chilled water fountains are available to stay hydrated. Many students participate in fitness classes, learning lifelong wellness activities, including nutrition, mindfulness, yoga, and resistance training (weight lifting).

The Breakfast Program typically consists of the following items:

- 100 percent juice, milk (skim, 1%, and 1% chocolate)
- A variety of whole grain bagels and bread – all of which are free of additives, dyes, artificial preservatives, and saturated fats
- Fresh fruits, including bananas, apples, pears, oranges, plums, seasonal fruits, etc.

The Lunch Program includes the following:

- 100 percent juice, milk (skim, 1%, and 1% chocolate).
- A variety of whole grain bagels and breads – all of which are free of additives, dyes, artificial preservatives, and saturated fats.
- Salad Bar: dark green lettuce, spinach (no iceberg head lettuce), cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, cucumber slices, black olives, broccoli and cauliflower spears, bell pepper spears, shredded carrots, diced boiled eggs, homemade apple sauce, shredded cabbage, peach and pear slices, pineapple chunks, and/or fruit salad.
- Hot Entrée: Hot entrees are prepared daily by Central cooks or by the district food service provider. Central offers no ala carte items. No food is prepared by frying in a grease product. Meat products used include lean pork, chicken, turkey and fish. Vegetarian options are regularly offered, and no beef is used in Central entrees.

We realize that Central students all have specific preferences and that they do not always prefer the entrees offered. Should a Central student still wish to eat, they are encouraged to build a peanut butter sandwich and get a carton of white milk at no cost to help them meet their nutritional needs while at school.

