



Lincoln School Lunch
Brooks Café
Smith Café
Hanscom Cafe

December 8, 2015

TO: School Committee
Superintendent
Administrator for Business & Finance

FROM: Cathleen Higgins, Director of Food Services

SUBJECT: School Committee Update

The annual update on the Food Service program addresses several topics:

- Department of Defense Fresh Produce Program (DoD Fresh Produce)
- Hanscom move and FF&E
- Food Safety and Sanitation inspection results
- Hanscom DPH Training – Hanscom Café Staff
- Farm to School program with Drumlin Farms
- School Garden Initiative
- SNA Annual Conference for Cafeteria PD
- Borrowing Updates – Charging Policy

DOD Fresh Produce Program

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) provides all children in participating schools with a variety of free fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the school day. It is an effective and creative way of introducing fresh fruits and vegetables as healthy snack options. The FFVP also encourages schools to develop partnerships at the State and local level for support in implementing and operating the program.

The goal of the FFVP is to create healthier school environments by:

- Providing healthier food choices
- Expanding the variety of fruits and vegetables children experience
- Increasing children's fruit and vegetable consumption
- Making a difference in children's diets to impact their present and future health

We were eligible for the first time this school year for this program. The produce is ordered a week in advance and arrives at Hanscom, because they have more refrigeration space. We meet the produce truck and receive the produce then distribute it to the Brooks and Smith cafe. The quality has been excellent and both café staff and students have been thrilled to have so many fresh fruit and vegetable options. Our initial allocation under the FFVP was \$4,569, of which we have spent \$2,202 to-date.

Hanscom Café Move and FF&E

The Food Service Department has been obtaining quotes from three local equipment vendors and doing comparison pricing to determine where items will be purchased and how much the cost will be for the smaller items needed for the kitchen. Bids from three vendors have been received and are being reviewed.

Food Safety and Sanitation Results

Hanscom receives monthly inspections from the Department of Public Health (DPH) on base. FPCON Bravo status has impacted the way in which we hold, prepare, and receive food in the Hanscom café. We now have stricter guidelines to follow.

Brooks and Smith received their first of three inspections this fall on a day where Smith had no power at lunch time. Sandra Hillson, the cafeteria manager was able to satellite prepared food from the Brooks kitchen to serve in her cafeteria. The Smith café was serving by flashlights. Fortunately, Stan Sosnicki, Concord Board of Health was there to oversee the preparations.

Hanscom DPH Food Handler's Training Course

In August, before school began, as part of the professional development for the cafeteria staff, the Hanscom staff attended the Hanscom Air Force Base Public Health department's Food Handler Training Course. Staff at Hanscom attended the annual food safety and sanitation training which had a strong focus on food defense, and passed the exam thereby receiving a Food Handler's Training Certificate..

Farm to School Drumlin Farms

Drumlin Farms continues to provide a great local resource in our search for a viable Farm to Table option. This fall, we served a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables in our Brooks and Smith cafes. Some of the items included several varieties of kale, mesclun, onions, melons, sweet peppers, potatoes, salad radishes, scallions, and a colorful tasty variety of heirloom tomatoes.

School Garden Initiative

The school cafeterias received a variety of fresh vegetables, garlic and herbs from the gardens this year, both at Smith and at Hanscom. We were able to offer some items on the spring and then again this fall. Scott Dexter had his students harvest tomatoes, zucchini and summer squash from the garden which Sandra Hillson and Tonia Gaines served in the Smith café. Some of the squash was actually ornamental and was used to give the café an autumnal feel. Becca Fasciano dropped off acorn squash to use in the Brooks café.

From the Hanscom Middle School, Becca Fasciano came with her students to deliver freshly picked husk berries to serve in the Hanscom café. The students were proud to pose with their harvest.

SNA Annual Conference for Cafeteria Professional Development

Cafeteria manager Sandra Hillson and her assistant, Tonia Gaines recently attended the annual SNA Fall Conference on October at the Worcester Centrum. After a busy day in the cafeterias, the staff came to the Food Show and vendor portion of the conference. Many new items were offered and my staff had the opportunity to talk directly to many of our vendors and express

concerns and ask questions. It is a great professional development opportunity and the staff gets very excited about new options to offer to our students. We have been able to share several samples with our students on all three campuses. Claudia Stewart, the head cook at Brooks, developed a small survey form which she distributes to students to obtain feedback on sample items.

Borrowing Updates – Charging

Negative Account Balances as of 12/8/2015

- Hanscom Total Students = 9, Total Amount Owed = \$21.90
- Brooks Total Students = 0
- Smith Total Students = 7, Total Amount Owed = \$19.90

We are happy to see such low balances on our Negative Account balances list. We serve students a full reimbursable meal of their choice, even when they are on the negative account balance list and over our limit of three lunches charged. Using the online payment system is a preferred option with parents and has helped keep the negative balances low. The online payment system offers features such as low balance e-mail alerts, automatic payments, and a free smart phone app for parents. This has had a significant effect in the reduction of borrowers and balances.