



Lincoln School Lunch

Brooks Café
Smith Café
Hanscom Cafe

To: School Committee
From: Cathleen Higgins, Director of Food Services
Date: Wednesday, December 30, 2015
Subject: Participation Rates

FY2015 Year-to-Date Participation

	BROOKS	SMITH	HANSCOM	AVERAGE
	PARTICIPATION	PARTICIPATION	PARTICIPATION	PARTICIPATION
YTD June	58.60 %	54.78 %	49.12 %	54.16 %

FY2016

	BROOKS	SMITH	HANSCOM	AVERAGE
	PARTICIPATION	PARTICIPATION	PARTICIPATION	PARTICIPATION
September-15	44.60 %	42.72 %	41.30 %	42.88 %
October-15	44.52 %	64.21 %	48.53 %	52.42 %
November-15	45.09 %	51.02 %	48.63 %	49.30 %
December-15	43.00 %	50.82 %	43.86 %	45.89 %
Average	44.30 %	52.19 %	45.58 %	47.36 %
Variance to FY15	-14.3 %	-2.59 %	-3.54 %	-6.8 %

Participation Rates

Participation rates are down a few percentage points on the Lincoln campus. Brooks has a new lunch schedule that allows students to choose to bring lunch and eat outside in the nice weather, and we've seen a marked drop in lunches served. At Smith, we usually see an uptick in the winter months and anticipate that again this year. Hanscom rates are down in large part due to the change to the temporary kitchen situation, which we expected. We hope to see an increase in next month's participation numbers and hope that will continue through the new year.



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Subject: DOD Fresh Produce Program Follow-up

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.

DOD Fresh Produce Program Follow-up

The feedback from staff and students has been very positive overall. The fresh fruit has been very well received. The quality and variety has been very good. The deliveries are very early every Tuesday. We receive our produce from AT Siravo out of Providence, Rhode Island and they are very helpful to work with. We receive support from Richard Finnegan, at the DESE. He handled all my questions about the initial start of the program in the beginning of the school year.

The students choose their own side dishes to go with their lunch so it helps cut down on the waste. The popular favorites with students are the small bags of apple slices and the "lunch bunch" grapes. The watermelon, oranges and apples are always well received. The students prefer the smaller Macintosh apples to the large Gala or Golden Delicious. We have tried cantaloupe, honeydew, and Ruby Red Grapefruit. After the winter break, we are looking forward to trying some strawberries, once they are in season.

As far as the fresh vegetables go, grape tomatoes, carrot bags, and celery sticks are the usual favorites. Cucumbers are very popular but not a good quality this time of year. My staff has tried a wide variety of dark green leafy vegetables for our daily salads in addition to Romaine. The students don't seem to care for the Mesclun mix although the teachers love it. The Green Leaf lettuce has been popular and the baby spinach is a good item. Shredded Coleslaw is

available and the staff uses their own recipes to prepare it. We use vegetables such as fresh Broccoli 'trees' to meet the USDA 6 Cents Requirement for dark, green leafy vegetables. The Brooks café has ordered some potatoes from The DOD Fresh produce and offered some potato salad on the Fruit & Veggie bar that has been well received.

The other major positive impact on the program is the cost benefit. We are allotted almost five thousand dollars over the course of the seven months of the program. Our minimum delivery is \$150.00 and we are able to meet that on a weekly and bi-weekly basis. We alternate items ordered to keep a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables rotating through the cafeterias.

Some of the challenges we face in the program is that the order has to be placed almost two weeks in advance so we have to estimate our usage so as to control waste. Part of that same challenge is, since we are a small district, we divide the cases. We can't often order a small amount such as a dozen or a bunch so we try a case of different vegetables every order and then divide them between the schools. Several of the options available to us are locally sourced produce vendors.

A major challenge that we confront is that a wider variety of fresh vegetables are offered and we have no space to store, prepare or cook it on the Lincoln or Hanscom campuses. Our options are limited by the logistical limitations of our physical plant. Once the new Hanscom kitchen is open, we can order fresh green beans, zucchini, yellow squash, and sweet potatoes.

One of the other difficulties that we have overcome is that the order only comes into one school. I chose the Air Force base as the primary location since it has more storage even though the deliveries are delayed because we are at FPCON Bravo. We receive the orders at the Air Force base kitchen and then Lauren Braudis, the Hanscom cafeteria manager and I distribute it then I deliver it to the Lincoln schools.

Another obstacle that we have encountered is the best way to promote this great opportunity and resource that we now have available to the students in our district. It is difficult to menu the items on the monthly menu since the seasonal availability of produce can vary from month to month. This school committee report will provide a good spotlight for our nascent program. We are considering some small article in the principals' newsletters which reach a wide target audience of parents.

The main challenge that we confront with the DOD fresh program is that the funds available are a draw down and may be used up well before the end of school. The students and staff enjoy the variety of the fresh fruits and vegetables. If the draw down is used up early, there is a chance the DOD Fresh program may increase funds depending on demand from other schools. I am trying to budget the funds carefully to last for the remaining five months. The program ends usually at the end of April.

This has been an exciting opportunity for us and I hope that we will continue to be eligible in future year. I think the impact on the program overall has been very positive.



