



Lincoln School Lunch

**Brooks Café
Smith Café
Hanscom Cafe**

November 30, 2016

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)
- Smarter Lunchroom Initiative
- Food Safety and Sanitation inspection results
- ServSafe Training for staff
- Nuts and Bolts Training – John Stalker Institute
- School Garden Initiative at Hanscom
- SNA Annual Conference for Cafeteria PD
- SNA Award for Employee of the Year
- Borrowing Updates – 11/28/2016
- Participation Rates YTD through 11/30/2016
- Photo Gallery

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. We order local Massachusetts grown produce as much as available. All the FFVP produce is of domestic origin.



We were eligible again this school year for this program because we spent over \$15,000 in the USDA Foods programs (formerly referred to as the USDA Commodity program). The produce is ordered a week in advance and arrives at Hanscom, because they have more refrigeration space with the new walk-in. We meet the produce truck and receive the produce then distribute it to the Brooks and Smith café. 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 \$3,958, of which we have spent \$2,533 to date. Last year, we were able to increase our allotment on April 30th due to other districts that did not take advantage of the program. Hopefully, this will also be the case again this school year.

Smarter Lunchroom Initiative

In early September, I signed us up for a free training opportunity called the Smarter Lunchroom Initiative. The program consists of technical support and staff training to help improve the school lunch program. The focus of the program is helping schools to make the healthy choice the easy choice for students, leading to increased sales of healthy school foods.

We were allowed to choose one school so I decided to focus on the Hanscom cafeteria. We will then pass on what we learn to the Lincoln cafeterias as well. Lauren Braudis and I completed an initial checklist, and we scheduled a visit with Christine Robinson from the John Stalker Institute at Framingham State University. Prior to her visit, we sent Christine one week of menus, production records, and reimbursable meals information as well as vegetable, fruit and milk servings sold.

On October 6th, we had a visit from our Smarter Lunchroom coach, Christine Robinson, and she also conducted a staff training. During the three-hour visit, our coach observed the cafeteria in operation with students going through lunch service. She took “before” photos of our cafeteria to help aid us in making improvements. She then provided us with her review of the Smarter Lunchroom scorecard. Lauren and I were then able to target ten goals to improve our program. We now have four months to complete our goals, and Christine will come back out for a follow-up visit.

I have provided the following for more information.

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 annual inspections this fall. All schools received an “Excellent” result. We post the results in the cafeteria and on the Food Service pages on our website.

ServSafe Certification

On December 7th, 2016, all of my cafeteria managers and some of our front line staff will be attending a ServSafe training to be certified for the 5 year ServSafe certification. Our training is being done by Eastern Food Safety. We have received our training manuals, and have been studying to prepare for this certification. It is required by the 2013 Food Code that one person at each location be certified. If all seven people are certified, it will bring our district total to eight, more than one person per cafeteria.

“Nuts and Bolts” Training – John Stalker Institute, Framingham State University

As part of my professional development, I have been attending a yearlong seminar that consists of on-site training and webinars in conjunction with The John Stalker Institute and the DESE, held at Framingham State. The program consists of an intensive conference once a month on Wednesdays focusing on a single topic. So far, we have covered the Verification process, HACCP plans (conducted by our ServSafe trainer, Cindy Rice), and use of USDA foods and DOD Produce. Various members of the DESE staff, as well as other specialized trainers, administer the trainings.

I want to thank the District administration for approving my attendance. This series is starting off to be one of the best trainings I have ever attended. The subjects are covered in depth over the course of a day, rather than trying to cram too many topics into a full day.

Besides the useful training material, it has been a great opportunity to network with other directors and my contacts at the DESE. I have had the opportunity to have several conversations with Kevin Dawson, Ahmed Bilorio, and Marion Browning. I deal with these DESE staffers on a regular basis by e-mail. They handle the financial reporting, commodities, and the DOD Fresh Produce program.

I leave the training feeling excited and empowered, ready to use the information to improve both my own and my staff's performance, in order to improve the program for our students. Thank you again for the opportunity for this amazing professional development.

School Garden Initiative

From the Hanscom Middle School, Becca Fasciano and Mairead Curtis are full of plans for the garden plots at the new Hanscom Middle School. They are considering hydroponic options until the New England weather improves enough to utilize the two roof top garden plots. We are happy to participate in the project and feature vegetables grown by our students. Talk about local farm to table!

SNA Annual Conference for Cafeteria Professional Development

Cafeteria managers Lauren Braudis, Christine Sveistys, and Sandra Hillson recently attended the annual SNA Fall Conference in 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. This also provided a great opportunity to meet our vendors and customer service representatives in person, putting a face to a name rather than just communicating via email. 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.

SNA Awards Ceremony for Maki Koetting

On Tuesday evening, 10/25/2016, during the School Nutrition Association (SNA) Annual Conference, we were honored to attend the awards ceremony for Maki Koetting, our two-time winner for SNA of Ma Employee of the Year and Northeast Regional employee of the year.



Borrowing Updates – Charging

Negative Account Balances as of 11/28/2016

- Hanscom Total Students = 17, Total Amount Owed = \$52.25
- Brooks Total Students = 3, Total Amount Owed = \$5.75
- Smith Total Students = 2, Total Amount Owed = \$3.55
- District Staff Total Staff = 12, Total Amount Owed = \$58.08

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. The Lincoln cafeterias are virtually cashless, with zero deposits on several days a week.

Participation Rates YTD FY2017

FY2016 Year To Date Participation

	BROOKS PARTICIPATION	SMITH PARTICIPATION	HANSCOM PARTICIPATION	AVERAGE PARTICIPATION
YTD June	45.84 %	52.85 %	49.24 %	49.31 %

FY2017

	BROOKS PARTICIPATION	SMITH PARTICIPATION	HANSCOM PARTICIPATION	AVERAGE PARTICIPATION
September-16	42.07 %	49.03 %	50.79 %	47.30 %
October-16	39.46 %	57.16 %	56.53 %	51.05 %
November-16	38.97 %	57.68 %	56.69 %	51.11 %
Average	40.17 %	54.62 %	54.67 %	49.82 %
YTD Variance to FY16	-5.67 %	1.77 %	5.43 %	

Participation Rates

Brooks has a new lunch schedule that allow students to choose to bring lunch and eat outside in the nice weather, and we've seen a marked drop in lunches served. This change has had a significant impact on our participation at Brooks YTD.

At Smith we usually see an uptick in the winter months and anticipate that again this year.

Hanscom rates are trending upwards due to some popular lunch menus and a variety of Grab & Go lunches such as Hummus and Greek yogurt.

We hope to see an increase in next month's participation numbers and hope that will continue through the new year.

Photo Gallery



Smith Café



Brooks lunch



Hanscom Café



Brooks Cafe