

Behavioral Economics in the Lunchroom: 9 Key Ideas



Behavioral economics = the study of how our environment influences our choices

› The environment (appearance, placement, ambiance, prompts, etc.) strongly influences how people select, eat, and enjoy foods. › You control the lunchroom environment. › Change the environment ➡ change the students' food choices.	TRY IT AT HOME: This month, choose 2+ ways to rearrange your kitchen, pantry, or refrigerator to promote healthy eating at home.
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HOT STATE VS. COLD STATE DECISION-MAKING

In a hot state, you are emotional, impulsive, or rushed. This leads to less-healthy food choices. Remember: "STRESSED" is "DESSERTS" spelled backwards!	In a cold state, you feel logical and calm. You make better long-term decisions about your health, including eating more healthy foods.	Plan ahead: Pack snacks and lunches the night before. Shop for groceries after a meal, when you are full.
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6 PRINCIPLES OF BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS IN THE LUNCHROOM

PORTION SIZE	Serve correctly sized portions, especially of treats	Ex.: small utensils for condiments, single-serving snacks	Don't eat snacks from the container. Serve yourself one portion in a small bowl.
CONVENIENCE	Make healthy foods quick and easy to reach	Ex.: healthy foods window, grab and go, foods up front within easy reach	Put less healthy snacks on the top/bottom shelves, in the back. Put healthy choices front and center.
VISIBILITY	Make healthy foods impossible to overlook	Ex.: signs; color; foods first in service line, in front, & by register	Place fruits & veggies on eye level shelf of refrigerator, in front. Place a bowl of handheld fruit on kitchen table/counter.
TASTE EXPECTATIONS	Foods that look good will taste good	Ex.: food is neat and colorful, garnish, clean service area	Bright, colorful serving-ware (plates, napkins, placemats, utensils, etc.) makes foods look more appetizing.
SUGGESTIVE SELLING	Talk up healthy foods, positive customer service, smile	Ex.: signs, verbal prompts, smiles; promote healthy choices	Ask, "Which vegetable would you like?" Offer 2+ options.
SMART PRICING	Offer deals on healthy foods and reimbursable meals.	Ex.: healthy snack combo deals, expanded RM options	Resist combo meals. Buy only what you want to eat. If you "go large," put half away before eating, for later. Pay cash.



Cues for Positive Communication with Students and Staff

Occasion	Goal	Examples
GREETING	› Create a welcoming atmosphere › Take the first step to building rapport › Promote a reimbursable meal and/or target food item	"Good morning! What would you like to try today?" "Hello! Would you like to try the [entrée]?" "Welcome to lunch! The [entrée] is popular today. Would you like to try it?" "Today is [entrée] day. Would you like some?" "Welcome to the lunchroom! What can I get for you today? The [targeted item] is a great choice."
SERVING	› Create a reimbursable meal › Promote healthy sides	"The [vegetable] goes well with the [entrée]." "Which vegetable/side would you like with that?" "The [fruit] is perfectly ripe." "If you don't like [first side offered], how about trying the [other side]?" "You can make [the entrée] a meal with some [fruit/vegetable sides]." "Today we're serving [list items]. Can I get you some [target item]?" "We have a great new recipe: [list targeted item(s)]. Would you like to try it? Tell us what you think!"
POINT OF SALE (POS)	› Create a reimbursable meal › Prompt students to "fill out" an incomplete meal	"I see you don't have all of your items. Why not grab a [handheld fruit in nearby basket]?" "You get 2 sides with your meal. You can still take one—go ahead and pick." "Your meal's not complete! Don't forget to take a [fruit, vegetable, or juice] as a side." "You forgot milk! It's included with your lunch. How about getting some now?" "It's not too late, go back and get [missing item]." "You can make that a meal with [missing item(s)]."
SPECIAL REQUESTS	› Ensure all students are able to eat a complete meal › Assist new readers (elementary, special needs, and ELL/ESOL students)	To staff (discretely): "I see that [student] has a special diet. I will try to set aside a [preferred item]; however, to ensure he/she gets the correct meal, please bring him/her to the front of the line." To students still mastering reading: "Today's specials are [read menu]." To students still mastering reading: "Here is a menu. (Show picture menu.) What would you like today? What looks the best to you?" To students still mastering reading: "Today's specials are [list items]. Would you like to try [target item(s)]?"
CONFLICT	› De-escalate situation › Avoid creating or fanning negative feelings on either side › Keep serving line moving smoothly and quickly	"I'm sorry you don't like [first item offered]; how about [other entrée option] instead?" "I'd be happy to explain what makes a reimbursable meal." "The USDA defines what counts as a reimbursable meal, we aren't allowed to make those substitutions [ex. soda for milk, snack for fruit]."

WORKSHEET

Creating Catchy Food Names



Q: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

A: A LOT! MAKE FOOD SOUND GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT.

Warm-Up: Which option in each pair sounds more appealing, assuming they cost the same? Put yourself in the shoes of the items' target audience.

List 1: Lip Gloss Colors

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ Light pink | ☐ Sun-kissed Strawberry |
| ☐ Dark pink | ☐ Luscious Raspberry |
| ☐ Red | ☐ Friday Night Scarlet |
| ☐ Peach | ☐ Perfect Summer Peach |

List 2: Car Names

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ Minivan | ☐ Grand Caravan |
| ☐ Sports car | ☐ Mustang |
| ☐ Truck | ☐ Silverado |
| ☐ SUV | ☐ Expedition |

List 3: Foods

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Steak | ☐ Sizzling T-bone Steak |
| ☐ Coleslaw | ☐ Tangy Coleslaw |
| ☐ Salad | ☐ Crisp Garden Salad |
| ☐ Grilled Cheese | ☐ Crunchy Toasted Cheddar Sandwich |

Follow-up questions:

- 1: Why are the names in the right column more appealing than those in the left column?
- 2: Why is it important to remember the target audience's perspective?



WORKSHEET

Creating Catchy Food Names

continued

Matching: Create catchy, appealing names for these foods using fun, interesting words. Choose 1–2 descriptors to add to each food to create new names for the dishes.

Young children (K-5) enjoy imaginative, playful names

Ex.: X-ray Carrots, Big Bad Bean Burrito, Dinosaur Trees (broccoli)

Word bank:

American Fiesta Jumpin' Green Lantern Power Rainbow Sweet Talkin' Black Belt Snappy

_____ green beans

_____ baked apples

_____ baked sweet potatoes

_____ black bean soup

_____ peas

_____ veggie pizza

Older students (grades 6-12) are attracted to evocative, descriptive sensory words

Ex.: Summer Salad, Savory Beef Sandwich, Crunchy Carrot Sticks

Word bank:

Texas VIP Snappy Sweet Harvest Homestyle Spiced Fresh Holiday Garden

_____ green beans

_____ baked apples

_____ baked sweet potatoes

_____ black bean soup

_____ peas

_____ veggie pizza

Follow-up questions:

1: Which names are the best? What makes them appealing to each audience?

2: Which names could you use in your lunchroom?

Creating Catchy Food Names

WORKSHEET
continued



CREATIVE DESIGN

Pretend your group is starting a restaurant but you are only allowed to serve foods from your school lunchroom. Use descriptive and fun words to add interest to these entrées and side orders.

Choose your audience: **K-5** or **6-12** (circle one).

Entrées:

Baked Chicken: _____

Turkey Sub: _____

Chef Salad: _____

Grilled Cheese Sandwich & Tomato Soup: _____

Sides:

Corn: _____

Kale: _____

Kiwi: _____

Salad Bar: _____

Squash: _____

Mixed/Steamed Veggies: _____

Application: Choose your favorite two entrées and two sides. Or, choose four items your lunchroom would *like* to promote. Write the names on the left side. Then, choose descriptors to give the chosen foods catchy new names.

_____: _____

_____: _____

_____: _____

_____: _____

Follow-up Questions:

Which names are best? Which could you use in your lunchroom?



Healthy Celebrations



Celebrating holidays, birthdays, and important accomplishments is a great way to reward hard work, build relationships, and have fun! But too often, celebrations incorporate unhealthy foods such as sodas, cookies, and other sweet indulgences. These well-meant treats can have unintended negative consequences:

- Replacing healthy meals with sugary snacks can cause students to feel first jumpy, then hungry and sluggish, decreasing their ability to focus
- Students with medical and cultural food restrictions can feel excluded; some may even be harmed by eating foods considered off-limits
- Using unhealthy foods as rewards can create negative and unhealthy perceptions about foods
- In the classroom, food spills can create messes and invite pests

Make your parties both fun and healthy by celebrating with these alternatives:

- Games, especially those involving movement
- Stories and interactive activities
- Music, singing, or dancing
- Small toys, stickers, or gifts

If you really want to incorporate food into your school day celebration, suggest healthy alternatives such as fresh or dried fruits, raw vegetables, and other nutritious snacks. Serve these foods after lunch, so students fill up on healthy lunches first. Send foods home, or talk with your head custodian and kitchen manager about holding your party in the lunchroom or other designated food-safe area.



For more great ideas for healthy holiday celebrations, visit the **Healthy Food Choices in Schools Community of Practice:**

www.extension.org/pages/70218/resources-for-promoting-healthy-holiday-fun-in-school



Join the Community of Practice

Healthy Food Choices in Schools is an online learning community of practice (CoP) at **extension.org/healthy_food_choices_in_schools**. Its mission is to provide resources that empower FSDs, lunchroom staff, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and wellness committees to make changes that encourage children to make healthier food selections in school food environments, without undermining revenue. The CoP also has tools and information families can use to improve nutrition at school and at home.

All resources made available by the Healthy Food Choices in Schools CoP are based on sound research and/or experience. They are created by knowledgeable and skilled researchers and professionals from various fields including nutrition, behavioral economics, food psychology, community education, and food service.

To join, contact **healthy_food_choices_in_schools@cornell.edu**. Joining will offer opportunities to:

- Network with other professionals who share your enthusiasm for encouraging healthy food choices in schools
- Discover tips and initiatives to enhance your own programs and efforts
- Disseminate your knowledge and findings to a national audience

The screenshot shows the eXtension website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: About eXtension, Ask an Expert, Blogs, Campus, eXtension.org, Learn, and Search. Below this is the eXtension logo and a search bar. The main content area is titled "Healthy Food Choices in Schools" and features a large image of a person's hands holding a bunch of fresh vegetables. Below the image is the title "From Plant to Plate: Benefits of Farm to School Programs" and a brief description. To the right of the main content, there is a "Connect with us" section with social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Pinterest, and Google+. Below that is a "Welcome" message and a "Select a different institution" dropdown menu with a "LOCATE" button. At the bottom, there is a "More about this Resource Area" section with a "LEARN MORE" button.





Incentives List

FOR NO TIME TO TRAIN DECEMBER WORKSHOP BOOSTER SHOT

DIRECTIONS: Review this list, removing options you cannot offer and adding incentives you can offer which are not already included. Print out one copy of the final list per participant. Cut out each activity, shuffle, secure with a paper clip, and place in sealed sandwich bag. Make one set per participant.

Money (one-time bonus or gift card)

Money (ongoing bonuses dependent on project success)

Recognition (plaque to display at work or home)

Recognition (heartfelt card)

Recognition (public praise—verbal, in school newspaper, etc.)

Personalized aprons or hats for you/the whole lunchroom staff

Permission to come in late/leave early (once)

Permission to wear jeans/casual clothes at work for one week

Luncheon /celebration in your honor at the school

Flowers to decorate your work space or to take home with you

Acknowledgment on **SmarterLunchrooms.org** or the school/district website

Staff training (for you or the whole lunchroom staff)

Invitation to speak with or teach others

Opportunity to design the lunchroom menu for a day/week

Opportunity to design/decorate a bulletin board in the cafeteria

Host a healthy snack party for a class of your choosing

Cooking demonstration or lesson from a local chef, in the lunchroom

Funding for a future project/lunchroom makeover

Other (write-in): _____

Serving Up Health and Happiness

Spotlight on Sheila Hoyt,
Cook Manager at Horseheads Intermediate & Middle Schools



After 12 years in school kitchens, Sheila Hoyt had learned a thing or two about school food. Working her way up the ladder from a substitute worker to cook manager of two schools (Horseheads Intermediate and Middle Schools in Horseheads, NY) taught her how to manage staff, run a clean and efficient kitchen, and serve nutritious meals to 800 children per day. But attending a staff development workshop with trainers from

After 12 years in school kitchens, Sheila Hoyt had learned a thing or two about school food.

the Cornell B.E.N. Center “opened [her] eyes” to how small changes in the lunchroom environment “really affect how kids look at lunch and interact with the staff” and can encourage kids to take, eat, and enjoy

Serving Up Health and Happiness

continued

healthier lunch options. Thanks to some easy, inexpensive changes to her lunchroom décor and routines, she happily reports that “the kids enjoy us, they don’t think of us as mean old lunch ladies. They are really excited and say ‘This is really cool!’ and ‘Can we do this every day?’ They even invite me to sit with them!”

“The kids enjoy us, they don’t think of us as mean old lunch ladies. They are really excited and say ‘This is really cool!’ and ‘Can we do this every day?’ They even invite me to sit with them!”

The Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs (B.E.N. Center) studies how the lunchroom environment influences students’ food choices in school. In spring 2011, during a workshop

with B.E.N. Center trainers, Sheila was inspired by the “common sense” ideas and implemented about a dozen of them in her two lunchrooms, adding a few ideas of her own—with terrific success. The students ate more fruits and vegetables and the relationship between lunchroom staff members and the students greatly improved. This delighted Dr. Brian Wansink, whose mission in founding the B.E.N. Center was to empower schools and districts to revitalize their lunchrooms. He insists, “These changes are so easy and every school can make a couple of changes and see their kids eat healthier.”

Sheila received lots of positive feedback from parents and school staff, who have come to check out the lunchrooms’ new look and learn about the healthy foods offered there. To reach out to families, Sheila made a display for Back-to-School Night and hosted an open house. Administrators say the kids “are really responding.” Each year, her focus is on catching the incoming 5th graders’ attention; “once you hook them,” she says, “they keep working with you and carry your message into the next grades.”

What excites Sheila most about the coming school year? “All the new staff and training—we need to know we are not all alone, we are a team, let’s help each other out and keep it new. You guys [at the B.E.N. Center] got me rolling.”

Read more: SmarterLunchrooms.org



Easy & Inexpensive Ways to Give Your Lunchroom a Makeover

Add color! Display fruits and veggies in colorful trays or bowls and use colorful linens to line shelves and metal pans. Add colorful straw holders, utensils, and décor.

Add contrast: Mix different fruits (in cups or handheld) so the colors play off of each other: red grapes next to peaches, green apples next to oranges.

Show, don't tell: Sheila created "Today's Special" and "Coming Tomorrow" **signs** with interchangeable pictures of popular items. The kids see what is offered, it interests them, and they plan to buy lunch the next day. It also lets the kids decide earlier what they'll order, so the line moves faster. Bonus: It's a great way to advertise special options, such as vegetarian entrées and local veggie sides. She also uses **plastic food models** for color and to advertise foods offered behind glass.

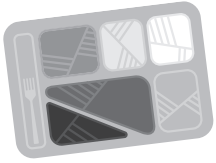
Put target items at eye level: "We got new snack racks (for free!) and we set signs advertising each day's meals right where the kids can see them."

Keep it new: Add fresh or artificial flowers, seasonal decorations, and special food items. Change it up regularly.

Offer healthy treats: "The most popular new item was the 100%-fruit-juice slushie machine. The kids asked, and we got it for them, and they love it. We're getting another this year. The kids are really happy, and it's 100% fruit juice."

Be a good listener: Make an opinion box and ask for feedback from students and other school community members. Sheila did this, then implemented the most popular feasible ideas. She also talked to kids at their lunch tables.

- **Hint: Ask for specific feedback:** What foods exactly do you like or dislike? What would you like to see added to the menu, and why?
- **Explain:** Let kids know what you can and can't work on. "Lots of kids didn't understand why we can't just serve bacon cheeseburgers every day. I explained about the dietary guidelines and gave them other options we could try—like spicy chicken nuggets—and they were more eager to try the other new foods instead."



WORKSHEET

Complete the Reimbursable Meal

What are the 5 reimbursable meal components?

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PART 1: *Individual practice. Answer each question on paper, then compare answers in pairs or as a group.*

Which component(s), if any, are needed to make each example a complete reimbursable meal?

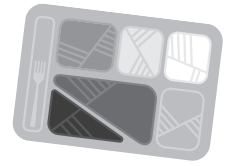
Ex. 1: Burger (with bun), chocolate milk	Ex. 2: Yogurt & fruit parfait, apple, water
Ex. 3: Cheese pizza	Ex. 4: Green salad, water
Ex. 5: Pasta with meat sauce, orange juice	Ex. 6: 3 hash browns, milk

Lunchroom target foods to promote:

Keep in mind: If the lunchroom's goals include increasing consumption of fruits, vegetables, dairy, or other target foods, and there are remaining "slots" in a student's reimbursable meal, suggest adding the target items even if the meal is technically complete without them.

Complete the Reimbursable Meal

continued



PART 2: Verbal Practice

Split into pairs. Take turns playing the server/cashier and the student buying the meal. For each sample tray, the person playing the server/cashier will survey the tray, decide which prompt to use, then deliver the line in a friendly, natural tone to the person playing the student.

Props: 6 sample trays with incomplete meals (real or photos/slides)

Goals to focus on:

- Great customer service: eye contact, friendly tone of voice, relaxed body language, smile
- Quick, accurate understanding of the content of a qualifying reimbursable meal
- Accurate, helpful suggestion of item(s) to include in the meal, using appropriate prompts

Goal	Sample Prompt for Lunchroom Staff <i>Mix and match</i>
› Create a reimbursable meal › Promote healthy sides (and/or other target items) › Prompt students to “fill out” an incomplete meal	“The [vegetable] goes well with the [entrée].” “Which vegetable/side would you like with that?” “The [fruit] is perfectly ripe.” “If you don’t like [first side offered], how about trying the [other side]?” “You can make [the entrée] a meal with some [fruit/vegetable sides].” “Today we’re serving [list items]. Can I get you some [target item]?” “I see you don’t have all of your items. Why not grab a [fruit in nearby basket]?” “You get 2 sides with your meal. You can still take one – go ahead and pick.” “Your meal’s incomplete! Don’t forget to take a [fruit/vegetable/milk].” “You forgot milk! It’s included with your meal. How about taking some now?” “It’s not too late, go back and get [missing item].” “You can make that a meal with [missing item(s)].” “If you add [missing item], you’ll have a complete meal. It would... ...actually cost less than these items separately.” ...cost the same as these items separately --- the {new item(s) would essentially be free to you.” ...only cost _____ more, and you’d get a whole meal.” “A complete meal offers a lot more value for your money.”
› De-escalate conflict › Avoid negative feelings › Keep line moving	“I’d be happily explain what makes a reimbursable meal.” “The USDA defines what counts as a reimbursable meal, we aren’t allowed to make that substitution [ex. soda for milk, snack for fruit].” “Instead of two [items], why not switch one for a [other item], mix it up? Then it’ll be included in your meal and not cost any extra.” “The [items] are also delicious/popular/fresh, and they are included in your meal whereas [a la carte or duplicate item] is not.”



SCRIPTS

Positive Communication Role Play

SKIT 1

Student makes negative comment about school food.

VERSION 1A (POSITIVE RESPONSE)

2 participants

Server: Hello! <smile> Which entrée would you like to try today?

Student: Nothing. This food is gross.

Server: I'm sorry you feel that way. We also have cold salads, sandwiches, and yogurt parfaits, which you might like better.

Student: Oh, well, okay, I'll get a yogurt parfait.

VERSION 1B (NEGATIVE RESPONSE)

2 participants

Server: What would you like?

Student: Nothing. This food is gross.

Server: Well, it's what we have. Do you want something or not?

Student: Well, no! <makes a rude face> I'll just get some cookies and chips.



SKIT 2

Student does not immediately order a complete meal.

VERSION 2A (POSITIVE RESPONSE)

4 participants

Server: Hello! *<smile>* Which veggie would you like to try today? We have steamed green beans and fluffy mashed potatoes.

Student 1: Um, the mashed potatoes.

Server: Great! Which entrée would you like to go with that?

Student 1: Nothing, just the potatoes.

Server: Well, we have fresh fruit and carrot sticks down the line.

Student 1: *<goes to checkout>*

Student 2: I'll have the potatoes, too, please.

Server: Great! Which entrée would you like to go with that? We have a Texas Rib-B-Que sandwich or chicken patty sandwich.

Student 2: The Rib-B-Que looks okay. I'll try that. *<goes to checkout>*

Cashier (to Student1): You get five items with your meal, it's not too late.

Student 1: I don't want to hold up the line.

Server: Not a problem. There's a milk cooler at this end of the line. And here's a bowl of fresh fruit. Which do you like most, apples or oranges?

Student 1: Oranges. *<takes an orange and milk>*

Cashier: Enjoy! *<rings up purchase>* Have a super day. *<turns to Student 2>* And you get two fruits or veggies, would you like an orange also?

Student 2: I forgot to grab fruit in the line – oh, I'll take an apple. Thanks for the reminder.

Server: Great. *<rings up purchase>* Have a super day.



SCRIPTS:
Positive Communication Role Play
continued

VERSION 2B (NEGATIVE RESPONSE)

4 participants

Server: Hi, what would you like today?

Student 1: Um, the Rib-B-Que sandwich, I guess.

Server: Do you want a side? We have beans or potatoes.

Student 1: Nothing, just the sandwich. *<goes to checkout>*

Server (to Student 2): Hi, what would you like today?

Student 2: I'll have the sandwich too, please.

Server: And which side? We have green beans and mashed potatoes.

Student 2: Um, not today—I'd rather have fruit.

Cashier (to Student 1): Is that all? *<rings up purchase>* That'll be *[a la carte price]*.

Student 1: But I got a meal!

Server: It's not a full meal unless you get at least one fruit or vegetable.

Student 1: Fine! *<takes 2 oranges>* I'm just going to throw them away. *<throws the 2 oranges conspicuously in the trash as exits>*

Cashier: You can't have two of the same side... oh, whatever. You're holding up the line. *<annoyed, cancels first purchase and rings up purchase>* Next! *<turns to Student 2>* Is that all you want?

Student 2: Um, well— *<looks at fruit but feels embarrassed>* I'll just have the sandwich and milk. *<pays, hurries to lunchroom to sit with friend, Student 1>*

Server: *<rings up purchase>* But you need a fruit or vegetable as a part of your meal! *<rolls eyes>* What's with these kids today?!



SKIT 3

FSD needs lunchroom to sell more target entrées.

VERSION 3A (POSITIVE RESPONSE)

4 participants

Food Service Director (to Server, before lunch): We need to sell more of the new entrées. Encourage kids to try them. They taste good; if they try them, they'll probably like them. And try to get the kids to buy the full meal; otherwise, we'll have a hard time breaking even.

Server: Okay, I'll do my best. <goes to serving line> Hello! <smiles at student> Would you like to try the Big Bad Bean Burrito? It's new and really tasty.

Student 1: I don't know... I've never had it before. I usually just get pizza or a burger.

Server: We're trying new recipes. Let us know what you think! Here's a comment card to give us your feedback, like at a restaurant.

Student 1: Oh, cool! Okay, I'll try it.

Server: Great! And the golden corn and spicy stewed tomatoes go really well with it. Want to try them too?

Student 1: Well, sure.

Server: Enjoy! We look forward to hearing your opinion! Turn in the card when you return your tray.

Student 1: <goes to checkout>

Student 2: I'll try it, too. I like Taco Bell. I'll let you know what I think.

Server: Great! Enjoy!

FSD (to Server, after lunch): Wow, our reimbursable meals numbers look great, and we sold out of burritos! Awesome job! <high five>



SCRIPTS:
Positive Communication Role Play
continued

VERSION 3B (NEGATIVE RESPONSES)

4 participants

Food Service Director (to Server, before lunch): We need to sell more of the new entrées. Encourage kids to try them. They are pretty good; if they try them, they'll probably like them. And try to get the kids to buy the full meal; otherwise, we'll have a hard time breaking even.

Server: Okay, I will. *<goes to serving line>* ...Not that it'll make a difference. *<sees student>* Hi, want a burrito?

Student 1: I don't know... I've never had it before. I usually just get pizza or a burger.

Server: It's healthy and you fill out a survey.

Student 1: I hate healthy food, yuck. Nope, pizza for me.

Server: How about corn and tomatoes?

Student 1: With pizza? They don't go together. *<goes to checkout>*

Student 2: I was thinking of trying it but I don't want to look dumb in front of my friends... I'll take the pizza, too. No sides, thank you. Sorry. Good luck with your survey. *<looks guilty but goes to cashier anyway>*

FSD (to Server, after lunch): Our numbers don't look good, for meals or burrito sales. I'd really like to offer these new recipes, but we just end up wasting them... *<looks sad and worried>* I don't know how we're going to stay in business.



SKIT 4

Teaching staff member influences students' choices and comfort level.

VERSION 4A (POSITIVE RESPONSE)

5 participants

Food Service Director (to Teaching Staff at a staff meeting): The lunchroom offers many healthy, tasty meals. Some students are intimidated by new things, though, so we need help to break the ice and invite the kids try new foods. You make a huge difference in how the kids view our food, so we are asking you to please walk through the serving line (even if you don't buy anything) and make one positive comment. You might say, "Oh, I love sweet potatoes!" or "Today's turkey sandwich looks great!" or "Hello [server's name], what's today special?" Be creative and help our kids see that the people they look up to like school lunch.

Also, if you have a student who needs extra attention—for example, special assistance or a special diet—please let us know so we can help them discretely. Thank you! We look forward to working together to serve our kids.

Teaching Staff Member (to FSD, discreetly after the meeting): Just a heads-up, two of my students might need help. Thanks for thinking ahead. Serena is really shy and needs help with reading the menu, and Joey's parents are vegetarian and insist he doesn't eat meat. Oh, and I'll be happy to go through the line and say something nice in front of the kids.

FSD: Thank you for letting me know. I'll tell the servers about helping Serena and reserving a veggie entrée for Joey. Bring them through first in the line at lunch.

<later, at lunch: Teaching Staff Member leads students Serena and Joey to the Server>

Teacher: Wow, I love butternut squash! The roasted squash looks great.

Server: Thanks, they are today's special. We also have a black bean burrito, a chicken sandwich, and Hawaiian pizza—that means ham and pineapple. For veggies, we have roasted butternut squash, golden corn, and green peas. Serena, which sounds best to you?

Serena (student): Oh, they sound good. Hawaiian pizza please. And corn and squash.

Server: And Joey, I held a bean burrito for you. Which veggies would you like with that?

Joey (Student): Corn and squash, please. Thanks so much!



SCRIPTS:
Positive Communication Role Play
continued

VERSION 4B (NEGATIVE RESPONSE)

5 participants

Food Services Director (to teaching staff at a staff meeting): The lunchroom offers many healthy, tasty meals. Some students are intimidated by new things, though, so we need help to break the ice and invite kids to try new foods. You make a huge difference in how the kids view our food, so we are asking you to please walk through the serving line (even if you don't buy anything) and make one positive comment. You might say, "Oh, I love sweet potatoes!" or "Today's turkey sandwich looks great!" or "Hello [server's name], what's today special?" Be creative and help our kids see that the people they look up to like school lunch.

Also, if you have a student who needs extra attention—for example, special assistance or a special diet—please let us know so we can help them discretely. Thank you! We look forward to working together to serve our kids.

<outside lunchroom: Teaching Staff Member leads students to the lunchroom door>

Teacher: Okay, it's time for my break. Have a nice lunch, kids!

<Teacher leaves. Students (Serena and Joey) go to the server.>

Server: Hello, welcome to the lunchroom. What can I get for you today?

Serena (student): Um... I guess... a hamburger?

Server: We don't have burgers today. The menu is posted right there. **<points to the wall>**

Serena (student): **<embarrassed>** Oh, sorry. I guess I'll just have... milk. Never mind.

Joey (student): I'd like a bean burrito, please.

Server: We ran out of that last lunch period, sorry. How about a chicken sandwich or Hawaiian pizza?

Joey (student): **<disappointed>** No, I don't eat meat...

Server: Well, that's all we have left. What's wrong with eating meat?

Joey (student): **<sigh>**... Nothing for me, thanks.

<Students exit. FSD sees their empty trays and goes to Server.>

FSD: What happened with those kids? They need to eat lunch and we need to sell more lunches. How did we just lose two sales?

Server: **<shrugs>** I guess they just don't like our food.

WORKSHEET



Date:

Lunch period:

Notes:



WORKSHEET

Smarter Lunchrooms Case Studies

DIRECTIONS:

For each sample lunchroom, identify 3–5 areas for improvement. For each area of improvement, suggest at least one intervention strategy.

Example 1: Fruit, Snacks, and Milk

Area for Improvement	Suggested Interventions
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Example 2: Serving Lines

Area for Improvement	Suggested Interventions
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	



Example 3: Entrances and Dining Spaces

Area for Improvement	Suggested Interventions
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Example 4: Your Own Lunchroom

Area for Improvement	Suggested Interventions
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	



WORKSHEET

Collaborative Mission Statement

MISSION STATEMENT TEMPLATES

At (School or District Name), we strive to create a lunchroom...

Examples:

...that is _____, _____, _____, _____, and serves _____ food that _____ ...

...where students _____, staff _____, parents _____, and _____ ...

...where staff members feel _____, students feel _____, and we feel _____ ...

...that looks _____, sounds _____, smells _____, and feels _____ ...

At _____, we strive to create a lunchroom...
(School or District Name)

To reach these goals, we will...

We will support each other in pursuing these goals by...

We will know we are successful when...

We will celebrate our achievements toward these goals by...

Individual Goals

Complete individually and hang in staff room or work space.

Name: _____ **School:** _____

My personal goals to help improve the lunchroom are:

1.

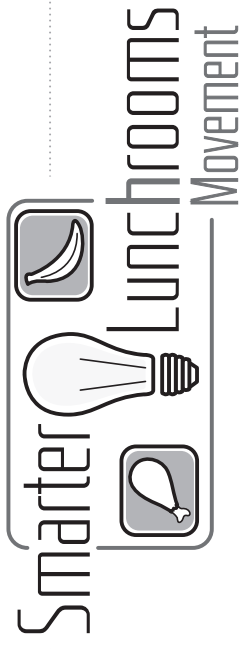
2.

To reach my goals, I will make sure to:

To reach my goals, I will request these items and/or support:

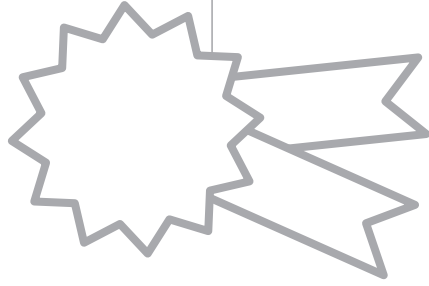
My goals connect with the group mission because:

I'll know I am successful when:



Certificate of Recognition

PRESENTED TO:



FOR HELPING US CREATE A SMARTER LUNCHROOM!

It's Not Nutrition...
Until It's Eaten!

