School Food
An Important Strategy for Addressing Children’s Nutritional Needs

Rochelle Davis
President + CEO, Healthy Schools Campaign
June 2012
About Healthy Schools Campaign
The School Food Debate?

You can lead kids to broccoli, but you can't make them eat

Students' reaction to healthier lunches highlights challenges for schools

February 20, 2011 | By Monica Eng, Tribune reporter

Anyone who has ever tried to sneak healthy food into kids' lunches knows what Chicago Public Schools is going through.

Sometimes kids openly embrace the new food. Sometimes they eat it without realizing the difference. And sometimes they refuse it altogether.

Presentation Overview

- Changing nutritional needs of students
- History of school meal program
- Overview of school meals today
- School food policy
- Case study: Changing CPS’ school food
- Role for teachers
Meeting Student Nutritional Needs

• 1946, Congress passed the National School Lunch Act “as a measure of national security.”

• During World War II at least 40 percent of rejected recruits were turned away on basis of poor nutrition.
Meeting Student Nutritional Needs

2010 Operation Readiness report “Too Fat to Fight”

“The United States military stands ready to protect the American people, but if our nation does not help ensure that future generations grow up to be healthy and fit, that will become increasingly difficult. The health of our children and our national security are at risk. America must act decisively.”
History of School Meal Program

1930s A Depressing Start
1940s School Lunch Gets Serious
1960 The Laws of School Lunch
1970 Vending Machine Wars
1980 Let Them Eat Ketchup
2000 The Health Revolution
1930s: A Depressing Start
1940s: School Food Gets Serious

“In the long view, no nation is healthier than its children, or more prosperous than its farmers.”

President Harry Truman signs the 1946 National School Lunch Act
1960s: Poverty + Regulations

“This is a memorable day for the children of America…for the child who arrives at school hungry, because there was no breakfast for him to eat at home…for the child who goes to school where no lunches are served, because there were no facilities to serve him with.”

President Lyndon Johnson signs the 1966 Child Nutrition Act
1970s: Vending Machine Wars
1980s: Let Them Eat Ketchup
2000s: Addressing Obesity
Basic Facts about School Food

**BREAKFAST**
- 2 BILLION MEALS
- 11.6 MILLION STUDENTS
- 87,000 SCHOOLS

**LUNCH**
- 5.2 BILLION MEALS
- 31.8 MILLION STUDENTS
- 101,000 SCHOOLS
Average School Lunch Service Cost Breakdown*

- Food: 46%
- Labor (including administrative labor): >45%
- Supplies, Contract Services, Indirect Charges: >10%

*School Lunch and Breakfast Cost Study-II: Summary of Findings, FNS Office of Research, Nutrition, and Analysis, April 2008
2000s: Addressing Obesity

• New Nutrition Standards/increased reimbursement
• Farm to School
• Funding for facilities
• Wellness Policies
• Increased Access (eligibility, breakfast)
• Food outside the cafeteria
• Food Corp
• National Leadership
New Nutritional Standards
Farm to School
2000s: Addressing Obesity

- New Nutrition Standards/increased reimbursement
- Farm to School
- Wellness Policies
- Increased Access (eligibility, breakfast)
- Food outside the cafeteria
- Funding for facilities
- Food Corp
- National Leadership
National Leadership: Let’s Move
Local Debates

• What should students eat?
• When should students eat?
• Where should the food be cooked?
• What about the workers?
• What about other food in the school or classroom?
Changing school food and fitness: Chicago Public Schools
The Role of Teachers
Thank you!

Rochelle Davis
President and CEO, Healthy Schools Campaign
rochelle@healthyschoolscampaign.org
healthyschoolscampaign.org
312.419.1810
175 N Franklin Ave, Suite 300
Chicago, IL 60606