

## IMPORTANT NEWS ABOUT OUR LUNCH PROGRAM!!

As you may know, over the past few months, we have begun making a variety of improvements to our lunch programs. We are committed to bringing you more high quality, healthy and delicious food that your children will enjoy.

### NEW ENTRÉES!

While most of your children's favorite items will remain on the menu, we have been adding new, fresh and healthy items and will continue to do so in the coming months.

In January, we are excited to offer a made-from-scratch chili, savory and delicious! We are also offering another new item, creamy chicken Alfredo over freshly cooked rotini pasta. We will continue to offer different versions of our homemade chicken sandwich, including an Italian version with provolone and marinara sauce. Our January chicken sandwich will be shredded chicken breast, warmed with Sweet Baby Ray's BBQ sauce and served on a whole wheat bun.

We are also offering fresh new salad options, in response to many requests. First up in January is a Greek salad with chicken, feta cheese, hummus and pita chips. Yum. This salad will alternate weekly with a chef salad and a grilled chicken salad. The greens we use for all of our salads are a mix of romaine and iceberg, with shredded carrots and red cabbage. Now, we're excited to announce that we will be improving our greens mix by adding fresh spinach!

In the coming months, we are also planning to offer a number of new entrées, including a teriyaki chicken stir fry, a meatball sub, and a new chicken fajita, all prepared fresh, in-house.

This fall, we began offering turkey and ham sub sandwiches from Jersey Giant. These tasty subs, from a local shop, have been very popular and will be offered each month.

We serve only all beef hot dogs, and we have begun grilling them, which has been very popular with our students!

Please support our efforts to make our lunch program healthy and delicious – encourage your children to try the new entrées and let us know how they like them!

### NEW SIDE DISHES!

We have also made some changes to improve the side dishes that we serve with our entrées. Each day we offer both a fresh and a canned fruit option: During the winter months, typical fresh fruits offered include apples, quartered oranges, pears, strawberries, cut up cantaloupe and grapes. If your child would like any of our whole fruits, like apples or pears, to be cut up, please encourage them to ask - any of our lunch ladies would be happy to do so. We also offer both a canned and a fresh vegetable each day, including cucumbers, broccoli, cauliflower and carrots.

To make sure your children have access to the best of local fruits and vegetables, we are exploring relationships with some new vendors, including the new Food Innovation Center at KVCC and the Kalamazoo Farmers Market. As one new addition, this fall we were able to serve local Honey Crisp apples from the Farmer's Market with some of our lunch options.

### PRICING

A modest increase in the price we charge for our lunches is needed to compensate for the higher prices associated with fresh, healthy, locally sourced ingredients, prepared in-house, and the upcoming increase in the minimum wage.

Beginning in January, the price of a full priced lunch will rise 15 cents, from \$2.70 to \$2.85. Additionally, the cost of an additional entrée will increase from \$1.00 to \$1.25.

As the year progresses, please check out the Hot Lunch Program page on our school website for the menu each month. If you are a family who does not participate in our hot lunch program, we encourage you to give it a try – we think you will like what you find!