



Director Spotlight!

Showcasing the passion, talents, and hard work of Arizona school nutrition professionals.



Paul Stanley

Director of Nutrition Services, Dysart Unified School District

Hometown: Clovis, California

Current City of Residence: Surprise, Arizona

Favorite Childhood School Meal: Scratch-Made Tacos

When I was a kid, I wanted to grow up to be a: Veterinarian

What prompted you to start working the field of school nutrition?

I worked at a restaurant in Flagstaff through college and fell in love with food and hospitality. When the opportunity presented itself to begin a career in child nutrition, I didn't hesitate. I started as the Assistant Director of Foodservice for Flagstaff Unified School District two days after I graduated college.

Tell us about a specific project or initiative you have championed that you are proud of.

Although we have implemented many new programs and initiatives over the years, I am most proud of how our department handled operations since the school closures last year. Changing the service model in a week's time was one of the most challenging times of my professional career. I couldn't be more proud of the team and how they responded.

Assuming time and money were not barriers, what would be your top priority as far as changes you would like to see in your school nutrition program?

If time and money were not barriers, I would make all of our products including bread, tortillas, etc. 100% from scratch and purchase more food trucks!

What are the top three skills a school food service director should have?

A food service director must communicate effectively, problem-solve and be flexible.

What advice would you give to a younger version of yourself just starting your role as Director?

Focus on what you can control, pick your battles and be consistent in everything you do.