



Unlocking Opportunities: Grants, Awards, and Recognition for Your Program!

March 19th, 2024

1:30 PM - 2:00 PM

Professional Standards Learning Codes: 3200, 4100



Meet Your Host



Ashley Kennedy, SNS

HEALTH AND NUTRITION SERVICES SPECIALIST

Welcome!



upLIFT was designed specifically for child nutrition professionals like you. It offers resources to help you LEARN about nutrition, get INSPIRED on meal choices for your participants, FEED students healthy meals, and TEACH others in your community about your programs.

You can look forward to materials and monthly webinars featuring unique upLIFT content showcasing Arizona child nutrition professionals, and providing ongoing inspiration throughout the year. This will empower you to upLIFT your programs in your own unique way!

Overview

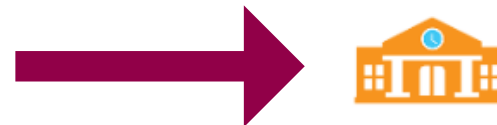
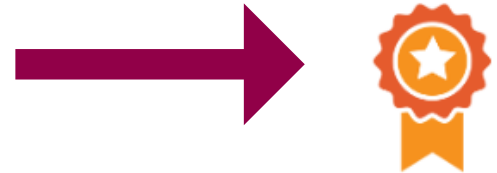
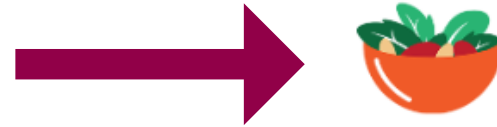
1. Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards
2. America's Healthiest Schools with Emily Thege
3. Guidance from the Field

Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards

Overview

Healthy Meals Incentives

USDA Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) established the [Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative](#) to improve the **nutritional quality** of school meals through food systems transformation, school food authority recognition and technical assistance, sharing **innovative ideas** and tested practices, and grants.



Overview

Action for Healthy Kids

As part of a cooperative agreement to develop and implement the USDA FNS Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative, Action for Healthy Kids is offering [Recognition Awards](#) to celebrate School Food Authorities (SFAs) that have made significant improvements to the nutritional quality of their school meals.



Overview

Recognition Awards will spotlight:



innovative **practices**



student and community **engagement**
activities



strategies schools have used to provide
meals **consistent** with the 2020-2025
Dietary Guidelines for Americans

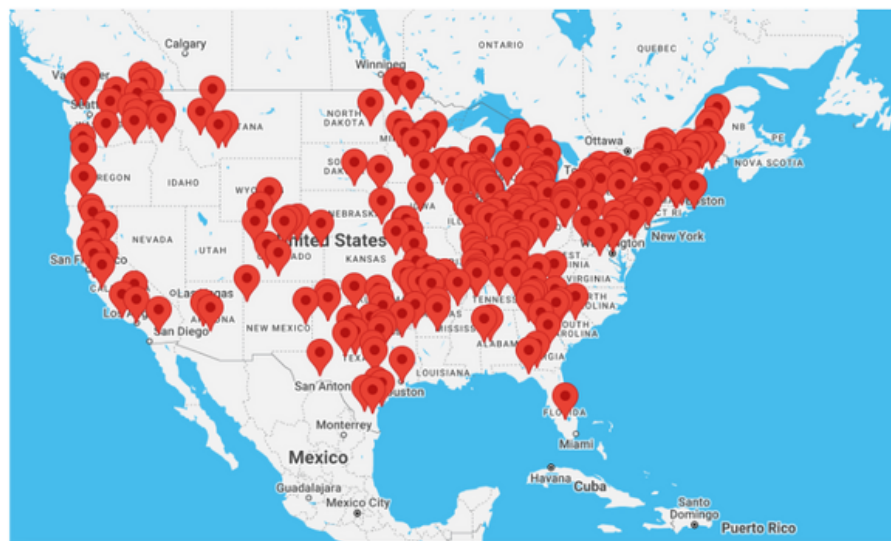
Funding Opportunities

Subgrants

Action for Healthy Kids has also awarded ~ **\$30 million** in subgrants to **264** school districts across **44** states with funding from USDA FNS.

Each small and/or rural school district will receive up to **\$150,000** to support them in improving:

- nutritional quality
- kitchen updates
- innovative staff training programs
- and more!



Highlight Your Program!

Innovation is key.

By implementing innovative ideas, you can effectively **highlight** your school nutrition program and **inspire** students to make **healthier** food choices. Ideas include:

- interactive cooking demos
- recipe contests
- farm to school events
- nutrition education workshops
- school garden initiatives
- student taste tests
- and more!



Healthy Meals Incentives Application

Timeline and Review

- Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis between **June 30, 2023** and **June 30, 2025**.
- Applicants will receive notifications regarding their award status within two calendar months from the end of the month in which they submitted their application. For instance, applications submitted in November 2024 will receive notification of their award status by January 31, 2025.



Application Deadline:
June 30, 2025 at 11:59pm ET

Healthy Meals Incentives Award Criteria

Eligibility

SFA's must participate in the **National School Lunch Program** and/or **School Breakfast Program** in the 50 United States, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, or the Virgin Islands.

SFA's may apply for any of the awards at any point during the application period, but may only **receive each award once**.



State agencies do not need to review SFA applications prior to submission.

Healthy Meals Incentives Award Types

Types of Awards

Trailblazer Award Series	Innovation Award Series
Breakfast Trailblazer	Innovative School Lunch Makeover
Small and/or Rural SFA Breakfast Trailblazer	Innovation in the Cultural Diversity of School Meals
Lunch Trailblazer	Innovation in the Preparation of School Meals
Small and/or Rural SFA Lunch Trailblazer	Innovation in Nutrition Education

Participation Benefits



SFAs meeting recognition award criteria will receive the following:

- National and local recognition through USDA, Action for Healthy Kids, and Healthy Meals Incentives.
- Awardee toolkit that includes promotional resources for use on the web, social media, and traditional media.
- Complimentary registration and travel stipends to attend an exclusive national Healthy Meals Summit.
- Access to diverse best practices from recognition awardees, stakeholder engagement, training and technical assistance activities, and Healthy Meals Summits.

Participation Recognition



Arizona Recognition

Celebrate AZ schools!

Nadaburg Unified School District 81

Wittman, AZ

Funded Amount: \$72,279.00

Grant Project Areas:

Equipment, Supplies, Training, Farm to School Activities

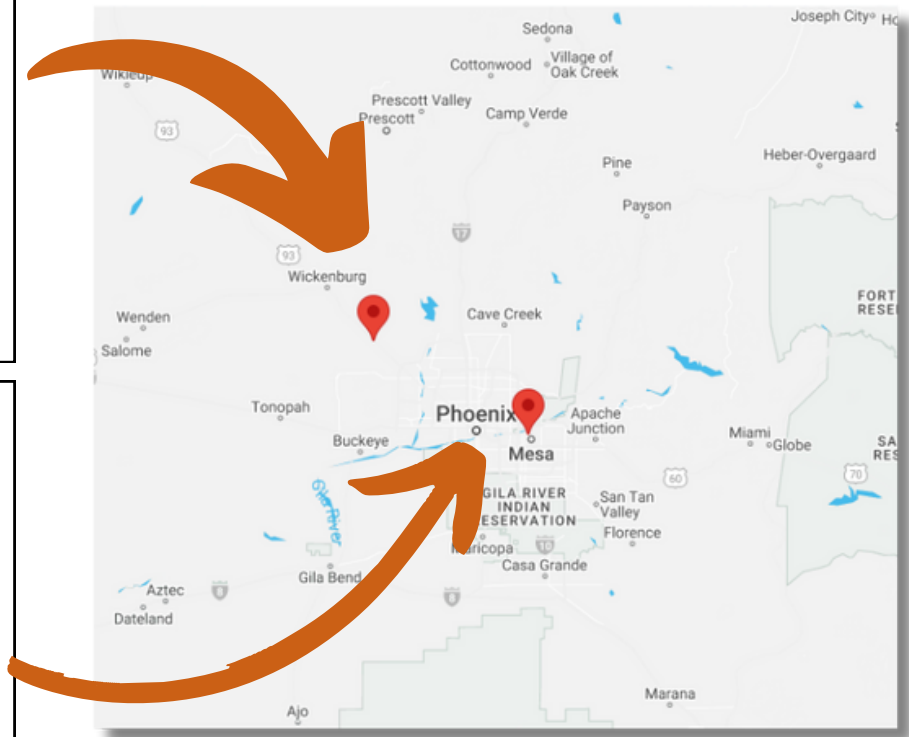
Concordia Charter School

Mesa, AZ

Funded Amount: \$96,203.00

Grant Project Areas:

Equipment, Supplies, Staffing, Training, Nutrition Software, Student Engagement



America's Healthiest Schools

Alliance for a Healthier Generation

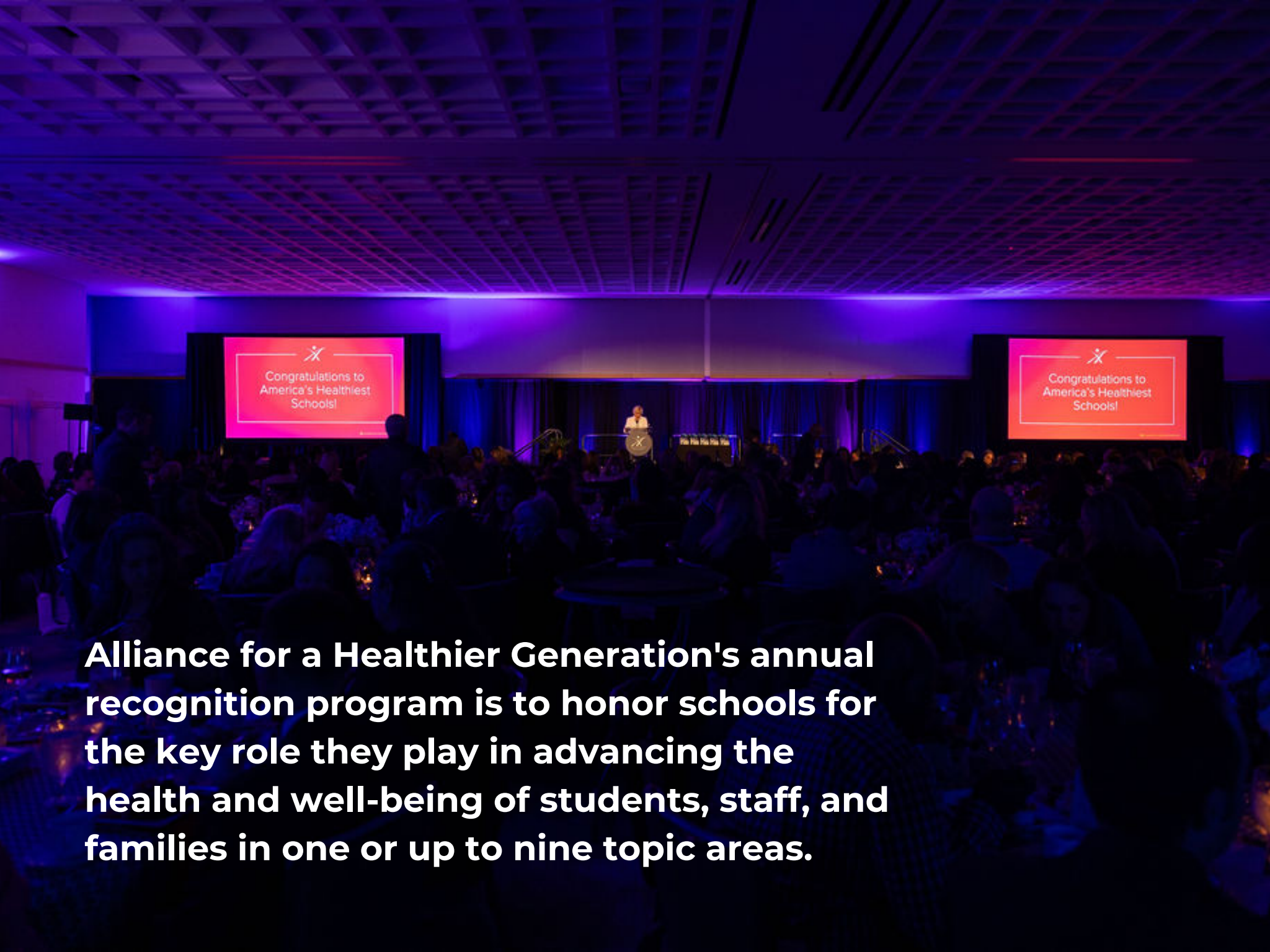
Emily Thege

Director

America's Healthiest Schools &
Recognition

Alliance for a Healthier Generation
emily.thege@healthiergeneration.org





Alliance for a Healthier Generation's annual recognition program is to honor schools for the key role they play in advancing the health and well-being of students, staff, and families in one or up to nine topic areas.

Overview

National Recognition

- Appear on our award page, **seen by millions** nationwide each year through local and national media outlets such as USA Today, HuffPost, Woman's Day, and more.
- **Digital award package** to help locally celebrate your achievements.
- An opportunity to be **invited** to the America's Healthiest Schools Leaders Summit.

Award Criteria

One topic receives recognition

- Increasing Family & Community Engagement
- Improving Nutrition & Food Access
- Implementing Local School Wellness Policy
- Enriching Health Education
- Bolstering Physical Education & Activity
- Strengthening Social-Emotional Health & Learning
- Cultivating Staff Well-Being
- Promoting Tobacco-Free Schools
- Supporting School Health Services

Award Criteria



Improving Nutrition & Food Access

Recognizes school teams that:

- Maximize school meal participation
- Collaborate with teachers on nutrition education
- Partner with community organizations to increase food access for students

Award Criteria

**We're from Arizona,
we already do that.**

**Maximize school meal
participation
(three strategies)**

**Collaborate with teachers
on nutrition education
(once)**

**Partner with community organizations
to increase food access for students
(once)**

Application Example

*CEP, Grab n Go,
attractive salad bar
presentation.*

*Fresh Fruit and Vegetable
Program to all grades at
school*

Backpack program during fall break.

Application Example

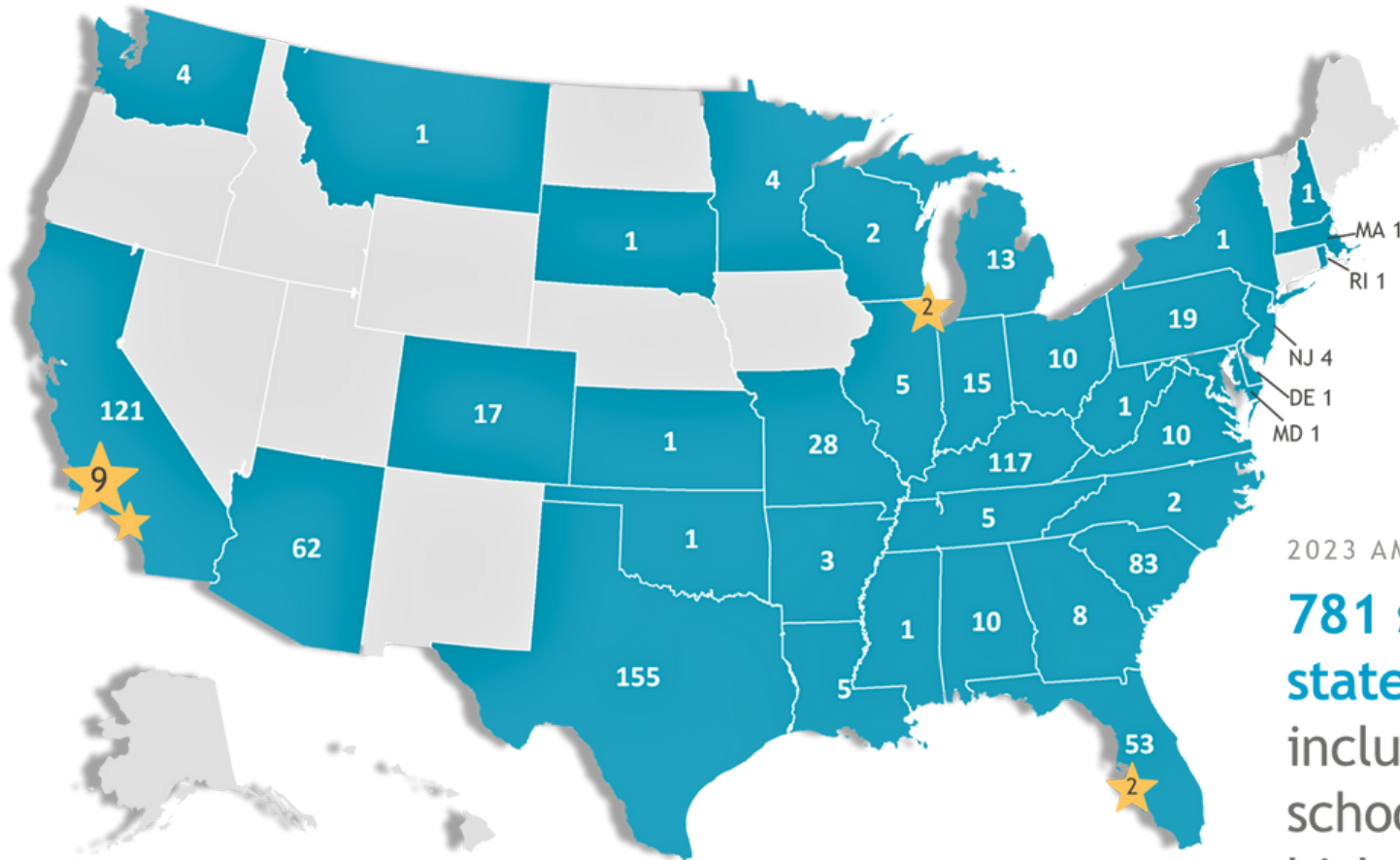
*Taste test, Feed
during Farm Fresh
Challenge,
celebrating school
breakfast week*

*Teach during Farm Fresh
Challenge*

*Partnering on programming or
connecting families to local food
banks or food rescue organizations.*

62 Schools in Arizona

Horizon Honors Schools, Cartwright School District, Mesa Unified School District, Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District



2023 AMERICA'S HEALTHIEST SCHOOLS

781 schools across **36 states** were recognized, including **14 All-Star** schools achieving our highest distinction.

Is your school one of America's Healthiest Schools?

Submit your school's award application in the Action Center by **April 16, 2024**.

Get support from Healthier Generation staff
(888) 543-4584, awards@healthiergeneration.org



Helpful Links

[2024 Award Guide](#)

[Fact Sheet](#)

[Webpage](#)

Guidance from the Field

Mesa Public Schools

Sarah Byrd
MS, RDN

Area Supervisor
Food and Nutrition Department
Mesa Public Schools
Mesa, AZ



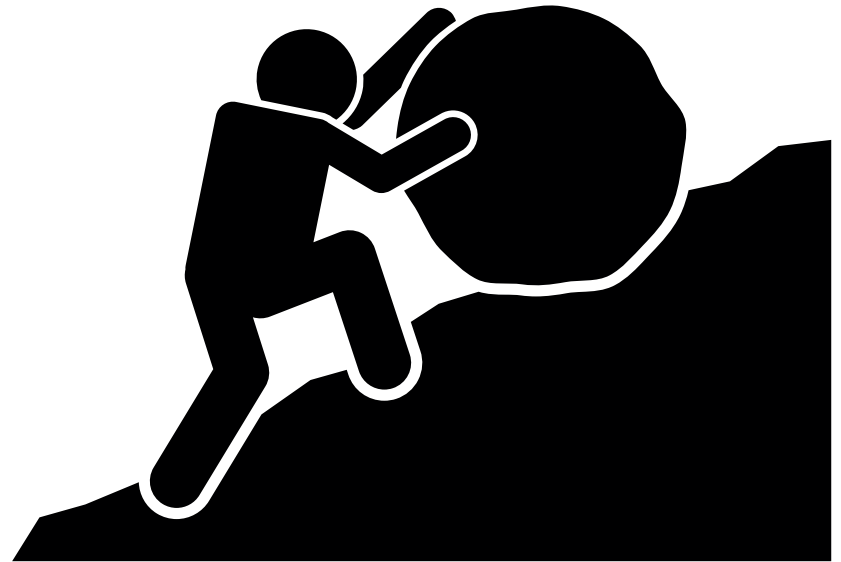
Mesa Public Schools

Ways MPS Succeeds

- Years of experience applying!
- Started small, now has evolved. There are even more plans to succeed and work with administration.
- Integrates a variety and offers fresh produce three times per week with fresh fruit at least one day per week.
- Moving students through the line has improved since pandemic times.

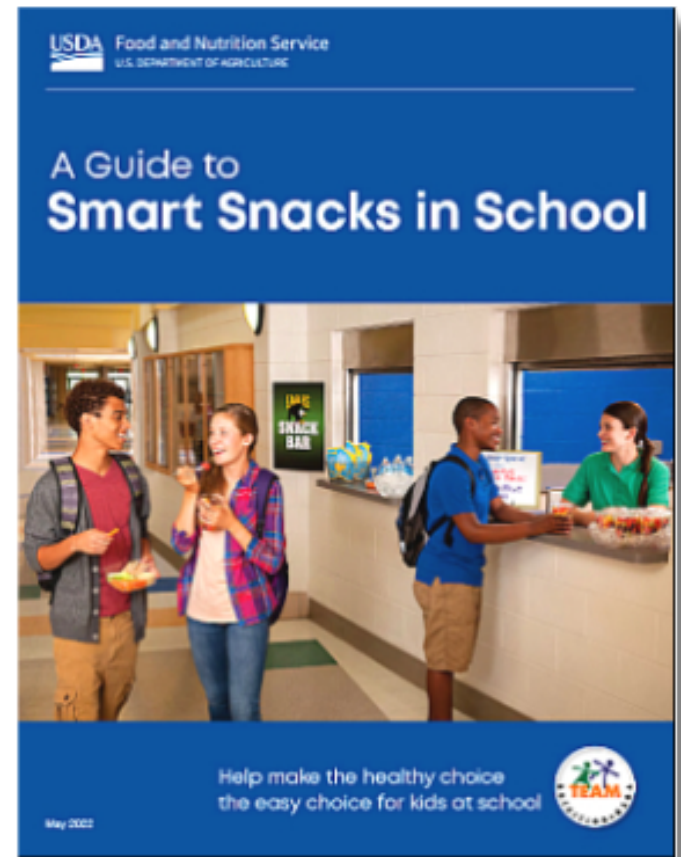
Challenges

- Some hurdles meeting all criteria
- Every school is so different so meeting criteria at each school presents a challenge
- Meal scheduling issues
 - Bus schedules, shorter lunch periods
- Always encounter issues with grab n go, schools with Breakfast in the Classroom
 - i.e. staffing, resources
- Nutrition services staffing issues
 - Nutrition education takes effort and requires time and extra staff



Future Applicant Guidance

- Take advantage of [USDA Smart Snacks Guidance](#)!
- Make an effort to have both an appealing breakfast and lunch
- Incorporate Farm to School
 - ADE HNS Farm Fresh Challenges are great ways to get started with Farm to School!
- Brainstorm unique, collaborative ways for cafeteria staff to support administration with nutrition education
 - i.e. classroom lessons and/or presentations
- Hold 'Tasting Parties'



Top 5 Tips for...

Unlocking Opportunities!

- Be confident! Let your program speak for itself!
- Collaborate with administration.
- Take advantage of these award opportunities!
- Use variety in your meals!
- Have fun!

Resources

Whole Food Profile

Learn the basics to start cooking with this nutritious, whole food!

WHEAT BERRIES

Wheat berries come in all varieties, and can vary in texture and flavor, depending on the wheat type. Most varieties are hearty and chewy and can be substituted for rice or pasta. You can also add them to any grain bowl, salad, or soup for extra flavor and texture!

How to Select and Store WHEAT BERRIES:

Selection
HARD OR SOFT WINTER OR SPRING
Selection of wheat berries is dependent on personal preference. Hard berries are normally red, higher in protein with a nuttier flavor. Soft berries are lower in protein with a milder flavor.

Storage
Wheat berries have a long shelf life. The main factors to consider when storing grains are moisture, and bugs or rodents. It is recommended to store bulk berries in large food-grade buckets with a lid. A tight-fitting lid will keep bugs, pests, and moisture away from the wheat berries.

Preparation
Since and simmer in water until tender. Soft wheat berries can cook in as little as 30 minutes, whereas hard ones sometimes need as much as 90. Have patience, and keep simmering until the grains are tender.

Try WHEAT BERRIES...
In Soups/Stews
Bring water to a boil. Add rinsed wheat berries, and reduce the heat. Simmer until they're tender. (Use 3 cups of water for every 1 cup of berries.)

In Grain Bowls
Use them as a base for hearty grain bowls! They pair nicely with proteins like chickpeas and lentils. Customize with your favorite vegetables and sauces!

White Sonora Berries are one of the oldest heritage wheat varieties in North America, and local to Arizona! Use this variety to introduce local items to your menu!

Did you know?

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University of Phoenix Learning Institute for Training and Professional Development

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1/2 cup (125g)
Calories 160
Total Fat 2g 4%
Sodium 1mg 0%
Total Carbohydrate 35g 7%
Dietary Fiber 3g 12%
Protein 6g 12%
% Daily Value are based on a diet of whole grains.

Whole Food
Profile

How to Use Whole Foods

Innovative ideas for using real, whole foods in delicious ways!

WHEAT BERRIES

Wheat berries, a versatile whole grain, usually require softening before eating. Mix them with water or broth, bring to a boil, and simmer until they reach the desired texture.

Examples:

- Wheat Berry Salad With Lemon-Garlic Vinaigrette
- Southwest Chicken and Wheat Berry Power Bowl
- Pear, Winter Squash and Wheat Berry Salad
- Wheat Berry Salad Recipe
- Wheat Berry Salad With Sealed Apple Dressing

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TIP!
Take advantage of **UPLIFT LOCAL** Use the **UPLIFT LOCAL** website to identify local vendors of wheat and wheat berries!

How to Use
Whole Foods

Research Rundown

Article: Considering Nature and Nurture in the Etiology and Prevention of Picky Eating: A Narrative Review

What did this review examine?

This review examines the developmental contributions to picky eating into the categories of **nature** and **nurture** and explores the interaction between the two. It also summarizes the potential outcomes of picky eating and the various strategies that are currently recommended to mitigate picky eating in young children.

How was picky eating studied?

A review of the literature was conducted in PubMed using "picky eating," "vegetable intake," "taste genetics," and "child food preferences" as keywords.

Key findings:

NATURE
Studies found that genetic factors such as:
• Preference for and ability to savor taste
• Changes in taste perception with age
• Genetic predisposition to fear of certain foods

NURTURE
Studies found that environmental factors such as:
• Breastfeeding and early introduction to solid foods
• Feeding style and feeding practices
• Food availability and exposure

Early experiences including flavor exposure in utero and via breastmilk interact with genetic differences in flavor perception in a complex way to establish food preferences. As a child grows, it is found that their innate and established preferences and behaviors, as well as their temperament, can affect nurture components like parenting style and food availability. Therefore, it can be concluded that factors leading to the development of picky eating behaviors are **multidimensional and will vary from child to child**.

Put it into practice!

- Use herbs, spices and dips as a method for increasing palatability of vegetables, in order to start shifting children's innate and pre-conditioned preferences.
- Pair exposure of unfamiliar foods with more liked foods and flavors to combat the fear of certain foods.
- Repeat exposure of an ill-liked item can increase consumption of a target food or vegetable. Combine this exposure with education materials to improve your chances for success!

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Research
Rundown

All About Whole Grains

From nutrition tips to cooking tricks, learn how to best serve these energy-rich powerhouses in your sites!

What is a whole grain?

A whole grain contains the entire cereal grain seed or kernel. The kernel has three parts including:
• the bran,
• the germ, and
• the endosperm.
Usually, the kernel is cracked, crushed, or flaked during the milling process. If the finished product retains the same relative proportions of bran, germ, and endosperm as the original grain, it is considered a whole grain.

Whole Grain Kernel

Why whole grains?

Whole grains provide a variety of nutrients to support proper growth and development in children. Also, dietary fiber in whole grains may help reduce blood cholesterol and lower risk of heart disease, obesity, and type 2 diabetes.

Examples:
• Whole Grain Oats
• Brown Rice
• Whole Wheat Pasta
• And More!

Cooking Tricks

Cooking grains is a fundamental skill in the kitchen! Whether it's rice, pasta, or oats, each grain requires a **specific cooking method** to achieve optimal texture and flavor. The **absorption method** is used for rice, where the grains soak up the cooking liquid, while pasta is cooked by draining **excess water** off. Properly cooked grains add complexity and substance!

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Grain	Grain to Water Ratio
Rice	1 cup rice: 2 cups water
Pasta	1 1/2 cups pasta: 4 cups water

Nutrition
Knowledge
Fact Sheet

<https://www.azed.gov/hns/nslp/uplift/>

Reminder!

upLIFT Your Voice!

Remember to share how you've upLIFTed your voice this month! ADE is eager to showcase your marketing and promotional initiatives. Reach out to Ashley.Kennedy@azed.gov with your stories, photos, examples, or anything that excites you!



Looking Ahead

Join us next month!

April upLIFT Webinar

April 16, 2024, 1:30-2:00 pm

Join us for a compelling webinar where we'll delve into the art of marketing plant-focused meals in cafeteria settings. Discover practical strategies to promote healthy, sustainable options that resonate with students' tastes and values. Learn how to craft enticing menu items, gain valuable insights on overcoming challenges, and empower your school community to embrace the benefits of plant-based eating. This webinar is not to be missed!



Thank you!

Any questions?
Please type them into the Q&A now.

If you are attending the live webinar, you will receive an email once attendance has been completed. Once you have received this email, your training certificate will be available in Arizona Professional Learning Development (APLD).

If you are watching the recorded webinar, you can access the survey link and certificate of completion at the end of the webinar slides.



Congratulations!

You have completed the recorded webinar: **Unlocking Opportunities: Grants, Awards, and Recognition for Your Program!**

To request a certificate, please go to the next slide.

In order to count this training toward your Professional Standards training hours, the training content must align with your job duties.

Information to include when documenting this training for Professional Standards:

- Training Title: **Unlocking Opportunities: Grants, Awards, and Recognition for Your Program!**
- Length: **0.5 hour**

Please Note:

- Attendees must document the amount of training hours indicated regardless of the amount of time it takes to complete it.

Congratulations!

Requesting a Training Certificate

Please click on the link below to complete a brief survey about this webinar. Once the survey is complete, you will be able to print your certificate of completion from Survey Monkey.

*This will not appear in your ADE Professional Learning Development (APLD) Account.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/upliftrecordedwebinar>

The information below is for your reference when completing the survey:

- Training Title: **Unlocking Opportunities: Grants, Awards, and Recognition for Your Program!**

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1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

Program.Intake@usda.gov

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