

# Healthy School Meals in the RCSD

**Dr. Charles T. Lunsford #19**



## Healthi Kids Coalition

The Healthi Kids Coalition is blazing a path for healthier, more active children in Rochester. Eating a healthy lunch each day will help your child focus on learning and do better in school. Join the movement to make sure your kids are getting healthy meals that have kid appeal! Give us a call or visit us online to find out how!

**[www.healthikids.org](http://www.healthikids.org)**

**585.224.3101**



In February 2014, Healthi Kids and the Children's Institute worked with parents from School #19 to learn what's happening in the school cafeteria. We wanted to know if kids were happy with the food that they are served and what would make it better. Together we looked at how much food was being wasted and thrown away and we talked to kids about what they like and don't like. The menu that day was chicken and rice or salad, apples and carrots. We talked to 14 students and here's what we learned:

#### *How much food was thrown away?*

- 12 students picked chicken and rice and 2 students chose salad. About half of students ate almost all of the entrée, the main part of the meal, but another half threw out almost all of it.
- 13 students took an apple. 1 in 4 kids threw away the whole fruit.
- Only four students who took the carrots. Three of them ate about half of them and one student ate them all.
- Six students took strawberry milk, 5 chose chocolate, and 2 picked white milk. One student did not take milk at all. 85% finished all of the milk and the rest drank about half.

#### *What do kids think of lunch?*

About half of all kids said that they liked their lunches that day but thought that school food could be better. Here is what they told us:

- Sometimes the food is too cold.
- Cooking the food at the school instead of serving it in plastic would be better.
- Kids want more variety/choices.
- Several comments were made that the rice was dry.
- Seasoning —kids want more flavor but there were mixed feelings about how "spicy" the food should be.



#### **What can we do to make school food better?**

##### *Parents:*

- Call **Ms. Bell**, your Parent Liaison, at **328-7454** to find out how you can meet other parents just like you who want to make a difference.
- Contact **Erick Stephens**, Healthi Kids Parent Coordinator, at **224-3112** to learn more about school lunch and how to ask for change.
- Pack healthy lunches/snacks and practice healthy eating at home.

##### *School #19:*

- Teach kids about how important it is to try new fruits and vegetables.
- Encourage adults in the building to be positive role models and encourage kids to try new foods.

##### *RCSD:*

- Create a Youth Food Advisory Committee to learn what kids like about school food and how to keep making it better.
- Train kitchen staff on how to prepare foods in a way that kids like and treat kids like customers.

##### *Healthi Kids:*

- Advocate for an increase in the amount of money the district gets to make healthy, kid-friendly meals.

