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Madison, IN: Madison Consolidated Schools is going ‘old school’ when it comes to food service for students district-wide.

Remember back when the school lunches were more like what your mom or grandma made at home? Well, we are headed back in time! Madison Consolidated Schools is excited to announce a number of additions and improvements to the Cafeteria service we offer students district-wide.

Madison Consolidated Schools has partnered with Strong Roots Family Farm and the Storie family to begin providing fresh vegetables for all cafeteria locations district-wide. This project began last fall when Mrs. Judy Brooks, Food Services Coordinator and Mrs. Amanda Briggs, Ag Teacher and FFA Sponsor approached Hope Storie after learning about her family business. “Hope and Tristan wanted to make some extra money and people were always asking if we had extra vegetables, so we decided to go to the Farmer’s Market four years ago,” shares David Storie. “After meeting with the school staff and realizing the desire for more fresh food, our family decided to expand our garden space to three separate gardens so we could grow more to accommodate the request. We have been so pleased with the results and look forward to the opportunity to continue to help educate all students on the different varieties of vegetables available through gardening.”

Hope and Tristan, both students at MCHS, are active in FFA and their classmates have been instrumental in the success of this initial rollout. In the first two weeks of school our students have been able to enjoy fresh corn, approximately 21 bushels in all. In order for cafeteria staff to be able to receive delivery and prepare the corn, it had to be shucked; that is where the FFA students were a huge help. “We could not have delivered or prepared all of the corn without assistance from the FFA students,” shares Brooks. “We would take delivery from the farm and our FFA students shucked approximately 600 ears of corn for us each week so we could clean and deliver to each building for preparation the following day at lunch. Cafeteria staff district-wide are excited to have this opportunity to prepare fresh garden vegetables for our students.”

In addition to the Farm to Table project, there are several other changes coming to the Cafeterias throughout our district.

1. Beginning August 24, students who stay at MCHS for after school co-curricular or extracurricular events will be able to purchase a snack at our cost. Cafeteria staff will prepare sandwiches, fruit, yogurt, etc. for student pick-up beginning at 3:00 p.m. to approximately 4:30 p.m. MJHS students are also invited to participate, at this time we just ask that they come to the MCHS cafe to purchase their snack. If we see a large demand with students coming from MJHS each day, we will begin to offer the same service at the junior high in September.
2. Beginning immediately, any extra food prepared and not served during the scheduled lunch period will be given to students free of charge at the end of the same day lunch period, as an after school snack, or

the next day during lunch. We want to eliminate left overs and ensure our students are able to enjoy all of the food prepared each day.

3. The elementary cafeterias will offer a fresh salad as an alternative to the standard lunch selection. The salads will be displayed and available to students in the lunch line.
4. We will eliminate cereal from the breakfast menu. Our goal is to provide more nutritious, homemade breakfast items, such as french toast, waffles, scrambled eggs, turkey sausage, etc. We will expand the standard breakfast menu to include items such as bagels and cream cheese or jelly, yogurt, and graham crackers.
5. Upon further review of our August menu, we realized only 7 of 21 main course offerings were homemade; meaning they contained minimal to no processed foods. Our commitment is to double the number of homemade main course lunch meals district-wide beginning as soon as possible, but no later than the November menu schedule. We will then triple the number of homemade lunches by February 2016. Our goal is to include more fish on our menu, make homemade pizza rather than frozen, and prepare only fresh vegetables as often as possible. We will also review the side dishes offered to ensure we are serving homemade items to complement our main course selections.
6. We are working to find ways we can begin to support our athletic teams and other organizations with food when travelling to away events. We are working closely with Coach Hawkins and will update you as this project is finalized.
7. We would like to explore options where we can begin to offer healthy, nutritious snacks to all elementary students after school free of charge. We are seeking a community partner who may be interested in working together for a cost-free solution. If interested, please contact Ashley Schutte at 812-274-8104.
8. Extended vision concepts for our food service area may include a culinary model, similar to our Cub Manufacturing program, called Cub Culinary. Ideally, this is will be a hands-on lab and curriculum model to provide our students exposure to all elements of food service, including catering and restaurant operation and management opportunities. This is a longer-term vision and we will continue to provide updates on this project as things become more defined.

“Our goal is to offset rising concerns with childhood hunger and childhood obesity with everyday solutions for our families,” shares Dr. Ginger Studebaker-Bolinger, Superintendent. “We feel a responsibility to our students to provide healthier meal and snack options and feel very fortunate to have partners, like Strong Roots Family Farm, who are working within our community to raise awareness of good nutrition through locally grown produce.”

“This project is a win-win for everyone,” states Mike Frazier - Director of Quality Systems, Operations and Auxiliary Support which oversees food service district-wide. “We are able to expand and improve our food quality and selection by purchasing the same ingredients but using different preparation methods; all while maintaining costs, and offering expanded work hours to some of our cafeteria staff. We will also be able to seek grant funds which are available to help offset any incremental cost as we continue to offer these expanded services for our families.”

Be sure to review your child’s menu options as we anticipate changes to occur quickly and frequently. Monthly menus for breakfast and lunch are available to download each month from our website at www.madison.k12.in.us.