

How to Make School Meals More Attractive

When students aren't satisfied with their food, it sets off a chain reaction: decreased participation, increased food waste, and reduced reimbursements make the struggle to provide a fiscally responsible, nutritionally sound food program an endless problem.

But there's a way to break the chain.



LET STUDENTS HAVE A SAY

If you're not actively seeking feedback from students on your café menus, you're lagging behind. Without continuous student insights and feedback, the school food program can deteriorate rapidly; leading to menu fatigue, a decline in participation, and lower reimbursement revenue.

- **65% of middle and high schoolers say they like to change what they eat a few times a week**
- **70% of middle/high schoolers indicate menu variety is important or extremely important**

Aramark's annual Student ViewPOINT™ survey—conducted alongside taste tests, focus groups, and industry research—is a source of major insights on dining trends, attitudes, and behaviors critical to operating a successful school nutrition program. **Contact us at our website** for the full report.



DID YOU KNOW?

We are the only food service provider that surveys **+45K students.**

MODEL YOUR MENUS ON RESTAURANTS

Restaurants are continually revamping their menus to match trends and attract more customers. What kids prefer to eat outside of school is a marker of what they'll enjoy in school. Aramark Student Nutrition created a Culinary Alliance of 20+ rotating chefs who develop dynamic recipes and limited-time offers that bring restaurant style to school menus.

Does your district offer lunch items like these?



Culinary adventures await! Are your students enjoying new and trending menu items?

2024 - 2025 SCHOOL YEAR LIMITED TIME OFFERS

FALL 2024

Chicken Katsu
Bowl



Cheesy Chorizo
Enchilada Bake

Fall Harvest
“Brunch-4-Lunch”



Jerk Chicken
Pizza

SPRING 2025



Mojo Chicken
Bowl

Turkey & Apple
Flatbread Melt



Cajun Biscuits
& Gravy

Pizza
Waffalacos



Street Corn Chowder
w/ Cheesy Breadsticks

GET AHEAD OF REGULATIONS

The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act has improved children's access to nutritious foods, but evolving regulations also bring new challenges for districts.

- **99% of school nutrition directors surveyed indicated increasing costs as a challenge for their school nutrition program.**
- **97.8% of school nutrition directors are moderately or seriously concerned regarding the availability of foods that will meet USDA sodium limits and are well accepted by students.**

To overcome the continual struggle to meet new nutrition targets, manage higher costs, and combat declining meal participation, Aramark's team of dietitians, procurement specialist and culinarians work proactively to test menus with scratch-made, fresh, and local ingredients to meet these newer guidelines while offering delicious recipes to students to increase participation. Furthermore, we work with key manufacturers to reformulate and assess menus to ensure high quality and distribution availability throughout the school year.

EMPOWER YOUR PEOPLE

Engaging food service staff is crucial for success; a disengaged team spells turnover, service disruption, and district-wide dissatisfaction.

Aramark equips teams with the resources they need to thrive, with intuitive onboarding, insightful skill development tracks, and training and mentorship programs led by chefs, dietitians, and management experts. Empowered with clear pathways to grow their careers, our teams are always encouraged to give feedback, proactively plan their trajectories, and join highly active employee resource groups—a robust resource network even the largest school districts struggle to sustain independently.



DITCH THE CAFETERIA MINDSET

Good food is the core of any school nutrition program, but when students spend every day in the same cafeteria, even the best food can feel stale. When designing an attractive dining venue, consider the full sensory experience of eating—taste, visual cues, and noise levels all matter. Aramark Student Nutrition professionally designs and builds age-appropriate food venues with all the flair of the trendy restaurants kids gravitate to outside of school.

The school food experts at Aramark Student Nutrition are excited to support your district's journey to ensuring all students are well-fed and fulfilled. To get started, **visit our website** or contact inspired-solutions@aramark.com to hear more.

