

Novice staff successfully implements compliant foodservice program

Hope for Hyndman Charter School's foodservice program had been led by an executive chef until his departure in the 2015-16 school year. He developed all the school's scratch-made recipes, verified that the weekly menus complied with the USDA nutritional guidelines, placed food orders and guided the three staff members on daily preparation and serving procedures. When he left the K-12 school where all 170 students can receive free breakfast and lunch, the three were concerned. None of them were well-versed in recipe development, creating weekly menus adhering to the USDA nutritional requirements, scaling recipes to their student population or the processes for USDA Administrative Reviews.

"We didn't know anything about menu planning and making recipes! We really didn't," Barb Ryan says.

That's when the school's sales representative from Feeser's Food Distributors introduced them to the plug-and-play convenience of NutriStudents K-12, a value-added enhancement to Sourcewell's cooperative purchasing contract with the Multi-Unit Group of food distribution companies. NutriStudents K-12 was just what they needed to continue to self-operate a USDA-compliant foodservice program. It also relieved the school of luring a new chef to its rural location in southeastern Pennsylvania.

Hyndman Charter School uses a 15-week rotation of NutriStudents K-12 chef-created menus, all certified by a Registered Dietitian as meeting the nutritional guidelines for the National School Lunch Program. The students have responded well to the change from their custom-designed menus – an average of 75% of students eat school lunch daily.

The school also uses NutriStudents K-12 USDA-compliant breakfast menus to offer a vibrant cafeteria-served breakfast to students.

Welcomed Simplicity

When the school implemented NutriStudents K-12, the staff was pleased with the system's simplicity.

"We didn't have to worry about serving sizes or nutritional analysis. It simplifies everything for us and tells us everything we need," Julie Waugerman says. "When we had the chef, we had to work a lot harder. It's a lot easier now because we know exactly what to be putting into our recipes."

They've also realized cost savings by buying larger quantities of national brands and less one-off purchases needed for the previous chef's scratch-made recipes.

Administrative Review 'So Easy'

As delighted as the staff is with the simplicity of the daily implementation, they were equally as pleased with how easy and smooth their USDA Administrative Review was in 2017-2018. They downloaded the NutriStudents K-12 Administrative Review packet to familiarize themselves with the process and the needed documentation. Kelly Carnell worked with the school's client service rep at NutriStudents K-12 to ensure the menu week to be audited was uploaded in the state-required analysis software. The school's staff only had to enter the meal counts for the week and work with Feeser's to gather the CN labels to provide to the reviewer.

"We didn't have to worry about serving sizes or nutritional analysis. It simplifies everything for us and tells us everything we need."

Julie Waugerman
Foodservice Staff
Hope for Hyndman
Charter School

NutriStudents K-12[®]
Menu Freedom. Tools for Success.

“Everything on our end was wonderful,” Kelly says. “Everything the reviewer wanted, we had ready. And we knew everything was right. She only spent an hour of the day with us. It was so easy.”

Since using NutriStudents K-12, the staff says of its foodservice program, “It’s a breeze! It really is! We actually love it! You don’t have to worry. You don’t have to think. NutriStudents K-12 has done all the hard work.”

If you’re considering licensing NutriStudents K-12, take their word for it, “You need to do it!”