

# Nutrition Education & Promotion Toolkit

**A Guide for teachers, support staff, and school administrators providing nutrition education in Norfolk Public Schools**

**Provided  
By:**



Norfolk Public Schools recognize the link between student health and learning and the desires to provide a comprehensive program promoting healthy eating and physical activity for all students in the division. It is our goal to create healthy school environments.

By providing this guide our goal is to help teachers, support staff, and school administrators the tools to use evidence-based techniques to encourage healthy nutrition choices as well as consistent messaging across schools, classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

## Nutrition Education

Explore the different nutrition lessons available for students.

All lessons can be adapted to meet SOL requirements.



To schedule a Nutrition Education Lesson and order materials needed contact Livia Berg RDN, Nutrition Education and Communications Specialist.

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**\*NOTE:** All activities and lesson plans can be adapted to meet SOL requirements.

# Plans for all year round

## Seasonal Inspiration...

### Spring Has Sprung

March

- National Nutrition Month
- **4th-8th: National School Breakfast Week**
- 22nd: World Water Day

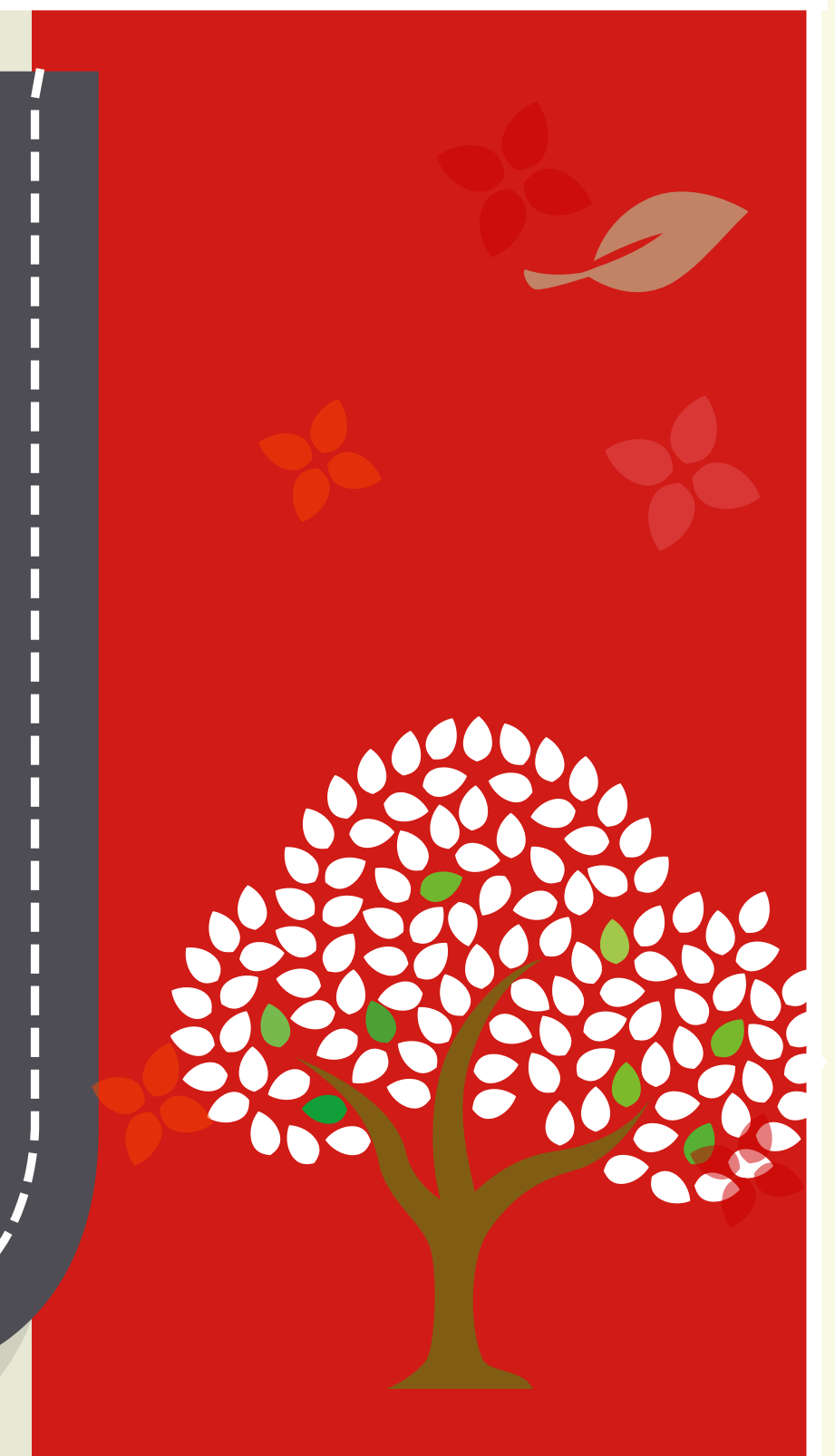
April

- April 6th- Fresh Tomato Day
- April 22nd- Earth Day and National Picnic Day

May

- Mother's Day
- National Bike Month - Bring the Blender Bike to your classroom!
- National Barbecue and Hamburger Month
- National Strawberry, Salad, and Salsa Month

Gardening:  
Talk about Herbs and Spices  
and let kids plant their own  
herb pot!



### Sweet Summertime

- June 11th- National Corn on the Cob Day
- June 18th- International Picnic Day
- Father's Day
- Hydration lessons
- Farmer's Markets & buying local
- Farmer's Market Week- 1st Week of August
- Make Homemade Popsicles



### Autumn Awesomeness

September

- National Hispanic Heritage Month
- National Fruits & Veggies Month (Mushroom and Potato Month too!)
- National Whole Grains Month

October

- National Farm to School Month: Bring a virtual dairy classroom or cows to class!
- 15th - 19th: National School Lunch Week!
- 16th - World Food Day
- 26th - World Pumpkin Day

November

- National Diabetes Month!

Throw a Carnival or  
Harvest Fest for Fall!



### Winter Wonderland

December

- Worldwide Food Service Safety Month
- National Oatmeal Muffin Day

January

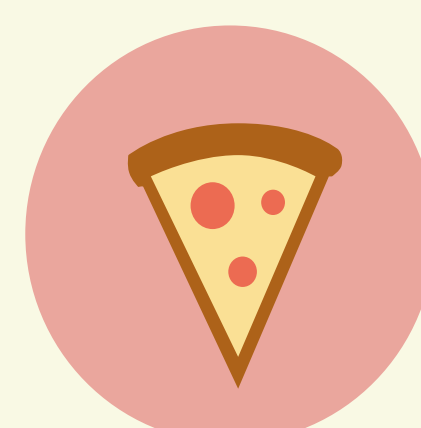
- National Soup and Oatmeal Month!
- 4th: National Spaghetti Day
- 14th - 17th: Sugar Awareness Week

February

- American Heart Month
- National Snack Food Month
- Sweet Potato Month



Partner with your School Nutrition Manager to elevate your classroom plans, celebrate "food" days and ask to see their Promo Calendar for more ideas!



# LEARNING THE 5 FOOD GROUPS

*Mock Grocery Store*

## OBJECTIVE

Students will learn which foods fall under each food group through an interactive mock grocery store. Students will compare less healthy vs. more healthy options in each food group. This will include an introduction to the benefits of each food group and how to read a food label.

## THE EVENT

The instructor will begin with a brief lesson on the 5 food groups. Students will then break into groups. Each team will be assigned a food group. In the front of the classroom, there will be a mock grocery store. Students will be asked to "purchase" the foods that belong to their food group. They will then present their products to the class and explain which foods are more healthy or less healthy and why.

Example:

Milk Group- Comparing flavored milk to non-flavored milk and whole fat milk to 1% milk. Explore milk alternatives.

# 5 FOOD GROUPS RELAY RACE

*Get Active while Learning*

## OBJECTIVE

Stay active while learning which foods fall into each food group. Activity will include an introduction of the 5 food groups.

## THE EVENT

Players team up into groups of five and line up together. Thirty feet from the starting line, place five open shopping bags, each labeled with a different food group name. Prepare a separate bag filled with images of various foods from each of the five food groups. (Do not include pictures of foods such as pizza that include more than one food group). When the relay starts, the first player in each line reaches into the picture bag and grabs one picture, running to place the picture in the correct food group bag. After successfully placing his or her picture in the right bag, each player runs back to the start and tags the hand of the next player in line. Play continues until all players have completed the relay. The team that finishes first and places its pictures in the correct food group bags wins.

# FOOD CRUSADE

*A Food Video Challenge*

Middle School Oriented

## OBJECTIVE

Increase students' knowledge about fruits and vegetables, as well as drive their preference for these food groups, by watching peers' videos and creating their own.

## THE EVENT

Each group of students creates a campaign video to promote their favorite fruit or vegetable, aiming to convince other students that it is a food worth eating. The videos should convey the nutritional benefits in a fun and competitive way, as well as communicate the visual aspects, taste, texture, and other relevant details of the food. On event day, students can view all video entries and vote for their favorite. For the grand prize, the winning team's fruit or vegetable can be featured on the school menu.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/team-nutrition-popular-events-idea-booklet>

# FOOD EXPLORER

Elementary or Middle School

*A Scavenger Hunt  
to Power Up*

## OBJECTIVE

Raise students' awareness of the components of a nutritious snack and encourage them to build their own healthy snacks in a fun, memorable way.

## THE EVENT

Students are divided into teams and led by teachers and parent volunteers through a premapped scavenger hunt. Their task is to “find” various healthy ingredients that will ultimately be combined into a healthy snack. Multiple stations are set up along the route, and at each stop, students receive a series of clues that guide them to guessing the station’s food. When a team identifies the correct food, each student on that team receives a ticket with the name of the food on it. Teams move through the remainder of the scavenger hunt until all food tickets are collected and all ingredients for the healthy snack are found. Once students have completed their entire clue worksheet, they can redeem their tickets for the healthy snack they “created” during the scavenger hunt – for example, a fruit salad featuring all of the ingredients they “found,” a vegetable salsa and wholegrain chips, a whole-grain and dried fruit snack mix, yogurt parfaits, or smoothies.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/team-nutrition-popular-events-idea-booklet>



# TRY DAY FRIDAYS

All Ages

*Try Something New  
this Friday*

## OBJECTIVE

Introduce students to new foods. Discuss the benefits of the food or the origin of the food. Foods may include exotic fruits, unique vegetables, or international dishes.

## THE EVENT

Students will have the opportunity to try a new food. The food being tested can be selected by the Nutrition Education Coordinator or by the teacher. Try Day Fridays will include an introduction to the food, to familiarize the students with the item. The lesson may include nutrition benefits, cooking or preparation techniques, origin, or historical significance.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/team-nutrition-popular-events-idea-booklet>

# TASTY TUESDAYS

All Ages

*Taste Test New Products  
and Vote!*

## OBJECTIVE

Tasty Tuesdays give students the opportunity to help create their lunch menu. School Nutrition is always looking for students to try new products or recipes. Taste tests include a brief survey to determine whether or not the item would be successful on the menu.

## THE EVENT

Gather in the cafeteria or in the classroom to test a new item or recipe. The event can be planned for single classes, groups of classes, or the entire school. All materials will be provided by School Nutrition.

# CAN'T BEAT HOW I EAT

*A Fruit & Vegetable  
Challenge*

## OBJECTIVE

Students become more aware of their current eating habits through self-monitoring and are encouraged to set goals for sustained healthy eating.

## THE EVENT

Students team up by class and record the fruits and vegetables they eat over the course of 2 weeks. Classrooms challenge one another to see which class eats the most or the widest variety of fruits and vegetables. Students in each class brainstorm ways to achieve the class goal. For example, how can they eat more fruit at breakfast? Also, the activity can be adapted to have children track what they consume from the dairy or grain groups (with an emphasis on whole grains). Students can reflect upon their experience in the competition through a journaling activity. At the end of the first week, students can examine how their eating habits changed and share tips with one another about how to make even more healthy food choices during the second week of the competition. At the end of the competition, all classes can attend a celebration. The top teams can receive nonfood prizes and all students can share their experiences with unfamiliar fruits and vegetables during the event.

# FROM EAST TO WEST

*Pen Pal Program*

## OBJECTIVE

Students from different schools share stories about nutrient-rich foods grown and eaten in their area. Students gain favorable attitudes toward novel fruits, vegetables, or whole grains.

## THE EVENT

School Nutrition connects the school with another school in a different part of the United States, pairing individual students as pen pals. Through letters, students introduce themselves and share information about their favorite fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, as well as foods that are native to their region. Students can be given a list of questions to ask their pen pals, using materials such as Dig In!: Lesson 6, Handout 2: Garden Pen Pals (see appendix, page 95). If the school maintains a garden, students can also share updates about the garden with their pen pals. As letters are received back, students can read them aloud to the class and discuss how their pen pals' eating habits differ from their own.

Note: Please give notice of interest in advance, as it may take time to partner with another district.

# DRINK SMART, PLAY HARD

*Water Wins*

Elementary or Middle School

## OBJECTIVE

Kids will guess the amount of added sugars in familiar drinks, and then play a sweet game.

## STEPS

1. ASK: "Does anyone know what added sugars are? Added sugars are put into a food or drink when it is made. For example, when sugar is added to iced tea. Can you guess how much added sugar is in these drinks? Use these sugar packets to show me. Each sugar packet contains about 1 teaspoon of sugar."
2. DO: After kids guess, show them the answer by counting out the correct amount for each drink. Put the packets in front of each drink after counting. For example, with a 12-oz can of cola, have the kids count out eight sugar packets.
3. Talk about added sugar and its negative effects on the body.
4. PLAY: Make six teams and line up behind the starting line. Have the first person in each team draw a slip of paper and take the correct number of sugar packets. The first kid in each line must walk or run with a sugar packet in his or her spoon to the finish line, drop the packet, and run back to pass the spoon to the next person. If the sugar packet is dropped before the finish line, the kid must go back to the starting line and start again with the same packet. The goal is to get all of the sugar packets to the finish line first.
5. WRAP UP: "Did you notice that you had to run a lot more for the drinks with lots of sugar added? That shows that if you drink a sugary beverage, you have to exercise a lot more to burn off the calories from the added sugar. To be healthy, you have to balance your food and play. Every day you make choices about what to eat and drink. As you can see, sweet drinks have a lot of added sugar. Remember to choose water instead of regular soda, fruit drinks, sweet tea, sports drinks, and lemonade."

[http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/tn/sfsm\\_t6famguide.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/tn/sfsm_t6famguide.pdf)

# GUESS THAT FOOD

All Ages

## OBJECTIVE

Students must guess the food that is attached to their headband by asking descriptive questions that can be answered by a Yes or No response. Students will be split into teams and will receive points. Before starting the game, students will receive a lesson on the 5 food groups, so they can use the information during the game.

## EXAMPLE

Johnny W. has a picture of spaghetti attached to his head band. He may start by asking...

Johnny: Am I a fruit?

Team: No!

Johnny: Am I a protein?

Team: No!

Johnny: Am I a grain?

Team: Yes!

Johnny: Do you make a sandwich with me?

Team: No!

Johnny: Do you eat me with Chinese food?

Team: No!

Johnny: Do I come from Italy?

Team: Yes

Johnny: Am I Spaghetti?!

Team: Yes!!

# FOOD GROUP BINGO

*Self Explanatory, Right?*

Elementary and Middle

## DESCRIPTION

Food Group Bingo is a fun way to learn which foods belong to each food group. The game can be tailored to meet the needs of each age group.

## FARM TO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

## EXAMPLES

- **Farmer's Market**  
School Nutrition can set up a stand in the school to allow the students to purchase from the Market. The activity will also include a lesson on farmer's markets and the benefits of buying local.
- **Gardening**  
Students will have the opportunity to grow produce or herbs. Activity will include a lesson on the parts of a plant.
- **Farmer Trade Cards**  
Local produce will be brought in for the students and they will receive trading cards with a bio on the farmer who grew their food. This activity can be ongoing, so that students can collect trading cards throughout the year.

# NUTRITION IN THE CLASSROOM

All Ages

## LESSON PLAN IDEAS

- The 5 Food Groups and their Benefits
- Sodium and Salt
- Good Fat vs. Bad Fat
- Exploring Vitamins and Minerals
- Portion Control
- Food Safety
- Great Grains
- Food Allergies & Intolerances
- Fast Food
- Hydration & Drinks
- Energy Balance & the Importance of Physical Activity
- Mindfulness



# CELEBRATIONS, FUNDRAISER & REWARDING STUDENTS

All Ages

## CELEBRATE & FUNDRAISE THE HEALTHY WAY

As part of the Norfolk Public Schools' School Wellness Policy all foods and beverages available to children during the school day must meet the USDA nutrition standards. This includes food and beverages offered during celebrations, parties, and snacks brought by parents or teachers for any occasion. To keep children safe, healthy, and included in any celebration, we encourage non-food celebrations. Here are some fun, non-food celebrations and fundraising ideas:

- Goodie-Bags with party favors like notepads, balloons, pencils, stickers, keychains, and small toys.
- Buy something for the classroom (books, games, music, class pet, etc)
- Extra recess time in your child's honor or purchase tickets to add 1 extra min of recess
- A game or other indoor activity for recess given in your child's honor or purchase tickets to add 1 extra min of recess
- A birthday dance party in class or purchase tickets to earn a dance party in your classroom
- Play music during class
- Send supplies for a craft project
- Send an item your child's classmates can sign for their birthday, like a shirt, hat, or picture frame

## REWARDS

As per the School Wellness Policy, foods and beverages will not be used as a reward, or withheld as punishment for any reason, such as performance or behavior. Food rewards contradict classroom lessons on nutrition, add empty calories to kids' diets and teach kids to eat when they're not hungry — setting the stage for unhealthy habits that can last a lifetime and contributing to the childhood obesity epidemic. Check out these fun ideas for non-food rewards to use with students.

Check out these fun ideas for non-food rewards to use with students.

# Resources

*For more activities and lesson plans, visit...*

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/kids-parents-educators>

<http://www.superkidsnutrition.com/kidsactivities/>

<http://www.nourishinteractive.com/nutrition-education-printables/category/72-kids-home-classroom-arts-crafts-nutrition-activities-games>

<https://www.nutrition.gov/life-stages/children/kids-corner>

