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AFFILIATION: Parent of students & wife of teacher in the district; Additionally Registered Dietitian with years of experience in food service, pediatric nutrition, and community nutrition.

First, I want to thank the Frewsburg Central School Board of Education for listening to my presentation on the possible future of the Child Nutrition Program for Frewsburg Central Schools and other districts throughout Chautauqua County.

Prioritizing the Child Nutrition Program (CNP) will help our children have access to nutritious meals and snacks. Research proves access to high quality nutrition is critical for children's academic success because it provides the essential energy and nutrients needed for brain development, focus, and memory, which directly translates to better school attendance, grades, and test scores. Poor nutrition can lead to fatigue, poor concentration, and behavioral problems, ultimately hindering learning.

I am not here to just state the obvious link between nutrition and our children's academic success. I want to provide you with a road map to make the Child Nutrition Program a priority for the children in our district (and our county) as you consider the impending staffing changes brought on with retirement.

I have 4 specific stops on this road map.

1. First Stop. We, at FCS, commit to keeping food service as a self-op program instead of subcontracting out to a food service company. There are many benefits but two financial benefits include:
 - a. Increased control and flexibility over menu pricing, quality of food used in procurement process, and variety in menus offered.
 - b. Revenue is directly reinvested into the program, allowing for continuous improvement and innovation within the food service operation.

2. Our second stop on our road map. We, at FCS, commit to being responsible stewards of current federal funding and explore ways to leverage additional funding sources.
 - a. As you may know, the majority of federal funding for Child Nutrition Programs is “per-meal reimbursements”. Relying on this single stream of funding limits quality of food and labor. A Child Nutrition Program suffers when the entire budget is from this single funding source.

Single-source funding = fragile foundation.

Diversified funding = strategic, resilient, and growth-friendly operations.
 - b. Regardless of funding source, there are ways to manage food service operations to maximize the budget such as following standardized recipes and using cycle menus in a single establishment. But the largest impact can be felt when

transitioning to a cooperative system, like what FCS does with transportation services. By creating a cooperative with other districts and streamlining food service operations, the budget can ultimately benefit from increased purchasing power, reduced food waste through standardized food industry operations and efficiencies, and cooperatively sharing the costs between districts for managerial oversight.

- i. Specifically, staffing 1-2 Food Service Manager(s) for a multi-district operation instead of 1 per district would make a big impact on total budget. Right now, each district has someone on staff to do the staff schedule, ordering, menu development, food safety trainings of the staff and program review. Instead, this could be managed by 1 (or 2 people) for a multi-district operation. Therefore, the cooks and food service attendants at each school district can focus on the actual food preparation. Possibly moving away from processed foods and having more time for homemade foods.
- c. An additional point at our second stop on the road map is to make it a priority to move away from a single-funding source budget and thus exploring opportunities of additional federal grants, state grants, and private or community funds. These grant opportunities help with technology improvements, structural or infrastructure changes, and implementation of innovative programs such Farm to School, utilizing local food systems, and Student job-training in

food service. These are grants I have seen used sporadically throughout Chautauqua County, but are not centralized. Please recognize that a food service company is not looking to create innovative programs like The Cove Food Truck at Clymer Schools or the Farm to Table programs and summer feeding programs in Cassadaga and Jamestown School Districts.

3. My third stop on our road map. We, at FCS, prioritize using trained professionals in an Administrative Managerial role for monitoring, oversight, and implementation of food service operations.
 - a. I am biased as a Dietitian. I know many individuals who are great cooks and wonderful food service managers. But including a dietitian as part of the Child Nutrition Program (CNP) management team connects the basics of food service with community health, food insecurity, and nutrition science by enhancing community partnerships and bringing wellness programs to our school families.
 - b. In consideration of time, please see supporting documentation in the first link in the attached resources. This is an article discussing a county-wide food service cooperative in Broome-Tioga counties and how their food service management is structured to include a Dietitian.
4. My fourth and final stop on our road map. We, at FCS, prioritize following successful examples and not reinventing the wheel.
 - a. See supporting documentation in Resources on Rock on Cafe. This model is a successful multi-district Food Service Operation.

b. I am leaving you with homework as you consider moving the Food Service Model to a multi-district cooperative Food Service Operation.

- Review additional resources attached to search how school districts in Broome and Tioga counties created a cooperative food service for their Child Nutrition Programs.
- Talk to other school districts in Chautauqua County to see where they are currently in this journey of making changes and improvements to their Food Service Operations.
 - Find out who is using food service management companies; particularly Southwestern and Falconer. Ask questions such as: Are they happy with the quality of food for the price they are paying? When are these contracts up for renewal? Is it time to start conversations about an alternative operation?
 - Also, talk to the districts who are currently self-operated; particularly Jamestown, Cassadaga and Clymer. Could their food service manager expand their responsibilities across districts? When is their food service manager planning to retire? Is it time to start merging food service operations?

In summary, as a dietetic professional and the mother of students in the district, I would love to see a cooperative School Food Service across multiple districts in

Chautauqua County. Following the model set by Broome-Tioga counties Rock on Cafe, I specifically would like to see a two person management staffing structure to manage multiple districts throughout the county. One that includes a 12 month Food Service Director, such as the current food service director employed at Jamestown School District, as well as a 10 month Dietitian. I hope I have been able to enlighten you with your options in making the Child Nutrition Program at Frewsburg Central School a worthy focus of your attention.

Resources on Rock on Cafe

Article by Rural Health Network on the staffing of Rock on Café

<https://foodandhealthnetwork.org/july-member-spotlight-broome-tioga-boces-food-service/>

Rock On Café (About Us)

<https://www.rockoncafe.org/AboutUs.aspx>

Broome-Tioga BOCES School Food Service

<https://www.rockoncafe.org/Default.aspx>

Additional Child Nutrition Program Resources

Child Nutrition Knowledge Center

<https://www.cn.nysed.gov/>

NY School Nutrition Association (membership association for professionals)

<https://www.nyschoolnutrition.org/>

National School Nutrition Association

<https://schoolnutrition.org/>

USDA Ag & Markets Farm to School

<https://agriculture.ny.gov/farming/farm-school>

USDA Child Nutrition Programs

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/schoolmeals>

The Cove – Clymer Central School District Food Truck

<https://www.facebook.com/p/The-Cove-Clymer-Central-School-Food-Truck-61551551421173/>