JESPA Proposal to District

Article 16 - Food and Nutrition Services

The goal of the Food and Nutrition Services department and the district is to ensure the wellness of each student and to make sure the nutrition and health of our students is a priority in all communities we serve within Jeffco. For students to learn, think, and be the best they can be, they need yummy, nutritious food and sufficient time to eat. The food service program must be operated on a non-profit basis and will be supplemented by the general fund. In order to provide the best possible service and fresh, scratch-cooked options, food service professionals must be treated as such, receive robust professional development, and kitchens must be staffed sufficiently.

16-1 Food Equity

With a lens on equity, Jeffco shall provide free, healthy school meals and plenty of time to eat for all students.

16-1-1 - Culturally Relevant Food -The district will provide input into menus to students and parents to provide more culturally relevant food options.
16-1-2 - All students will have at least 30 minutes in the cafeteria to eat lunch.
16-1-3 - All students will eat for free. No student will go hungry while at school. All students coming through the school lunch line will be provided with a complete school meal, breakfast, and after-school snacks where applicable at no cost. Jeffco will participate in state and federal options that create school meals for all programs.
16-1-4 Nutrition - The nutritional value of the reimbursable meals and snacks served by Jeffco will exceed USDA and State Dietary Guidelines and follow the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) guidelines whenever possible, by providing nutritious, fresh, tasty, scratch-cooked, and when possible, locally sourced and organic food that reflects Jeffco's cultural diversity. Jeffco shall minimize overly processed and packaged food as well high fructose corn syrup, chemicals, dyes and food additives. A fresh, healthy, nutritious lunch and where applicable,breakfast and snacks, will be available to every student at every school so that students are prepared to learn to their fullest potential. The district will also ensure that every student in USDA-approved after-school programs will have access to a healthy school snack.

16-2 - Student and Community Engagement and Education
Jeffco shall support a school environment that encourages and models nutritious eating habits and physical activity, which promote academic success and lifelong health. Engaging students and parents directly has a profound effect on school lunch participation and ensuring students choose healthy food. The district shall partner with JESPA , parents, and other local partners to establish education programs to increase food literacy, including culturally relevant food literacy. (as described here by Nourish Colorado)

16-2-1 Parent Voice Parents must have a voice in school food. Parents shall opt-in to junk food instead of opting out. Parents may submit recipes to the advisory group.

16-2-2 Surveys and Advisory Group: JESPA and FNS will conduct a survey in the winter and spring every year to parents, provided in the language spoken at home to get open feedback about the food and nutrition programs at school. An advisory group including parents, students food service workers, and teachers (including paraprofessionals) will conduct the survey and monitor progress.

16-2-3 Back to school nights Food service managers shall have a table and open the kitchen to engage with parents and students in order to provide education and get feedback once per year. They shall be paid for this time.

16-2-4 Nutrition Education:

1. Eating experiences and school gardens should be integrated into the academic curriculum at all grade levels whenever possible.
2. Meals served to students shall be attractively presented in a pleasant environment with sufficient time for eating and socialization at the table. It shall be the responsibility of the school staff to foster good manners and respect for fellow students and staff. School staff will be encouraged to support the concept that healthy eating in an attractive environment is an important element in student academic success.
3. ESPs, Teachers, Principals, and other school staff will recognize that the lunch period is an integral part of the educational program of Jeffco and work to implement the goals of this policy. Toward that end, lunch shall be served at a time appropriate for a mid-day meal and in K-8 schools, recess should be encouraged to take place before lunch. Additionally, lunch periods will be at least 30 minutes to encourage healthy eating.
4. Food Services recognizes the importance of nutrition education to complement the high-quality food served in schools. Through Food Services educational programs, Jeffco students will learn where food comes from, what fresh food tastes like, and even how to grow and cook their own food. Additionally, students will have educational experiences that provide understanding of food waste, climate change, and the symbiotic relationship between healthy food, a healthy planet, and their health.
5. School gardens provide many hands-on learning opportunities for students and will continue to be an important part of nutrition education in Jeffco. Curriculum and educational activities that connect students with local agriculture while introducing concepts focused on nutrition and healthy eating allow students to become more active participants in both their local economy and their own food choices.

16-3 - ESPs personnel are professionals and educators to our students. Adequate staffing and training for all food service employees is required to provide fresh, scratch-cooked food.

16-3-1 Sales or production volume shall not be linked in any way to job descriptions, classifications, or expectations, or compensation.

16-3-2 Training will be provided before the start of the school year and on all non-student contact days. The district shall provide differentiated-training opportunities to all ESPs based on what ESPs need and want. Professional Development opportunities will be provided and will be chosen by the staff member.

16-4. Elimination of Food Waste

16-4-1 The district will work towards eliminating food waste by implementing reusable trays, cups and silverware in all school cafeterias; purchasing bulk containers such as organic milk, introducing reusable plastic containers (RPCs) for the delivery of local produce, chicken and beef products; and supporting comprehensive recycling and composting programs in all school cafeterias.

16-5 - Eliminating Junk Food

16-5-1 For the purposes of this article Junk food is highly processed, low nutritional value, and overly packaged.

16-5-2 Junk food sales are in place as a profit-earning model to sustain the FNS department and are otherwise harmful to students. All junk food sales will be discouraged, and will only be allowed if a parent opts in to the junk food sales and is aware of the price and nutritional information of each junk food product sold. No junk food or a la carte sales/a la carte shall be tied to pay or bonuses.

16-5-3 All junk food including highly processed food sales shall be eliminated by July 2023.

16-6 - Food Procurement:

16-6-1 In practicing good food procurement methods, Jeffco will support a regional food system that is ecologically sound, economically viable, socially responsible and culturally relevant. Thoughtful purchasing practices by Jeffco can influence the creation and availability of a local, equitable, and sustainable good food system. Jeffco will continue to emphasize the following values for food procurement: local economies, environmental sustainability, valued workforce, animal welfare, nutrition, and value-chain equity and innovation.

16-6-2 The procurement plan shall seek to eliminate potential harmful food additives, colorings and dyes, high fructose corn syrup, genetically modified foods, pesticides, herbicides, hormones, antibiotics, refined sugar, brominated flour and artificial sweeteners.

16-7 Safe and Sustainable Storage and Delivery and Equipment

16-7-1 - Appropriate staffing levels shall be established to allow for safe delivery of food with plenty of time to load and unload trucks safely.
16-7-2 Storage: reusable plastic containers shall house fresh, organic fruits and vegetables. Extra packaging should be minimized whenever possible.
16-7-3 Delivery: All trucks shall be maintained with safety for the delivery in mind, including lift gates and working ramps with wheels. All trucks must provide adequate refrigeration.
16-7-3-1 All warehouse personnel must be provided with hand trucks that are appropriately maintained to work for all weather conditions. Schools should make sure ramps and walkways behind the kitchen are appropriately cleared for safe delivery
16-7-3-2 Delivery shall be coordinated at a time when students are not present in the delivery area (i.e.) not during student drop off.
16-7-3-3 All food service personnel shall be trained in safety practices and procedures for lifting, loading, unloading, and handling of food. Warehouse personnel and drivers shall have regular, weekly safety meetings and shall be run through a shared-decision making and collaborative model. Anyone reporting safety concerns shall be free from retaliation and shall not be singled out.

16-7-4 - All warehouse personnel and delivery drivers shall be provided with a yearly protective equipment and clothing allowance of at least $250 to provide for boots, coats, gloves, and cold weather gear.