

**Community FARE & Frederick County Public Schools  
Farm to School Planning Team Meeting #2**



**Date:** Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup> 2019  
**Time:** Meet and Greet: 5:30 – 6:00 pm  
 Meeting Time: 6:00 – 8:30 pm  
**Location:** Monocacy Elementary School  
 7421 Hayward Rd. Frederick, MD 21702

**F2SPT Meeting #2 SUMMARY NOTES**

**Meeting #1 Recap –**

- In 2009 the MD Farm to School Program began. It has expanded into school gardens and education programs.
- Maryland ranks 9<sup>th</sup> in the country for local products in school meals.
- MDA encourages Food Directors to work with Food Distributors to put LOCAL in purchasing contracts.
- An ongoing challenge is making the connection from cafeteria to the classroom.
- Community partners are key to the success of this initiative. The kick-off meeting highlighted South Mountain Creamery, FCPS, Catoctin Mtn Orchard, FCC and Community FARE.
- Reviewed school data from 5 elementary schools: Hillcrest, Lincoln, Monocacy, N. Frederick and Waverley.
- Overview of school meal purchases at 5 schools: ~ 2,000 breakfasts and lunches served each day out of 3,554 students. Around 19,600 summer lunches and ~19,000 after school snacks served. ~ 700 students in FFVP.
- Total food costs at 5 pilot schools is \$732,137.00 and around \$5,000 is spent on local foods.

**Progress Made Thus Far –**

<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Status</b>
Phone Interviews with Regional F2S Programs	September – December 2018	Complete
Food Distributor Site Visit and Interview	October 2018	Complete
FCPS Cafeteria Site Manager Interviews	October 2018	Complete
Produce Farmer Interviews	December 2018 – May 2019	In process
FCPS Taste Tests	February – May 2019	In process
Key Player Interviews (Staff, Parents, Students)	September 2018 – May 2019	In process
Menu and Recipe Workshop	January – May 2019	In process
FCPS School Garden Interviews	October 2018 – May 2019	In process
Food Waste Study	February – May 2019	To be planned

**Data Review with Partner –**

- Regional Farm to School Program Interviews (n=5)
- Cafeteria Site Manager Interviews (n=5)
- Key Player Surveys to be reviewed by email. What are our key questions we want answered?

**Key Partner Presentation – University of Maryland Extension**

- **FSNE** = Haylee Staruk
- **Small Farms Ag Agent** = Kelly Nichols
- **Master Gardeners** = David Sullivan

## Breakout into Small Group Work –

### 1. FARMER TO SCHOOL, facilitated by Janice Wiles

#### a. Finding local produce for FCPS

- There might be excess produce from Farmer's Markets that farmers might be willing to sell; Steve Obrey and Bob Kelly both said they would be willing to be flexible and incorporate farmer's market excess into their menu as it comes in.
- Dairy Farms – We wonder if some may transition to grow vegetables. Will explore with Kelly Nichols, UMD EXT to see if she can think of any dairy farmers that might be willing to grow vegetables?

#### b. Farm Tours

- Catoctin Mtn Orchard used to offer farm tours but now they just don't have the staff to do it right; Katlyn at CMO would like to get them started again but it's hard to do solo.
  - Maybe utilize retired teachers through the [Frederick County Retired School Personnel Association](#).
  - Topics that could be addressed at CMO on a tour (depending on age) IPM, grafting, mating disruption, stink bug control, irrigation or water control, food safety.
  - Topics on vegetable farms: soil management and health, plant health and resistance, weed management, compost, food safety, harvest etc.
  - Example Hard Bargain Farm offered cow milking which was overnight for 5th graders.
  - Create simple videos to show what farmers do year round on the farm (not just a seasonal job).

#### c. Partnership with Mountainside Education and Enrichment

- Has a very popular summer harvest camp: 4 weeks of harvest and food preparation
- They got a grant for housing authority kids to attend camp; perhaps could do the same for some of the FCPS kids.

### 2. CHEFS IN SCHOOL, facilitated by Elizabeth DeRose and Monica Skidmore

- a. **Taste Tests:** Elizabeth DeRose explored ideas for education points offered at taste tests. Some ideas were offering apple slices with salt, lemon etc. Monica Skidmore addressed time challenges in cafeteria and feasibility of offering these options. Suzanne Markowitz from the FMH 5210 program would like to attend.

- b. **Smarter Lunchroom Scorecard:** We briefly touched on the Smarter Lunchroom Program. Monica Skidmore explained what the program is and then shared her results from visiting the 5 Pilot Schools. She was able to categorize information into categories:
- What FNS can do with just a little effort and change,
  - What would require more effort and change like money, equipment or policy change, and
  - What FNS can do occasionally at some schools but not regularly.

### 3. GARDENS AT SCHOOL, facilitated by Kim Leahy

- a. **Garden Volunteers:** Everyone feels the volunteers are the lifeblood of garden projects. We talked briefly about more specific assignment of volunteers to create a feel of ownership in the volunteer. Kim Leahy will be keeping records on all of the pilot school garden progress and events and will attend many, if not all of the classroom days in the garden.
- b. **Garden Goals:** Start small with spring and fall garden lessons paired with specific classes and dedicated teachers. Will always seek approval from Principals and include school custodians in garden planning conversation from the outset.

1. **Lincoln ES:** JoAnne Coates-Hunter from Fox Farm will Farmer Natasha Bowens Blair as a lead for garden volunteers at Lincoln. Natasha’s husband works at Lincoln ES. Lincoln has garden beds and a history of doing garden projects. Need to connect with the right staff person.
  2. **Hillcrest ES:** Kim Leahy is the garden lead and Zoe Haughwout, FNS Assistant Manager, is assisting. Zoe has a group of Starbuck’s volunteers who would like to help with school gardens. Will explore matching volunteers up with specific schools to help throughout school year. Will be meeting with Hillcrest on Jan 24 with Pam Wallace, first grade teacher, garden champion.
  3. **North Frederick ES:** MG’s Dave Sullivan and Don Ludke from discussed past garden projects with the pilot schools, and mentioned North Frederick has established garden space that has potential.
  4. **Waverley ES:** Mark Gregory, F2S Planning Team member, is the garden lead at Waverley ES. He is working with a 3 teachers, garden champions, at this school. They are very excited and dedicated to the garden project. Planning meetings with teachers are on their way.
  5. **Monocacy ES:** Kim Leahy will lead with Erin Kline is garden champion and will pursue meetings with Principal and maintenance staff to discuss spring timeline and possibilities.
- c. **FCPS and MG Partnership:** Michael Bunitsky, member of FCPS Schoolboard suggested looking into pursuing official partnership between FCPS and Frederick County Master Gardeners. Kim Leahy will explore possibilities, pros and cons of such a partnership with the Master Gardener group and follow-up with Mr. Bunitsky.

**FCPS Kitchen Tour** – Participants were given a tour of FCPS kitchen and discussed all logistics that go into serving school meals.

**Why this work is incredibly important** – **Melanie Hoff FCPS Manager**, shared her personal story about how changing her eating patterns improved her health and her desire to provide the same opportunity and lessons for her children.

**Strategic Shift – How do we get the word out about Frederick County Farm to School?** Full strategic shift summary on page 4 of notes.

Participants worked in groups and drilled down to explore challenges and solutions relating to spreading the word about the Farm to School Initiative. The set up went as follows:

**Key Challenge: How do we get the word out about Frederick County Farm to School?**

- What are the major obstacles to “getting the word out about F2S”?
- What are the strategies to overcome obstacles in #1?
- What are the potential pitfalls to the strategies in #2?
- How do you overcome the pitfalls in #3?

**Next Steps -**

- Next Meeting = March 12<sup>th</sup>. FCPS Career and Technology Center, Spires Café. 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- Food Waste Study. Will contact Mountainside Education Center.

**Other Comments -**

- Possibly identify some key connections ahead of time to solidify more concisely how groups work together, for example, partnership paperwork and requirements.

**STRATEGIC SHIFT SUMMARY TABLE. Theme: What are the major obstacles to getting the word out about Frederick County Farm to School?**

Topic	Challenges	Solutions
<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No money, no money, no money</li> <li>• Cost of campaign</li> <li>• Resources for making videos</li> <li>• Who owns it and finances it?</li> <li>• Time and capacity to find funds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships, community organizations e.g. Community Foundation</li> <li>• Business sponsors, donors</li> <li>• Find a grant writer</li> <li>• Find your champion, find volunteers</li> <li>• Student clubs, create ownership</li> </ul>
<b>Buy-In</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of early buy-in and support</li> <li>• Not having full support of FCPS administration, local farms and extension agents</li> <li>• How do you reach parents and get people to watch/attend/respond?</li> <li>• What incentive is there to read the information sent out (emails)?</li> <li>• How to market something that doesn't have a track record locally?</li> <li>• Getting things approved can be a lengthy process</li> <li>• It could backfire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire a farm to school coordinator</li> <li>• Take a field trip, offer fruit and veggie samples!</li> <li>• Principal and Teacher buy-in, letter from superintendent</li> <li>• Banners, flyers</li> <li>• Personal stories/testimonials, photos and video clips parents and children</li> <li>• Need a committee (e.g. administration, teachers, students, parents, board of education, community, farmers, food services, tech, community liaison, communication expert/marketing)</li> <li>• Implement Smarter Lunchroom program, find resources/grants</li> </ul>
<b>Audience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying the audience (Is it the same message or different?)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Farmers</li> <li>○ Students and Teachers</li> <li>○ School administration</li> <li>○ Parents and community</li> <li>○ Food service workers</li> <li>○ On-boarding parents</li> </ul> </li> <li>• What venue to use in order to reach the target audience?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify where people get information (e.g. facebook, website, FNP)</li> <li>• Make sure to craft message that connects with audience. Bi-lingual</li> <li>• PTA/PTSA, a vehicle for the message, translators</li> <li>• CTC video and print students, FCC interns would be free</li> <li>• Offer a "taste test" for teachers at staff meeting, samples</li> <li>• Take advantage of existing events and resources (apples to PTA)</li> <li>• Find out first emails, social media presence, videos</li> <li>• Take home folders, PTA and school newsletters, stickers for students</li> <li>• Table at school events, mall events, Centro de Familia</li> <li>• Target message will vary, clarity of message and coordination</li> </ul>
<b>Experts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge (specialized)</li> <li>• What is the theme? (What will catch attention?)</li> <li>• Reliability of students and quality of work to create materials</li> <li>• Do we have dedicated social media managers?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build structured campaign with dedicated human resources to coordinate</li> <li>• Find the right people with passion for the topic.</li> <li>• Partner with other organizations</li> <li>• Find a marketing expert. FCPS video team? Student competition?</li> <li>• What's already out there? College credit and internship opportunities?</li> <li>• Connect with farm to school coordinators in other areas</li> <li>• Students meet with professor and advisor on project</li> <li>• AmeriCorps Member through Asian Americans, Elizabeth Chung</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size and scope of FCPS and need to move beyond 5 pilot schools</li> <li>• How do you measure results?</li> <li>• Move beyond kick-off to maintaining. How to make it systematic?</li> <li>• How to engage stakeholders? Who's at the table?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set expectations, define goals, plan and craft guidelines, gather data</li> <li>• Determine how success will be measured, e.g. surveys</li> <li>• Start small with 5 schools and get good at it. Get good press as you go!</li> <li>• Create a food hub and processing center.</li> </ul>