



Community FARE & Frederick County Public Schools Farm to School Planning Team Meeting #3

Date: Tuesday, March 12, 2019
Time: 5:30 – 6:00 pm Meet and Greet
6:00 – 8:30 pm Meeting
Location: Frederick County Career and Technology
Center, Spires Café.
7922 Opossumtown Pike Frederick, MD 21702

Farm to School Planning Team Meeting #3 Summary Notes

Progress Made in F2S Thus Far:

-Restated Frederick County Farm to School Goal: To positively impact student health, student education and economic growth of the County's agricultural sector by increasing the availability of locally grown fruits and vegetables in Frederick County Public Schools.

-Circled back to the 5 Pilot Elementary Schools: UMD EXT, provided updated % Free and Reduced Meals data for each school: North Frederick 50% FARM, Monocacy 58% FARM, Lincoln 71% FARM, Hillcrest 83% FARM and Waverley 100% FARM.

-Introduced a DRAFT of the Farm to School Logic Model: Described how logic models are used in program planning, implementation, evaluation and implementation. Reviewed the logic model and the program inputs, activities, outputs, short-term outcomes and intermediate and long-term outcomes.

-Restated USDA definition for Farm to School: Farm to school enriches the connection communities have with fresh, healthy food and local food producers by changing food purchasing and education practices at schools and early care and education sites. Farm to school implementation differs by location but always includes one or more of the following: (1) Procurement: Local foods are purchased, promoted and served in the cafeteria or as a snack or taste test; (2) Education: Students participate in education activities related to agriculture food, health or nutrition; and (3) School gardens: students engage in hands-on learning through gardening.

Updates:

- **Procurement:** Catocin Mountain Orchard supplies a variety of fruit throughout the year which totals ~\$54,000. Tasks (1) Exploring menu options for local spring and fall foods, (2) Conducting Farmer Interviews in partnership with UMD EXT, (3) Identifying local options for Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, (4) Exploring fresh, local food options for summer meal program.
- **Education:** Farm to School is working in partnership with UMD EXT FSNE (Food, Supplement, Nutrition Education) educator, Haylee Staruk. Haylee provides nutrition education at four of five pilot schools. She is partnering with us on the Farm to School taste tests. She also is meeting with FCPS Food and Nutrition Services Dietitian, Monica Skidmore to explore working together on Smarter Lunchroom strategies.

- **School Gardens:** Farm to School is working in partnership with the Frederick County Master Gardeners lead, Kim Leahy. Four of five pilot elementary schools have school gardens planned for this spring. Farm to School is in process of identifying garden champions at North Frederick Elementary School. A Master Gardener has volunteered to be a garden leader at this school.

-Lincoln Elementary School Taste Test Report: Farm to School Taste Test Goals: (1) To partner with cafeteria staff to strategize best way to offer sliced apples for taste test and future meals. (2) To give students the opportunity to meet a farmer. (3) To increase student understanding of how apples grow. (4) To help students explore taste by distinguishing between tart and sweet apples. (5) To help spread the word about FCPS and Farm to School. (6) To help foster the connection from cafeteria to classroom.

Apples	Loved it	Liked it	Tried it	Did not participate
n=411 sampled	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Kindergarten	53	5	6	7
First Grade	66	1	4	8
Second Grade	69	4	0	7
Third Grade	28	5	6	4
Fourth Grade	46	9	5	2
Fifth Grade	54	7	6	9
Total	316 (76%)	31 (8%)	27 (7%)	37 (9%)

(Enrollment = 591 students. $411/591 \times 100 = 70\%$ participation overall in taste test. *Not every teacher turned in data sheet. Participation numbers are most likely lower than actual.)

-Lincoln ES Taste Test Student Quotes:

- “I liked it so much. Can they come again?”
- “The apples were good!”
- “The apples were so yummy!”
- “Thank you!”

-Reviewed Results of Strategic Shift Summary: How to get the word out about Farm to School?

Complete Results Table at end of Summary Notes. Challenges: Funding. Buy-in and Support. Social Media. Size and Scope of FCPS. Program Sustainability. Solutions: Community Partnerships. Business Sponsors. Dedicated F2S Staff. Testimonials. Website. Structured Marketing Campaign. Create Best Practices at 5 Pilot Schools.

Large Group Discussion and Handout #1:

(1) Why does Farm to School Matter?

- Excite and educate students about where their food comes from and how it is grown.
- An opportunity to educate students early on about good foods and healthy eating.
- To inspire students to try foods and expose students to different foods.
- To increase demand for local foods and increase access to local, healthy produce.
- To support our local farming community and generate new customers for farmers.
- To build a sense of community and increase community engagement around food.
- Decrease carbon footprint and environmental impact.

(2) What would you like this initiative to achieve?

- To find as many farmers as possible to grow for FCPS.
- To educate students and parents about apples and farm and safety practices.
- To help students appreciate fresh produce and experience the taste difference.
- To help students learn more about how to prepare foods.
- To find permanent champions for gardens at individual schools in case school leaders change.
- Organize collaboration and commitment of stakeholders to empower and influence change.

(3) How might this Farm to School initiative enhance your organization's capacity to provide services?

- **Senior Services Division:** We need to talk about healthy eating and healthy bodies throughout the lifespan. We need greater availability and affordability of local projects for all Frederick County residents. It would be great to generate a more public conversation about food (in all aspects).
- **Farmer:** I would like to participate in more taste tests with students. I would also like to host a “Meet the Farmer night” for parents.
- **FCC HCTI:** Our program is about culinary education so it's a natural fit for us to bring our program to assist secondary educators in starting food education early. There may be an opportunity for us to provide culinary skills training to FCPS food service staff with regard to recipe development and incorporating local foods.
- **American Fruit Grower Managing Editor:** I think we can help growers see Farm to School as an important project within their communities.
- **Food Service Assistant Manager:** I would like to increase our ability to give students fresher product that lasts longer. In addition to helping to reduce food waste and packaging. It's important to help us continuously connect food to classroom curriculum and create a greater community connection.
- **Farmer:** We would like to host school field trips and educate about alternative ways to grow foods. This initiative can help us think about a whole different clientele – kids. F2S can help us brainstorm about foods we can grow for FCPS and ways to introduce students to new foods.
- **Master Gardener:** Our slogan is “grow it, eat it” and this is something all children can do and appreciate for their own pleasure, tastes and accomplishments.
- **FNS:** This initiative can help educate students about healthy local foods and where their food comes from. If we are able to include more local foods in the school meal program and educate more about local foods, we could potentially feed more children.

Moving Forward. Sustainability Exercise:

The article, “Public health program capacity for sustainability: a new framework” by Sara F Schell was used as the foundation for the sustainability discussion. The Farm to School conversation focused on the following domains: (1) Political Support, (2) Funding Stability, (3) Partnerships, (4) Organizational Capacity, (5) Program Evaluation, (6) Communications. The following chart outlines key concepts to consider.

Domain	Focus	To Consider	Next Steps
Political Support Ranked as a high priority domain.	No matter the level at which your program operates, the overall economic and political climate will affect your ability to get things done.	School districts are influenced by superintendents, school boards and local politicians.	-Pursue Board of Education presentation. -Presentation on agriculture and economy for elected officials.
Funding Stability Ranked as a high priority domain.	It's necessary to establish a consistent financial base for F2S in the short term and in the long term.	Planning for the sustainability of funding should be a strategic process.	-Develop a funding plan to ensure key infrastructure is maintained.
Partnerships Ranked as a high priority domain.	Cultivate a connection to all Farm to School stakeholders.	Building awareness and capacity for sustainability requires a strategic approach and partnerships between public and private organizations.	-Draft partnership agreements. -Expand farmer partnerships to meet needs for increased volume (spec sheet), summer meal program and field trips.
Organizational Capacity	Having the internal support and resources needed to effectively manage the F2S program.	Strengthening our program's internal support can increase program's likelihood of long-term success.	-Continue to cultivate internal leaders and champions who will advocate for F2S across FCPS and in community. -Coordinator/Backbone Organization
Program Evaluation	Having the ability to have a plan in place to assess program and document results with the ability to take action and adapt program to ensure ongoing effectiveness.	Evaluating F2S builds sustainability by keeping the program on track with its goals and outcomes.	-Draft Action Plan for USDA grant which addresses program goals and outcomes and present to stakeholders. -Use Logic Model as roadmap and refer to often.
Communication Ranked as a high priority domain.	Strategic communication with stakeholders and public about Farm to School Program.	Communicating externally about F2S's effectiveness helps the program gain greater visibility. Internally, evidence that a program works builds staff buy-in and support from organizational leaders.	-Build partnership with FCPS communication team and CTC program. -Develop Fact Sheet to assist Farmers with school partnership and add to website. -Foster communication between farmers and FNS.

Large Group Discussion – Sustainability Exercise:

Each Working Group answered the question, “In order for the Farm to School initiative to successfully continue over time, it needs _____.”

Answers:

-Farmer to School: Presentation on agriculture and economy to public officials and decision makers. Partner with other institutions. Farmer’s commitment to the school. Establishment of regular market for farmers. Communication between schools and farmers. Farm field trips embedded into schools. Get Farmer testimonials.

-Chefs in School: Flexibility. Availability of food during school months. Farms with green houses and hydroponic growing practices. Cost effective recipe development. Staffing trained and on-board. Inclusion of summer meal program. Processing equipment.

Gardens at School: Garden must tie in with grade curriculum. Must have administration and custodian buy-in. Must have teacher champion. Family engagement can be a source of help and monetary support.

Gap Year Funding Update:

Fundraising Goal for 2019 – 2020 school year is \$30,000. Investigating grant opportunities along with business sponsorships and community donations. Two \$500 sponsorships received so far from Frederick County Bank, Colliver Dental Group; awaiting confirmation of two more.

- Fruit and Veggie Lover = \$500 tax deductible donation
- Foodie Sponsor = \$1,500 tax deductible donation
- Locavore Sponsor = \$3,000 tax deductible donation
- Local Food Movement Champion = \$5,000 tax deductible donation

Brainstorm for Funding Options:

- Apple Crunch for Education, United Way, Community Foundation, Livable Frederick, County Executive initiatives and Sustainability Program, Mother Earth News and FNP, Wegmans, H-Mart, Common Market.

Action Planning:

Farm to School working groups were asked to determine three areas of focus that they thought were important to consider for the 2019-2020 school year. One participant voiced the need to: (1) Get coordinator, (2) Secure funding, (3) Increase communication. Other participants worked in groups and highlighted the focus areas below:

Farmer to School

1. Identify and partner with at least 1 more farmer and align with school feeder patterns.
2. Curriculum development around agriculture, local food and farms (e.g. hydroponics).
3. Make Farm to School a part of Ag Week.
4. Identify risks for each of the farmers and address those risks.
5. Raise money for a Farm to School Coordinator to liaison with farmers and schools.

Chefs in School

1. Expand taste tests as criteria in Smarter Lunchroom Scorecard (e.g. each 1 time a year fruit, veg, entrée).
2. Expand Farmer partnerships and promote locally featured Farms through existing programs (e.g. LYNX supper, snack, FFVP).
3. Find ways for more efficient food processing with skills training and equipment.

Garden at School

1. Draft written parameters for beginning school gardens (e.g. teachers, admin, and volunteers).
2. For gardens in 5 pilot schools, establish regularly scheduled garden days with volunteers.
3. Have a school garden liaison that tracks data and garden coordination.

Next Meeting:

Monday, May 13th

5:30 – 6:00, Meet and Greet

6:00 p.m. Meeting begins

Location TBD