Best Practices
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This collection of best practices was compiled from participants in the Culinary Skills for A+ School Meals, Summer of 2016. This training was sponsored by the Indiana Department of Education and conducted by Culinary Nutrition Associates LLC and Cathy Powers, MS, RDN, LD.

Thanks to all of the participants for their dedication and enthusiasm for improving the meals served to students across the state of Indiana.
BASIC CULINARY SKILLS

1. Stay Ahead of the Game

Submitted by:
Tami Wyant
Tri-Central Community Schools

Description:
Use your freezer and refrigerator as “pantries.” We prep ahead on items that can safely and easily be prepped and stored. This way, we are always ahead so if something unexpected happens we aren’t scrambling.

Tip:
Always think the whole day out before it starts. Having a game plan prevents a lot of problems.

2. Time Management

Submitted by:
Joella Grant
Tri-Central Community Schools

Description:
Prepare the food items that takes the longest started first and then work down our menu to the things that take the least amount of time.

Tip:
Post the menu at each work station for easy access.
3. Clean Gloves and Wash Your Hands

Submitted by:
Jean Harden
Tipton County Tri-Central Schools

Description:
Our favorite saying…. wash your hands, wash your hands, wash your hands!
Always put on clean gloves every time you change your job. If you go in the dish
room change your gloves and wash your hands. We wear gloves for every job.

Tip:
Have a range of glove sizes, from small to extra-large, so
that everyone has the correct size. Sloppy gloves are not
good to work with.

4. Teamwork

Submitted by:
Nila Robinson
Daleville Community School

Description:
All kitchen staff are cross-trained to do all kitchen tasks as needed. This is helpful
if someone is running behind or if there is a staff shortage.

Tip......Just for Fun
I have two pineapple plants growing in my kitchen. I cut the
top off of a pineapple and put it in dirt. In three to five years
the plant will be about 3 ½ feet tall. In the fall cut a red apple
in half and place in center of pineapple fronds. This pollinates
the plant. Within 10 weeks you should have a small pineapple.
5. Go-getter Gatherer

*Submitted by:*
Tiffaney Wright
Westfield Washington

Jackie Hollenbaugh
Calvary Luthern

Lori Branham
East Elementary

South Madison Community School Corporation

*Description:*
Gather ingredients the day before. Pre-measure spices and herbs. Pull items from the freezer ahead to allow thawing.

Read the entire recipe completely BEFORE you start cooking.

Check the oven temp. Take note of ingredients used in different parts of the recipe. Gather all ingredients from the cooler, dry storage and freezer. Measure each ingredient prior to starting the preparation of the recipe. Once all items are measured properly, return unused ingredients to storage and begin recipe preparation. This is your mise en place. When your mise en place is complete....then you begin cooking.

*Tip:* Always gather all tools, ingredients and sanitation items prior to recipe preparation.

6. Efficient Food Prep and Cooking

*Submitted by:*
Penny Garrett
Yorktown Community Schools

*Description:*
Encourage your staff to review the monthly menu for efficient use of time. For example: Prepare and cook ground beef for multiple use throughout the month such as sloppy joe sandwich, Coney sauce, nachos and taco salad.
7. Prepping of Food and Workers

*Submitted by:*
Vickie Shepherd
Western Boone Schools

*Description:*
Rotate your cooks in each station so everyone knows how to prepare the entire menu. This gives coverage if someone is out for a day, or longer. Part time staff also need to be cross-trained.

8. Keep Coolers Neat and Tidy

*Submitted by:*
Christy Tharp
Tri-Central Community School

*Description:*
Keep boxes straight and orderly. Organize the same items together. Stack with the labels and the date facing out so they are easy to rotate.
9. Front and Center

Submitted by:
Betty Huddleston
Western Wayne Schools

Description:
Have all labels facing the same way. For example, cases of boxed juice should have the labels all facing the same direction- not backwards, upside down, etc. This can apply to all drinks. If serving ala cart, make sure all packaging is facing the front, again not upside down or turned around. All same items are together. Just gives a more unified look, plus your line looks great. Avoid stainless steel bowls on the line – it looks too institutional. Use seasonal plastic bowls for some items on the line. It really takes no extra time.

Tip:
When set up for the day, check your serving line from the angle your students see it to make sure everything looks great. It really just takes a couple minutes.

10. Keeping Apples Fresh

Submitted by:
Carla Craw
Bethany Christian School, Goshen

Description:
We serve sliced apples to our students. Keep them fresh looking and keep them from browning by dipping the slices in pineapple juice and water. Save the juice from drained pineapple and put the apple slices in while serving.
11. Having Students Work for Lunch

Submitted by:
Kathy Goheen
Ft. Wayne South Bend Diocese

Description:
Hire students to help serve lunch and they receive a free lunch. Often it is their first “job.” They learn a lot and they get involved in what we are serving for lunches. Some work freshmen to senior year. We really depend on them.

12. Easy, Hard-cooked Eggs

Submitted by:
Joyce Witmer
Bethany Christian School, Goshen

Description:
We break fresh eggs into a hotel pan and steam for 20 minutes. Cool and chop. This is good for chopped eggs on the salad bar or egg salad sandwiches.
13. Utilizing Cutting Skills

Submitted by:
Norma Foreman
Northwest Allen County Schools

Karen Maulden
Westfield Washington Schools

Description:
Choose the correct knife for the job. Use practiced knife skills to better present veggies and fruits for consumption. Preparing onions, lettuce, and tomatoes ahead for daily use. Prepare extras for the week depending on menu items being offered.

Always point the knife blade down with walking.

14. Speed Scratch with New and Improved Knife Skills

Submitted by:
Cassidy Wise
Prairie Heights Community Schools

Description:
Kick up canned salsa by adding dicing fresh tomatoes, garlic, onion, cilantro. Makes canned salsa smile!
15. Blending Spices

Submitted by:
Sheree Riggan
Fairfield Community Schools

Description:
When making sauce for chicken parmesan whisk the spice together in water before adding to the hot sauce to prevent clumping.

Tip:
We break up browned ground meat in our Hobart mixer.

16. Food Tasting

Submitted by:
Terri Rose
Lakeland School Corporation

Carla Heininger
Calvary Lutheran School

Description:
About once a month we introduce our kids to a new fruit or vegetable. We have a picture of the item and a name for it: Gavin Grapefruit, Olly the Orange etc. we want to make pictures of the item and how it grows, tree-bush and take to the classrooms so they can color the page. We can display some in the cafeteria and they can teach mommy and daddy about the item. We also leave up our Christmas tree and decorate each holiday Christmas- Halloween- Easter. St. Patrick’s Day etc. always with matching plastic silverware in matching colors. Kids love it.
17. FIFO

Submitted by:
Marsha Hall
Elkhart Community Schools

Description:
When food stock comes in we dolly up the days for the menu. Easier for FIFO and saves time when staff comes in so it is all ready to go.

18. Steaming Chicken and Noodles

Submitted by:
Greta Burtsfield
Fairfield Community

Description:
Chicken, diced, USDA Foods 10 pounds
Water 2 ½ gallons
Chicken base 1/2 cup
Noodles 5 pounds
Salt 1 ½ tablespoon
Parsley as needed

Put chicken, water, chicken base and salt in a 6 inch pan. Repeat this for your total you need. Put in steamer for 30min. Add 5 pounds of noodles in each pan. Steam another 15 min. Cover and put in warmer, start first pan at 9am.

1 pan = 75 - ¾ c serving
4 pan= 300- ¾ c serving
19. Pizza Cutter Crust Off

Submitted by:
Sue Rhinesmith
Prairie Heights

Description:
We do not use ends of bread but make into croutons. If we have a need and the bread knife is being used we grab the pizza cutter and cube bread.

Tip:
Make sure you don’t overcook as they burn.

20. Gluten-Free Practices

Submitted by:
Jennifer Grogg
Dekalb Central Schools

Description:
In order to keep down on the already expensive cost on gluten free items i have a two-week menu for my gluten free students. I send two copies of the menu home. One for the parents to keep and one for them to circle the days they will be eating in the line.

Tip:
If you make a 6 week cycle menu it saves on how much gluten free items are being stored. This also helps know when the kids will be coming through so no food is being made and wasted.
21. Fun Menu Names

*Submitted by:*
Chris Ferguson
Lakeland School Corporation

*Description:*
On special days we change the name of the food that we are serving.
For Halloween, it would be:
- Corn Dog= Broomsticks
- Chicken Nuggets= Tombstones
- Pineapple- Witches Teeth
- Green Bean= Witches Fingers
- Salad= Scarecrow Inners
- Milk= Gastly Brew

*Tip:*
The kids like to guess what the food is for the day.

22. Serving Food

*Submitted by:*
Holly Huepenbecker-Hull
Carmel City Schools

*Description:*
One of our best practices is our food presentation. We try to serve as much as possible unwrapped and in a boat so that the kids can see what they are getting.
We serve as much as we can as the kids come through the line, and not have it boated up ahead of time. This way it looks fresh as the kids come through the line.
23. Better Sandwiches

*Submitted by:*
Donna Brown
Carmel Clay Schools

*Description:*
Use various seasonings and fresh, pickled or roasted vegetables to make a better sandwich. Spreads and hummus can make a tastier sandwich. Experiment with various breads such as flatbread, tortillas, hoagies and pita.

*Tip:*
Use extra hummus for dips for raw veggies.

24. Must Have Spices

*Submitted by:*
Kathleen Prechtel
St. Lawrence, St. Rose of Lima

*Description:*
These are must have spices and herbs for the school kitchen.

- Basil
- Chili powder
- Cilantro
- Cinnamon
- Cumin
- Dill
- Dried onion (minced)
- Fennel
- Granulated garlic
- Italian seasoning
- Kosher salt (use sparingly)
- Lemon juice
- Garlic (minced or chopped)
- Paprika
- Parsley
- Pepper
- Red pepper flakes
- Sesame seeds
25. Service Line Efficiency

Submitted by:
Nyla Gwynn
North Montgomery

Description:
Place the silverware, straws, and napkins at the end of the service line. We moved it all to the end of the line recently. It has helped the cashier to not have to send the kid back. This has helped speed up the line and have the kids not come back into the serving line.

26. Lainy Brainy

Submitted by:
Liz Bennett
Logansport Community School Corporation

Description:
We provided fresh fruits and vegetables for our students to have during their I-STEP breaks.

Tip:
Using some pre-cut veggies and fruits, but making them look interesting and providing the opportunity to try new things. We were also able to teach the students the importance of healthy snacking to keep their brains working well.
27. Knowing Your Surroundings

Submitted by:
Michelle Erwin
Rensselaer Central School Corporation

Description:
Getting to know where supplies, equipment are and how equipment works.

Tip:
If you are new to the kitchen it’s best to learn where your supplies (food, recipes, and utensils) are, also where some of the smaller equipment is. (Blenders, toasters etc). Make sure you also know how to properly use the equipment. Look over recipes ahead of time to make sure you have everything you need to make a successful product, and understand every step. Never be afraid to ask questions or help.

A kitchen runs more smoothly with a good trusty work staff. There is always room for improvement in any job or situation. There is no failure when making a new food product, just ask what went wrong and how can it be fixed or what can be done to improve it.

28. Use a Cutting Glove

Submitted by:
Madison Gervais
Westfield Wahsington

Description:
Always wear a cut glove with using sharp utensils.
29. Create-a-Chef

Submitted by:
Carrie Eaker
Chapelwood Elementary
MSD Wayne Township

Description:
Host an after-school cooking club to teach students the basics of cooking, measurements and safety. The best practices for the class are to have everything ready and waiting for the students.

Tip:
Have the recipes selected the week before. Select recipes for special occasions, like holidays. Remember to have recipes and tips printed out.

30. Taste Test Tuesday and Thursday

Submitted by:
Carolyn Lowe
Ben Davis High School
Wayne Township

Carrie Wolfe
Lynhurst 7/8
Wayne Township

Description:
Stage lines with small samples or spoons for student to try items they have never tried. Servers should encourage samples to expand the students’ palates.

Tip: During morning announcements let kids know what’s on the menu in an exciting way. Highlight new products and old favorites. Introduce tasting items.
VEGETABLE COOKERY

31. Hummus Veggie Platter

Submitted by:
Erin Brahain
Noblesville School District

Description:
Using 3 compartment container:
- 1 compartment flat bread - bread component
- 1 compartment hummus - m/ma component
- 1 compartment dippable veggies - veggie comp.
- At the high school add a cheesestick - additional m/ma

32. New Veggies

Submitted by:
Beverley Allen
Carmel Cay Schools

Description:
When we menu a new vegetable, my school always orders some in early and we prepare the vegetable at least two different ways before serving to the students. I get two students from each class and have a taste test. Whichever one wins the taste test is the one we serve to the students and staff.

Tip:
I always include the life skills classes also. The way I choose which students is by a drawing. Students that have already been involved are not put back in for the drawing the next time. That way there is always someone new getting a chance.
33. More Options...Greater Participation

Submitted by:
Kelsey Lawson
Western Boone Schools

Description:
Have plenty of options for the kids to choose from. Serve at least two 2 vegetables - cold or hot. Serve both fresh fruit and canned fruit. that we cut and bag for the day and next. Lots of choices present an amazing line with lots of color. Many choices make choosing and EATING fruits and vegetables more likely.

34. Serving Colorful Veggies

Submitted by:
Diana Massucci
St. Peter’s Lutheran School

Description:
Serve a variety of fresh vegetables using colorful vegetables and in a variety of different ways. Make colorful salads with a zesty sauce.

Mardi Gras Slaw

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dressing</th>
<th>Salad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apple cider vinegar</td>
<td>Red cabbage, shredded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sour cream</td>
<td>Yellow bell peppers, strips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayo</td>
<td>Green zucchini, strips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown sugar</td>
<td>1 head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry mustard</td>
<td>2 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celery seed</td>
<td>2 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cayenne pepper</td>
<td>½ each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dillweed</td>
<td>½ each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseradish</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Whisk together dressing ingredients.
2. Combine cabbage, peppers and zucchini. Toss with the dressing.
35. Using All the Celery

Submitted by:
Tina Musco
Bishop Dwenger High School
Catholic Diocese of Fort Wayne–South Bend

Michelle Rookstool
VanBuren Elementary School
Plainfield

Description:
When we cut our celery for salad bar we use all of the extra ends and tops by chopping them up and putting them in quart sized baggies. We then freeze them for soups in the future. We also do this for carrots and onions. We were throwing away a lot of celery that could be used. This way we are using everything, saving money and time in the future.

Tip: When cutting all vegetables trim to the very end to reduce waste.

36. Dice veggies ahead of time

Submitted by:
Penny Hirons
Wes-Del Community Schools

Description:
We dice leftover fresh veggies ahead of time and then freeze for use in soups, casseroles and other recipes
Example: onions, green and red peppers, celery

Tip: All employees participate in this when they have a free time.
37. Roasting Vegetables

**Submitted by:**
Tina Hoeferlin  
West Central School Corporation

Brittany Mendiola  
West Central School Corporation

*Description:*
Toss vegetables with olive oil and your choice of seasonings.

We like to roast our veggies to see which spices work best with the veggie. Our kids love the roasted mushrooms with garlic on them.

*Tip:*
Have fun with it! You won’t know if you don’t try.
38. Brussel Sprouts on the Lunch Line

Submitted by:
Paula Slone
Northwest Allen County Schools

Description:
This past year our school developed a recipe for roasted Brussel sprouts. Once added to our menu, the response from staff and students was amazing. Kids who didn’t know they liked Brussel sprouts were excited to see them on the menu.

Tip:
We wash our Brussel sprouts the day before and use a pre-sliced bacon product.
39. Speed Scratch Pasta Sauce

Submitted by:
Erin Gray
Emmaus Lutheran - Fort Wayne

Description:
To make a better pasta sauce we start with a plain low sodium tomato sauce. We then add low sodium diced tomatoes and our own blend of Italian spices. We make our own Italian spice mix in advance so this is as easy as using the pre-flavored spaghetti sauce.

Tip:
Dehydrated onions add flavor and keep a lot longer than fresh onions. (no difference from fresh in a sauce.) make ahead Italian spice mix with basil, thyme, oregano, garlic powder and a pinch of red chili flakes.

40. Prepping Fresh Veggies for Color

Submitted by:
Jan Hottle
Northwest Allen County Schools

Description:
I take my broccoli florets that we serve with dip and blanch them quickly to bring out the color. The students loved it! One girl said it looked like Christmas when we served w/red pepper strips!

Tip:
Make sure you only blanch for 1-1 ½ minutes and immediately put in ice water and into fridge or they will get mushy.
41. Fruit and Veggie Tasting

Submitted by:
Melissa Pettit
Lakeland School Corporation

Description:
Once a month we select a fruit or vegetable for the students to sample. We select a fruit or veggie that we don’t already serve. Some of the items have now made it to the menu as a regularly offered item. This year we sampled purple potatoes, pumpkin, cranberries, chick peas, beets, asparagus, zucchini, grapefruit, and avocado.

Tip:
We give out stickers to the students that take the sample as an incentive. We also create a cartoon character to match the sample and hang a picture of it on the wall in each cafeteria.

42. Better Visual Appeal and Taste

Submitted by:
Lori Mullins-Goggins
Metropolitan School District of Washington Township

Description:
Add fresh chopped herbs and chopped veggies to Spanish rice, refried beans, and vegetables.
43. Refried Beans

Submitted by:
Tracy Bullock
Delaware Community School Corporation

Description:
Improve the taste of refried beans by adding in various seasonings.

Tip:
Put-garlic salt and shredded cheese. Heat in microwave.

44. Fresh Fruit and Vegetable “Bar” and Trays

Submitted by:
Cecelia Weiss
Zionsville Community Schools

Teresa Livingstone
Garden City Elementary
MSD Wayne Township

Description:
We use at least 6 different fresh vegetables each day. We try to line them up in “colors” so they “pop.” It looks very colorful and eye pleasing. Keeping all veggies full all the time helps also.

Place bright colors out front to catch the students’ eyes. Some favorites are grapes and strawberries and starfruit and blueberries, giving them a bit of a variety.

Tip:
A big variety helps.
45. Sweet Carrots

Submitted by:
Cathy Clauges
Westfield Washington Schools

Description:
Add a small amount of brown sugar, honey or orange juice to sweeten carrots. You can also use “sweet” spices like cinnamon or nutmeg.

46. Kicking Up Vegetables

Submitted by:
Crystal King
Delaware Community School Corporation

Description:
- When preparing green beans we had ham base and dried onions.
- Add taco seasoning to refried beans (and sometimes cheese) to enhance the flavor.
- Always season every vegetable after steamed.
47. Underground Candy

Submitted by:
Jane Tekulve
Batesville Community Schools

Description:
This recipe consists of root vegetables- sweet potatoes, carrots, turnips. You can also put in rutabaga. Clean, peel and dice the veggies. Toss them with oil (olive or canola) and seasoning. Spread on the baking sheet. Roast until tender. The combination of flavors compliments this side dish.

Tip:
The kids enjoy these veggies.

Underground Candy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6 serving</th>
<th>50 serving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raw carrots diced</td>
<td>⅓ cup</td>
<td>1 lb 2oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw sweet potato diced</td>
<td>1 ¼ cup</td>
<td>6lbs 4oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw turnips diced</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>2lbs 4oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive or veg oil</td>
<td>5 tsp</td>
<td>7oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>½ tsp</td>
<td>1 tbsp, 1 ⅛ tsp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepper</td>
<td>½ tsp</td>
<td>1 tbsp, 1 ⅛ tsp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry basil</td>
<td>¼ tsp</td>
<td>2 tsp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsley</td>
<td>2 tsp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregano</td>
<td>1 tsp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosemary</td>
<td>1 tsp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clean- peel- dice- toss with oil and seasoning. Start cooking turnips and carrots and add sweet potatoes. Spread in a single layer on sheet pan and bake at 300 for about 20-30min or until roasted and soft.
48. Vegetable Usage

Submitted by:
Sherri Nickel
Rush County Schools

Description:
We were sent an abundant amount of frozen spinach! So out of necessity, we extracted the water from the thawed spinach, ran it through the processor and added it to our brownie recipe. The spinach adds moisture to the brownies and nutrients! The kids were completely unaware of this and still are.

Tip:
This is a healthier brownie for our students and a great way to reduce waste.

49. Lasagna with Spinach

Submitted by:
Heather Clark
Rush County Schools

Description:
Because the students are not fond of cooked spinach we incorporate it into our lasagna. We will use frozen spinach that we have thawed and we process it in the food processor. We will squeeze out ⅔ of the juice before we mix it into our spaghetti sauce. Then we assemble the lasagna from there.
50. Using Leftover Veggies

*Submitted by:* Kim Fidler
North Montgomery School District

**Description:**
When chopping carrots and celery for chicken noodle soup, there is always leftover that could go to waste. I chop all that will not be used and save for something else. Measure amount needed for next time and freeze.

**Tip:**
Weigh carrots and celery separately. Then chop right amount of each together, freeze in 1 container. Example: weigh 7 ½# of celery and 3.75# of carrots then chop together. Label reads 7 1/2 # celery and 3.75# carrots for 250 servings of chicken noodle soup and date it.

**Chicken Noodle Soup**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicken broth</td>
<td>15 gallons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celery, raw</td>
<td>7 ½ pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, raw</td>
<td>3 ¾ pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions, dehydrated</td>
<td>8 ¾ ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black pepper</td>
<td>5 teaspoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry seasoning</td>
<td>5 teaspoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kluski noodles</td>
<td>6 ¼ pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken, cooked, diced</td>
<td>8 pounds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add first 6 ingredients. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer 20 min. Add chicken and uncooked noodles. Simmer 10 min or until noodles are tender.
51. Product Placement

Submitted by:
Dottie Rose
North Montgomery School District

Description:
Always place the veggies I know they like the least at the 1st part of the serving line as the students get their lunch. The veggies that I know they will eat are placed way down the line.

52. Taco Salad

Submitted by:
Kimberly Gillis
Chapel Hill 7/8 Grade Center
Wayne Township

Description:
On a bed of nacho chips, layer lettuce, taco meat, cheese, salsa and jalapenos. This is a terrific way to encourage eating lettuce. This is one of our most popular salads.

Tip: Always layer the lettuce first. This protects the chips from the taco meats (which makes the chips soggy).
53. A to Z Salad Bar

Submitted by:
Karen Ogden
Westfield Washington

Description:
Work your way through the alphabet offering students samples of vegetables from each letter of the alphabet...."T" for turnip, etc.!

Tip: Provide printed information for students to take home to parents.
GREAT GRAINS

54. Baking Croutons with Leftover Bread

Submitted by:
Deb Jones
Northwest Allen County Schools

Description:
use the ends of loaves of whole wheat bread. We cut the pieces of bread in small pieces and place on cookie sheet. We add spices and bake them. We use them for daily salads or Caesar salad.

55. Sticky Buns with Biscuit Dough

Submitted by:
Star Rose
Prairie Heights School Corporation

Description:
Put together brown sugar, butter, nuts (optional), vanilla. Put biscuit on top of brown sugar mixture. Bake 350 degrees until done. Yummy!
56. Holding Hot Rice

Submitted by:
Carla Clifford
Whitley Co Consolidated Schools

Description:
After cooking rice to hold we cover with foil and have one corner lifted to let steam vent. This prevents rice from continuing to steam and cook and make rice stay fluffy.

57. Repurposed Baked Cinnamon Apples

Submitted by:
Glenda Gray
Emmaus Lutheran

Description:
We take our frozen apple slices and add cinnamon and a little sugar to them and bake. We serve that by itself. We then use the leftovers by adding them to canned unsweetened applesauce to make chunky cinnamon applesauce. We also add it to our oatmeal to make apple cinnamon oatmeal. This is a great way for us to put in our grain when we have our breakfast themed lunches.
58. Cooking Pasta

Submitted by:
Jill Trahin
Northwest Allen County Schools

Description:
Instead of boiling pasta in a kettle, we put it in a perforated steamtable pan placed in a regular 4 inch pan. Just cover with water and put in the steamer for 8 minutes. Remove from steamer and pull out perforated pan and pasta is perfect.

59. Gluten Free Practices

Submitted by:
Jennifer Grogg
Dekalb Central Schools

Description:
In order to keep down on the already expensive cost on gluten free items I have a two week menu for my gluten free students. I send two copies of the menu home. One for the parents to keep and one for them to circle the days they will be eating in the line.

Tip:
If you make a 6 week cycle menu it saves on how much gluten free items are being stored. This also helps know when the kids will be coming through so no food is being made and wasted.
60. Pizza Enhancement

Submitted by:
Kathy Sagarsee
Metropolitan School District of Washington Township

Description:
We serve frozen pizza every day on our pizza line; basically cheese and pepperoni. It would be easy to take the cheese pizza and create a weekly specialty pizza. We could take ingredients off our taco line and make a taco or fajita pizza. We could also make a margherita pizza for the vegetarians.
BUILD A BETTER SANDWICH

61. Sandwich Topping Bar

Submitted by:
Jill Stansberry
Alexandria Community Schools

Description:
We use a refrigerated unit for our sandwich topping bar and condiment center. It has an assortment of spices, condiments, sliced tomatoes, sliced onions, lettuce etc. The students love it. They make it the way they want it.

It has increased the number of sandwiches we offer and sell!

62. Raider Burger

Submitted by:
Brenda Layne
Liberty- Perry Schools

Description:
We have theme lunches each month. During our Jeremy Hazelbaker Day we serve a pork burger with a homemade sauce. The kids really like them. We are the Raiders (so the burger is the Raider Burger). We always decorate for the themes and dress to match the theme. We put it on twitter, call newspaper, and local radio station. We talk to the students about what they want to have and go for that theme.
63. Cucumber Boat Sandwich

Submitted by:
Jennifer Parrish
Dekalb Central Schools

Description:
Take a cucumber, trim off some of the skin leaving some thin strips of the skin. Then cut cucumber long ways in half, clean out the seeds. Then take your meat, cheese or any other toppings you want and place them in center where you cleaned the seeds. I have done this at the school and the staff enjoyed them. Hoping to try them on the students this year and hope the students like them.

Tip:
I like to use a cucumber spread or hummus to add some flavor but can use whatever you like.

64. Making Sandwiches

Submitted by:
Tammy Ruffner
South Madison Community Schools

Description:
Have all ingredients lined up, make all your sandwiches and put in a pan. When you are done making the sandwiches clean up your area then proceed with wrapping the sandwiches.
65. Crispy Grilled Cheese

Submitted by:
Kim Woodruff
Westfield Washington Schools

Description:
When making grilled cheese, get a sheet pan and liner and spray with butter. Layer bread, your cheese, and 2nd slice of bread. Spray top layer of bread with butter spray. Cover with another pan liner, top with a clean sheet pan and bake in oven 350 degrees for 10-12 minutes. Top and bottom will come out golden and crispy.

*Optional: before spraying top layer of bread slices use an open shaped cookie cutter and press into top slices of bread. O as deep as you can without going all the way through the top slice. Then spray with butter and cook. When pulled from oven, the golden brown grilled cheese will have a cool seasonal design in its golden crust.

66. Subs Your Way

Submitted by:
Amy White
Zionsville Community Schools

Description:
The Freshman Center offers subs in the style of Subway. The line is set up with large boats, croissants and sub buns, then a selection of 4 meat options and 2 cheeses, then we have 7 toppings to pick from. As students move through the line they notify the servers what they would like on their sub and the servers build it for them.
67. A Variety of Sandwiches

Submitted by:
Berna Meyer
Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation

Description:
We offer a sandwich bar. It includes choice of low sodium turkey, turkey, ham or grilled chicken breast. You can choose flat bread or a sub bun. It also includes many vegetables to build a beautiful nutritious sandwich. We also offer pre-made spicy chicken wraps. The students enjoy a choice of that lunch or the sandwich bar.

68. Make Your Own Wrap

Submitted by:
Suzie Hoerl
Lakeland School Corporation

Description:
We prepare a meat or protein and cut up lots of fresh veggies, sautéed onions and peppers and the kids come through, take their protein already cupped up with proper amount and they make their own wrap with any or all veggies that they want.
**SALAD AND SALAD BARS**

69. Cheap and Easy Croutons

*Submitted by:*
Christine Poole  
Western Wayne School District

*Description:*
We take leftover toasted cheese sandwiches, cut into little squares, put them on a baking sheet with parchment paper in a single layer. Sprinkle with garlic powder. Bake until golden brown at 350 for 5-10 minutes.

Good to add on your salad bar

*Tip:*
You cut the leftover toasted cheese sandwiches in squares and put them in freezer bags to freeze. That way you can get out just the amount you need for that day. Best used the first day they are made.

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70. Grab and Go Salad

*Submitted by:*
Jean Labrie  
Western Boone County School District

*Description:*
We have a grab + go salad. They are in 8” containers. We fix turkey, ham and veggie salads. We include fruit and the grain along with the salad.
71. French Dressing

Submitted by:
Nancy Spranger
South Adams Schools

Description:
Makes 2 ½ gallons.

Sugar 12 cups
Salt ⅓ cup
Paprika ⅓ cup
Onion flakes ⅓ cup
Salad oil 16 cups
Vinegar 5 ⅓ cups
Celery salt ⅓ cup
Catsup 8 cups

1. Blend sugar, salt, paprika, onion, and catsup in a mixer set on medium.
2. Add oil slowly alternating with vinegar.
3. Add celery salt. Mix for 10 minutes.
4. Refrigerate.

72. Easy Salad Bar Service

Submitted by:
Tammy Fennell
Lakeland School Corporation

Description:
In a self-serving salad bars have items on both sides of the line, have rows facing each direction. This makes it easier for students to serve themselves.

Tip:
Use of variety of fruits and vegetables to make a colorful salad bar.
73. Fruit Use.

Submitted by:
Rebecca Martini
Lawrenceburg Community School District

Description:
We save all leftover fruit and on Fridays we make a fruit salad. Begin with canned tropical fruit and then add leftover fruit ie. grapes, apples, oranges.

Serve in 5.5 ounce cups to make sure all students are getting a half cup serving. These cups are cupped up first on trays depending on how many lunches to be served.

Tip:
This practice keeps servings the same as well as using all fruit.

74. Fresher Salad Combo

Submitted by:
Pam Huth
Lakeland School Corporation
and
Lisa Raber
Lakeland School Corporation

Description:
Cutting up fresh spinach and add it to our 50/50 blend lettuce for salads. This adds color to salad and is good way to get kids to eat spinach.
75. Mix it Up

Submitted by:
Cathy Risner
West Central School Corporation

Description:
Rearrange sandwich and salad bar items frequently to keep things fresh and inviting. Mise en place saves much labor and time by building your station to begin with.

Tip:
Keeping it simple keeps our lines in constant motion. We have offer vs. serve and self-serve except for main entree.

76. Using Leftovers in the Salad Bar Soup

Submitted by:
Sue Soberalski
Bishop Dwenger High School
Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend

Description:
The salad bar at BDHS offers a soup every day. The leftovers from our taco meal are used for our taco soup. Leftovers from cheeseburgers are used for cheeseburger soup. Leftover rice is put in our canned tomato soup. Leftovers are either stored in the refrigerator and used in 5 days or portioned out then put in the freezer for later use.
77. Prepping Lettuce

Submitted by:
Jodie Edgell
Northwest Allen School Corporation

Description:
When I prepare to cut my romaine heads I run a sink of cold water then add ice to it, let it set while gathering supplies to make sink and begin cutting lettuce and putting it in the very cold water which I find makes it very crispy. I wash it in the cold water and then put into my salad spinner.

Tip:
Spin the lettuce to get all water out and put in 4” pan. Garnish with other fresh veggies and you’re ready to serve.

78. Vegetable Presentation

Submitted by:
Michele Amos
Westfield Washington Schools

Description:
We serve salads/vegetables (raw) daily. We have found using veggies with lots of colors and varieties are more appealing to our age group (5th and 6th graders) we restock and refill before each lunch. Mix up the rotation daily we keep them uniform, neat and organized. We have noticed that the kids prefer fresh over canned fruit and try to use fresh whenever we can.

Tip:
Always try to keep the cuts similar and use lots of color. Don’t use metal shotgun pans, use black. It makes the color pop more.
79. Chopped Lettuce

Submitted by:
Haley Cross
Delaware Community School Corporation

Description:
We chop and mix our salads. The lettuce is easier to eat when it’s chopped and the kids take it more. We mix iceberg, romaine, spinach to get a variety of colors. It looks pretty. The teachers appreciate the chopped too.

80. Something New

Submitted by:
Judy Holden
Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation

Description:
Add something new every day to the salad bar and make it look appetizing. I think the greater variety of salads you have the more the salad bar will be eaten.

Tip: When set up salad bar make everything colorful and fresh.
81. Keeping Cold Foods Cold

Submitted by:
Michelle Allen
Robert J Kinsey Youth Center
Kokomo Center School District

Description:
Our salad bar may be considered small in comparison to some of the large schools. We do not have a traditional salad bar set up. We use cool check pans which keep cold products at 41 degrees or below for up to 6 hours.

Tip:
Make sure the products you place in one of the cool check pan are 41 degrees or below. Example: homemade potato salad, be sure to cool your potatoes and dressing to 41 or below. The cool check pans will not cool the products for you.

82. Setting up the salad bar

Submitted by:
Kathy Standish
Rensselaer Central Schools Corporation

Description:
Put the lettuce first. Place the rest of the vegetables out in the order least favorite first, change it up each day. Mix up the colors of the veggies.

Tip:
Clean up the salad bar between each lunch time, and make it look nice for each grade.
83. Fresh Veggie Bar

Submitted by:
Gail Hoskins
South Newton School Corporation

Description:
We put several different fresh veggies and fresh fruit out everyday, rotating different ones daily some days using hummus, yogurt, ranch for dips. This year we made what we called watermelon pizzas. We wedged watermelon, put strawberries, grapes, kiwi on each slice and banana slices.

Tip:
Grapes should be cut in half to lay flat.

84. Build Your Own Bar

Submitted by:
Jessica Murray
West Central Schools Corporation

Description:
We not only offer the sandwich topping bar, but we also let them build their own Mexican bar, Potato bar, Soup bar, and Yogurt bar. This helps us cover all the sub groups for veggies. Students feel they are in control. They can get more for their money. They love the variety. Watch the costs on this, but in reality it does not break the bank because participation goes up on these days.
85. Let the Students Decide!

Submitted by:
Alice Richards
Robey Elementary
MSD Wayne Township

Description:
On Back to School Night have a huge display of vegetables. Let the students and their parents make choices on what vegetables they would like to have on the menu. Have a contest for best recipe or suggestion.

Tip:
Build up the excitement for the event.
Work with your produce provider to see if unusual and a variety of vegetables could be donated.