

## Overview

A program of Chef Ann Foundation, Get Schools Cooking (previously known as the School Food Support Initiative) provides school districts with the operational foundation necessary to transition their Food & Nutrition Service Departments from a heat & serve or processed model to one that is rooted in scratch cooking using real ingredients. Through Get Schools Cooking, food service teams are guided through an intensive, three-year program.

## Goals

1. To provide school districts with individualized, technical support to assist them in sustainably moving from a highly processed to cook from scratch operation,
2. To assess barriers and identify recommended actions in five key areas of school food service: Food, Finance, Facilities, Human Resources, and Marketing,
3. To support districts in developing action plans that create the structured framework to achieve their strategic objectives,
4. To provide system improvement grants and training that support the implementation of recommended actions and next steps.



## Program Eligibility:

School districts must meet the following criteria:

- Be firmly committed to working towards a scratch-cooked meal program centered around fresh, whole foods.
- Demonstrate support for improvement from district leadership.
- Participate in the National School Lunch Program and run a self-operated food service program.
- Have a minimum district enrollment of 3,000 students and serve between four and thirty school sites.

## Previous Program Participants Have:

- Introduced new scratch-cooked recipes
- Installed salad bars
- Added new vendors to procure local products
- Eliminated highly processed chicken nuggets and patties
- Gained significant community support
- Introduced whole muscle chicken

## Key Program Steps

Over the course of three years, districts will go through the following process:

**Application & Interview:** Each district submits an application that includes detailed information such as meal counts and financial records. Districts are interviewed to assess their readiness and ability to participate in the program.

**Workshop:** Districts attend a two-day workshop in Boulder, CO, home to one of the best examples of school food service innovation in the country. Sessions review the foundational strategies for successful school food reform, including visits to Boulder Valley School District kitchens and cafeterias to witness first-hand transformation.

**On-site Assessment & Report:** School food experts observe every aspect of the current operations in action and identify opportunities for improvement in day-to-day activities. Experts spend time at the district completing a fiscal review, examining the program's operations, visiting each school site and exploring community and stakeholder engagement. Food service leadership for the district is expected to support the assessment process through facilitation of meetings, data collection prior to the assessment and time spent with school food experts diving into the details of their meal program.

**On-site Strategic Planning:** This is where it all comes together! Our school food experts lead the food service team and key district leadership through a strategy session. The actions needed to achieve the desired changes (based on the result of the on-site assessment) are reviewed and discussed.

**Action Planning:** Chef Ann Foundation's team works with the districts to develop a focused action plan that guide districts' operations and evaluative goals.

**Additional On-site Training and Off-site Technical Assistance:** Districts are provided additional support to help them address recommendations from their assessment and meet their goals. This will include staff participation in Whole Kid Foundation's Healthy Food Service program that serves as an engaging and interactive training that brings food service staff along for the journey of cooking healthier food, being proud of their work and improving their own wellbeing.

**Systems Assistance Grant:** Districts are given the opportunity to apply for a one time \$35,000 systems assistance grant to support the identified goals of their program.

**Yearly Evaluations:** For two years following their assessment, districts complete evaluations that measure their progress.

## For More Information

Please visit "Programs and Grants" at [www.chefannfoundation.org](http://www.chefannfoundation.org) or contact Emily Gallivan, Director of Programs, at [emilyg@chefannfoundation.org](mailto:emilyg@chefannfoundation.org).