

Comstock Park Public Schools

December Food Service Newsletter

December is a short month of school but we plan to make the best of the time we have with our students. Food Service would like to introduce their new food concept for Elementary Students called Mood Boost! Mood Boost is designed to help students make a connection between what they eat and how they feel. Mood Boost brings new lunch menus, fun activities and a collection of characters called "Moodie's" into the cafeteria. Research has shown that the foods we eat the most often may have an effect on how we feel, not just physically, but mentally. When eaten regularly Mood Boost foods can help to elevate a person's mood and enhance our sense of well-being. The moods we will be focusing on are happy, alert, strong, calm, and confident. In December and January we will be holding taste testing's at the elementary buildings so students can have a chance to try some of these mood boost foods. We will also offer these new mood boost food options on our menus in January and February after students have a chance to sample them. Food service will also share different mood boost nutrition lessons for each mood as we have the students try them out. More communication to come as we rollout our new Food Concept!



Fifth Third Ballpark Events

Nov. 22-Dec. 31, 2023

*Drive-Thru Light Show

*Memory Lane Train

*The Santa House

<https://christmasliteshow.com/events/>



Check out Grand Rapids this December!

- Ice Skate at an outdoor rink. Rosa Parks Circle offers \$4.00 adult and \$2.00 children admission and runs November 24th – February 25th, 2024
- Experience the new immersive light show at Meijer Gardens. This is an inspiring show by the natural world and takes place at the Frederick Meijer Gardens Amphitheater. Shows last 20 minutes and play every ½ hour on selected dates.
- Take your kids sledding! Richmond Park, Belknap Park, Johnson Park, & Cascade Township Park have great sledding hills.
- <https://www.experiencegr.com/things-to-do/by-season/winter/>

Events & Fun Days to Look Forward to this Month

- **December 4th** – National Cookie Day
- **December 12th** – National Cocoa Day
- **December 14th** – National Biscuits and Gravy Day
- **December 17th** – National Maple Syrup Day
- **December 21-22**-Half Day of School Both Days
- **December 25th-January 5th** Christmas Break-No School
- **December 24th** – Christmas Eve
- **December 25th** – Christmas Day
- **December 26th** – National Candy Cane Day
- **December 31st** – New Years Eve



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serving up happy & healthy

This Month in Discovery Kitchen

December is Spice It Up! month in the cafes where we'll be engaging students with fresh recipes, delicious demos, and fun and informative nutrition education. Spice It Up! Is a celebration of international recipes that are proven to raise the bar of the spice rack empowering students to join in cooking with various spices that are sure to spice up any meal with their family and friends. In December, chefs and dietitians will organize Discovery Kitchen experiences in the cafeteria and classrooms with interactive ways students can taste and learn about flavor profiles from other countries and how to season foods without salt.



Global Eats: India



India is a seasonings and spices behemoth! Our take on Indian cuisine includes delicious dishes Tandoori Chicken, Beef Kofta Curry, and Sweet Potato & Spinach Vindaloo. India is the Spice Capital of the world! More than 70 percent of the world's spices are produced in India. India has a greater variety of spices than any other country. Almost 30% of the population in India is vegetarian! India has low rates of meat consumption per person but not everyone follows a vegetarian diet. Goat, chicken, seafood, and lamb are popular meats. Not all Indian dishes are spicy! Cuisine in northern India uses more milk products and is less spicy than the cuisine of southern India.

A Reason to Celebrate!

December 4th – National Cookie Day -In

America, a cookie is described as a thin, sweet, small cake. By definition, a cookie can be a variety of hand-held, flour-based sweet cakes, either crisp or soft. Each country has its own word for "cookie." In America, the Dutch word "koekje" was Anglicized to "cookie." The sweet treat came to America through the Dutch in New Amsterdam in the late 1620s. The earliest reference to cookies in America is in 1703, when the Dutch in New York provided 800 cookies for a funeral.

December 9th – National Cocoa Day-

Hot chocolate is made by using ground chocolate containing cocoa butter. We can also make chocolate liquor by fermenting, drying, roasting, and grinding cocoa beans. After this, the cocoa butter is removed, and we are left with only the cocoa powder. This cocoa powder is used to make hot cocoa. It is a relatively healthy drink with very little fat and calories, depending on what you add to it

December 14th – National Biscuits &

Gravy Day -

The combination of biscuits and gravy is a popular American breakfast, especially in South America. Some people claim that the food was made after the American Revolutionary War. When the USA pulled away from Britain, food shortages became an apparent problem. Hence, people came up with a good way to take in some carbohydrates – the combination of biscuits and gravy.

December 17th – National Maple Syrup Day -

Maple syrup is made from the xylem sap of one of the three maple tree varieties: sugar maple, black maple, or red maple. It was first collected by the indigenous people of the northeastern part of North America. The technique used to extract the sap from the trees is known as Maple Tapping and is traditionally done by inserting a spile into the trunk of a maple tree with a minimum age of 40 years and collecting the extract in a container.

December 24th – Christmas Eve-

Christmas Eve can be considered to be even more important than Christmas Day itself. This holds true for both Christian and Pagan traditions. The celebrations for Christians are held on Christmas Eve because according to the account of the creation of the world, the first day consisted of the evening first and then morning. Even the Biblical Sabbath begins at sundown. Christmas Eve is considered to be the start of Christmas Day. It is the time of day when tradition holds that Jesus was born.

December 25th – Christmas Day -

Christian festival celebrating the birth of Jesus. The English term *Christmas* ("mass on Christ's day") is of fairly recent origin. The earlier term *Yule* may have derived from the Germanic *jól* or the Anglo-Saxon *geōl*, which referred to the feast of the winter solstice.

December 26th – National Candy Cane Day-

The first candy canes were made in the 17th century when a choirmaster in Cologne, Germany, needed to find a way to keep the children quiet during the exceptionally long Christmas Eve Mass.

Trick or Treat?

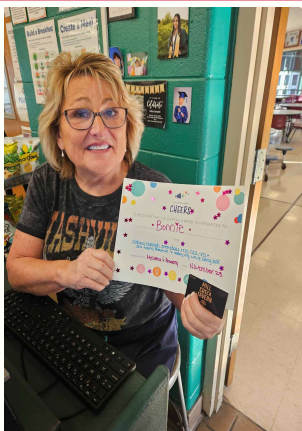
Our Comstock Park crew said BOO!

Halloween is always a fun time. The staff dressed up and made fun treats for the students to enjoy during lunch. From hot dogs wrapped up like mummies, to dirt pudding cups with worms, we like to make each holiday special for our students!



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CHEERS

Bonnie Sawinski



Bonnie is the Lead Cook at Comstock Park High School. She always puts our students first. No one has put more blood, sweat, and tears into this school district than her. Bonnie is the heart of our operation. Team work makes the dream work, and having Bonnie on our team is a dream come true! Thank you for your hard work and dedication. I know I can always count on Bonnie to get the job done right!