

# March Newsletter

## Comstock Park Public Schools Food Service Department

### National School Breakfast Week: March 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Students should take advantage of our free breakfast that is available in every building everyday! Did you know that children who fuel up with breakfast are more likely to attain higher levels of achievement in subjects such as reading and math. They exhibit improved concentration, alertness, comprehension and memory. Students have shown improved classroom behavior and higher standardized test scores when they eat a healthy breakfast. We believe in starting the day off right and that includes a nutritious breakfast for all students. By celebrating National School Breakfast Week (NSBW) every year, we're encouraging all schools to recognize the importance of a healthy start to the day for fueling a child's academic success. But when the school week gets busy, it's easy for students to rush out the door in the morning without having a nutritious meal. That's why school breakfast is such a great option! In fact, students who participate in school breakfast tend to have better attendance rates and fewer behavioral problems. The School Breakfast Program serves 14.7 million students each school day in approximately 90,000 schools nationwide. These breakfasts tend to be more nutritious than the average breakfast a child gets from home or a convenient fast-food restaurant. Join us March 4-8<sup>th</sup> to celebrate National School Breakfast Week.

### Did you know we offer breakfast at all of our buildings?

Building	Time
Stoney Creek	8:50AM-9:10AM
Pine Island	8:30AM – 9:00AM
Mill Creek	7:20AM – 7:35AM
CPHS High School	7:30AM – 7:50AM



Karen Cvanciger works at Comstock Park High School Kitchen. Karen is always willing to try out new food recipes and options to give our students a variety of meal choices. Thank you for being someone we can always count on to get the job done. Your work ethic and involvement are admirable and we are so fortunate to have you on our team!

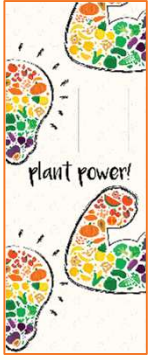


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### Events & Fun Days to Look Forward to this Month

- March 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> – National School Breakfast Week
- March 7<sup>th</sup> – National Cereal Day
- March 8<sup>th</sup> - HALF DAY
- March 9<sup>th</sup> - National Meatball Day
- March 11<sup>th</sup> – “Eat Your Noodles Day”
- March 14<sup>th</sup> – PI Day
- March 17<sup>th</sup> – St. Patrick's Day
- March 20<sup>th</sup> – National Ravioli Day & First Day of Spring
- March 22<sup>nd</sup> – World Water Day
- March 23<sup>rd</sup> – National Chip N Dip Day
- March 28 & 29 - NO SCHOOL
- March 30<sup>th</sup> – National Hot Chicken Day



### Discovery Kitchen:

March is Plant Power month in the cafeterias and this month's Discovery Kitchen theme is designed to engage students with fresh recipes, delicious demos, and fun and informative nutrition education. Plant Power is a celebration of plant-based fresh, seasonal and local foods. Through a variety of menu items and cafeteria activities, students can explore how they and their families can incorporate more of these powerful foods into their regular diet. In March, chefs and dietitians will organize Discovery Kitchen experiences in the cafeteria and classrooms with interactive ways students can taste and learn about fresh fruits and vegetables and how foods go from seed, to table.



### Student Choice:

The High School and Mill Creek Students got a chance to try a little different twist on some home made mac and cheese. The theme we chose this year was Mac n Cheese-ology. Students were given samples of homemade mac and cheese with either pulled pork or popcorn chicken with buffalo BBQ, or Mojo BBQ sauce on top. Then the students voted on which one they liked the most. If they loved it we would put it on their upcoming school lunch menu. The pulled pork was a hit! The mojo sauce was also proven to be the students favorite. We are so excited to say that it was loved so much, that we will be putting both options on the menu for our students!



March is not just about shamrocks and leprechauns; its also National Nutrition Month. Its about embracing a healthy lifestyle that goes beyond our meals. And this year we're taking things Beyond The Table, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' 2024 theme! Maintaining a healthy diet can have significant impact on our mood, stress level and overall mental well-being. Lets be sure to inform our students that food and the choices we make with food can lead to a lifetime of healthy food habits!



### Eat Right

Food, Nutrition and Health Tips from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

#### Smart Snacking Tips for Kids

Snacks can play an important role in meeting kids' nutrient needs. Choosing a variety of foods from all of the food groups will give them the energy they need between meals.

It helps to plan and portion out snacks in advance. Kids will usually only need 2 or 3 snacks daily, and these should be provided at least one to two hours before meals.

It is recommended that snacks (and meals) be eaten in an area without distractions. So avoid snacking while watching TV or when using other electronic devices.

Better yet, let the kids help prepare the healthy snacks.



Here are a few easy, tasty (and healthy) snacks to help you get started. Adults may need to help with some of these.

1. Parfait: Layer vanilla or plain low-fat yogurt with fruit and dried cereal.
2. Toast a whole grain waffle and top with low-fat yogurt and sliced fruit or smooth nut butter.
3. Blend low-fat milk, frozen strawberries and a banana for thirty seconds for a delicious smoothie.
4. Sandwich eat-outs: Make a sandwich on whole grain bread. Cut out your favorite shape using a big cookie cutter. Eat the fun shape and the edges, too!
5. Mist pizza: Toast a whole wheat English muffin, drizzle with pizza sauce and sprinkle with low-fat mozzarella cheese.
6. Frozen treats: Mix equal amounts of fat-free plain or flavored yogurt with 100% fruit juice, then pour into paper cups and freeze for a tasty treat.
7. Quesadilla: Sprinkle shredded cheese over a corn or whole wheat tortilla; fold in half and microwave for twenty seconds. Top with salsa.
8. Spread hummus on a tortilla. Top with a slice of turkey or ham, low-fat fat cheese and lettuce. Then roll it up.
9. Stuff a whole grain pita pocket with ricotta cheese and Granny Smith apple slices. Add a dash of cinnamon.
10. Microwave a cup of tomato or vegetable soup and enjoy with whole grain crackers.
11. Make a mini sandwich with tuna or egg salad on a dinker roll.
12. Microwave a small baked potato. Top with reduced-fat cheddar cheese and salsa.
13. Spread celery sticks with smooth nut butter or low-fat cream cheese. Top with raisins. Enjoy your "ants on a log"!
14. Dip slices of fruit or whole-grain graham crackers into low-fat vanilla pudding or yogurt.
15. Inside-out sandwich: Spread mustard on a slice of deli turkey. Wrap around a sesame breadstick.
16. Rocky road: Smear low-fat chocolate pudding on a whole grain graham cracker; then top with a marshmallow.
17. Sprinkle cinnamon on unsweetened applesauce and enjoy with a whole grain graham cracker for a taste similar to apple pie.
18. Make your own fruit roll-up by pureeing fruit and either baking it in the oven or by using a dehydrator.
19. Bake homemade chewy granola bars using whole-grain oats and dried fruit.
20. Whip up mini-muffins using healthy ingredients, like whole grain flour and pureed fruit.

- Portion sizes for kids are smaller than adults. However, certain foods due to their size pose a choking risk, especially for young children.
- See below for a list of foods that may cause choking:
- Hot dogs and sausage links
  - Meat chunks, unless finely chopped and combined
  - Nuts, seeds and peanut butter
  - Raw apple and pear slices
  - Whole grapes
  - Dried fruit
  - Raw vegetables
  - Whole kernels of corn
  - Popcorn and chips
  - Small candies and chewing gum
- Find more healthy eating tips at: [eatright.org](http://eatright.org)  
[kids.eatright.org](http://kids.eatright.org)

For a referral to a registered dietitian nutritionist and for additional food and nutrition information, visit [eatright.org](http://eatright.org).



The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. The Academy is committed to improving health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education and advocacy.

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## A Reason to Celebrate!

### March 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> - National School Breakfast Week (NSBW) –

Celebrates the importance of a nutritious school breakfast in fueling students for success. In these uncertain times, busy weekday mornings make it even more of a challenge for many families to find time for a healthy breakfast, so it is a great time to try school breakfast!

### March 11<sup>th</sup> – “Eat Your Noodles Day”

This bossy little holiday reminds us to eat noodles. Noodles are eaten in many cultures. They're typically made from unleavened dough which is stretched, extruded, or rolled flat.

### March 14<sup>th</sup> – PI Day

It is a mathematics to represent a consistent which is approximately 3.14159.

### March 17<sup>th</sup> – St. Patrick's Day

Observes the death of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland.

### March 20<sup>th</sup> – National Ravioli Day -

Originated before the 14th century as it was already a food that was consumed in other parts of Europe and the world at this time. It was eaten in England and in several other countries around the world. At this time, no one knows who invented National Ravioli Day

### March 20<sup>th</sup> – First Day of Spring

Spring Equinox signals the arrival of Spring in the United States, and with it the nicer weather, and the blooming of flowers and plants. In the Southern Hemisphere, the Vernal Equinox signals the start of Autumn, as this hemisphere becomes tilted away from the Sun. During the equinox, the day and night are nearly the same lengths, approximately 12 hours long each. It is at this point that the change happens when the days become longer and the nights become shorter.

### March 22 – World Water Day

Is about accelerating change to solve the water and sanitation crisis.

### March 23 – National Chip N Dip Day

The popularity of chips grew in the U.S. in the early 1900s when Mikesell's Potato Chip Company began mass production of the snack. Today, Americans eat 1.2 billion pounds of potato chips every year!

### March 30<sup>th</sup> – National Hot Chicken Day

First sold at Prince's Hot Chicken Shack in Nashville in the 1940s, the original hot chicken was coated with a paste of cayenne pepper and lard, other seasonings, and flour.