



PS 321

Number 1 2015/16

Green and Healthy



Green & Healthy at PS321.

Healthful lunches, the out to lunch program, recycling in the lunch room and classrooms – we will help you get back into the groove! Did the 3Rs slip to the back of your memory? We will bring them back! Reducing waste, Reusing materials, Recycling and Composting is easy, and it's good for the environment and your wallet. Every step helps. Welcome back to another Green & Healthy year at PS321.



Lunch Hours:

First Lunch Period: 11:05 - 11:55

1st grade 11:05 - 11:30

Teachers: Rebecca / Karen

2nd grade 11:30 - 11:55

Teachers: Frank / Joe

Second Lunch Period: 12:00 - 12:50

12:00 - 12:25

4th grade (M,W,F)

5th grade (T,TH)

Teachers: Allegra / Victor

12:25 - 12:50

3rd grade

Teacher: Gloria

Third Lunch Period: 12:55 - 1:45

12:55 - 1:20

Kindergarten Group A classes

Teacher: Maria

1:20 - 1:45

Kindergarten Group B classes

Teacher: Nancy

Can you be a lunchroom helper? Email Catherine Douglass at catherineaseward@gmail.com to sign up.

Don't Waste Your Food

According to CNN, 40% of U.S. food is wasted. Talk to your kids about using lunch time for eating, and what foods can be brought back home. Try to pack a healthful, nutritious lunch that will refuel your kid for the remainder of the day.

TIP: PS 321 Mom and nutritionist Wylie Kain:

"For a healthy lunch stick to as many real, whole foods as possible. Stay away from foods with ingredients you can't pronounce, buy local and organic when possible. It's that simple, and depending on your kid, that hard. But give them some say and you'll likely have more luck. After all, it isn't healthy if they don't eat it. For a ton of deliciously healthy lunch box ideas and recipes, go to 100daysofrealfood.com."

Besides the waste factor, wasted food poses another problem: It accounts for 20% of U.S. methane emissions in landfills. Methane is a greenhouse gas that remains in the atmosphere as long as 15 years and is 20 times more effective at trapping heat than carbon monoxide.

At PS 321, in addition to solid plastic recycling, we collect organic waste, which is thus diverted from landfills and helps reduce these emissions.



This is how the 4 Bin Recycling System during PS 321's lunch periods works:

Liquids: Pour milk, juice, and water in the bucket.

Recycle: Milk cartons, juice boxes, plastic water cups, plastic utensils, straws. Aluminum foil and other hard plastics if they are clean enough.

Compost: Food scraps, food-soiled paper, and trays

Landfill: Juice pouches, ziploc bags, plastic or foil wrappers, yogurt squeezers. Help us have as little in this last bin as possible!

As the cafeteria supplies sugar cane trays, students who eat school lunch are able to recycle ALL their waste!

Staff and lunchroom helpers support the kids in the recycling efforts. But, for this initiative to succeed, we need YOU at home. Talk to your children about what to recycle and help reduce waste at school and at home. "If you have an hour a week to be hands-on, please do sign up for a spot as a lunchroom helper, especially for Kindergarten and 1st and 2nd Grade lunch", urges Catherine Douglas, Lunchroom and Salad Bar Volunteer Coordinator. Email Catherine at catherineaseward@gmail.com to sign up.

Your Path to a No-Waste Lunch

Packing a no-waste lunch maximizes time to eat during an already short lunch break (15-20 minutes). Dealing with trash and recycling can add to lunchroom stress, especially for younger kids. Eat, pack up, and be done!

- Talk about what leftovers can be brought home.
- Pack a "bring-home" garbage bag or container for dirty recyclable plastics.
- Use reusable sandwich wraps and containers (yogurt, applesauce, raw vegetables or crackers) for single serve portions too!
- Include reusable utensils.

Rethink School Food

At PS 321, staff and parents work closely with SchoolFood Management to make sure healthy options are always offered in the cafeteria. The menu changes daily, and the professional chefs at SchoolFood, a division of the NYC Department of

Education, plan the monthly menus with a variety of healthy, great-tasting, and creative food choices in mind. Balanced meal selections meet precise nutrition standards, which meet and many times exceed USDA standards. Whole grains, a variety of vegetables, assorted fruits, low-fat & fat-free milk, and fresh salads are available with every meal.

We went to see for ourselves and talked with Cecilia Swartout, Senior School Lunch Helper and Cook-in-charge, in her spotless cafeteria kitchen. "I usually get to school before 7am to set up breakfast. By 9am, Danny and I start to prepare for lunch," explains Cecilia. The kitchen gets groceries twice a week. Cecilia and her colleague, Danny Santiago, chop and prepare anything from fresh tomatoes and zucchini, to cucumbers, and broccoli by hand. "We make everything here," Cecilia explains. "We cook the pasta, prepare the seasoning and make the dressing for the salad bar." The Salad Bar is available every day for all kids who get school lunch.

The effort is well received, and not only by students. "On our first day back, the cafeteria had prepared lunch for the staff," says Patty Hewitt, 4th and 5th Grades' Science Teacher. "We were served roasted chicken, a rice medley, plantains, and chickpeas, and I had an apple. It was tasty. I'll be sure to have more of their lunches this year!"

To sign up for school lunch, visit www.myschoolbucks.com (previously www.mylunchmoney.com), open an account and fund it with a credit card. Parent Lauren Lowry is in favor: "I always love when my now 4th grader asks for school lunch. Saves me the effort of figuring out what she will eat, and she loves the salad bar, so it is a win, win! Principal Liz Philips adds: "We encourage parents to put a small amount of money into their kid's account for emergencies like forgotten lunch." The cost for a school lunch is \$1.75, unless you qualify for free or reduced price lunch.

What does Cecilia think? "We would love to see more kids try our food – and not just for Pizza Friday!"

Monthly calendar for the K-8 Alternative Menu is available online at www.schoolfoodnyc.org.

Classroom News

PS 321 is proud to report that all classrooms have now uniform green paper recycling bins. Please use the bins accordingly, or ask your teacher for help. Please consider collecting recyclable plastics in your classroom and take them to the recycling containers in the hallway or cafeteria.

Expert Chat

G&H chats with Green & Healthy Committee Co-Chairs Wylie Kain and Deirdre McMennamin.

G&H: Deirdre, you are taking on the G&H Co-Chair position this school year with Wylie. What drew you to Green&Healthy?

DMcM: As a parent of an incoming 5th Grader and a 3rd Grader, I've been in the 321 community for a while and I've really been impressed with what the G&H committee has been doing. I try to keep our family green and healthy at home by cooking as much as we can with busy schedules, using reusable bags - I really can't stand plastic -, reusing, recycling and separating our organic waste. It's easier and less smelly than you think! Small changes can make a huge difference, especially in a community as large as ours.

For example, if each family in our school refuses

two plastic bags

per week, that's

over 60,000

bags we

would keep

out of

landfills

until the end

of the school

year. I am not

only talking plastic

bags at the store -

think take-out, and Ziplocs.

(Which can be returned to grocery stores by the way.)

G&H: Wylie, can you explain G&H's objective to our new parents? What makes G&H special?

WK: Our ongoing mission is to instill everlasting green and healthy values in our kids, and given

that this committee is a shared effort between teachers and parents, we have many opportunities to reinforce great G&H habits at school and at home. Our goals are to: 1. raise awareness of all things green: reducing, reusing, recycling, composting; and healthy: smarter food and beverage choices for maximum energy and attention to learn well, and 2. turn students into proud G&H advocates so these behaviors become second nature for all.

G&H: Last year was a big year for G&H. PS 321 introduced the collection of organic waste in the lunchroom. The salad bar was open every day of the school week. Recycling signage was significantly improved. We welcomed G&H teacher liaisons. What are the goals for the upcoming school year?

WK: We are very proud of everything we accomplished last year but everything you listed requires ongoing effort, so we're equally as focused on these things for this school year. Another big goal for us in 15/16 is to improve our in-class 3R's - so be on the lookout for a couple of new programs to help achieve this!

G&H: What are the challenges G&H is facing? How can parents help?

WK: While we have a fantastic group of teachers and parents on this committee, we can never have enough. For example, the salad bar is managed strictly by parent and student volunteers. Without enough volunteers, this wonderful cafeteria option will go away. Similarly, we need cafeteria volunteers to help kids sort recycling and waste at the end of meals. We strongly encourage you to come and help in the cafeteria if you have an hour to spare. And of course without the same G&H values the kids learn at school being reinforced at home, we're only fighting half the battle!

DMcM: Being green and healthy are both things that can slip through the cracks when we're busy, so we are always looking to find simple, convenient ways to help parents, teachers and students achieve that.

Did you know plastic bags don't decompose because microorganisms don't recognize them as food? They eventually photodegrade via the sun. How long does that take? We don't know (yet), but it is estimated to take between 500 and 1000 years. What can we do? Bring your own bags and refuse to take the plastic one!

Green and Healthy Volunteer Opportunities for Students!

If you are interested in making our school Greener & Healthier ask Susie Farrell, Patty Hewitt or your classroom teacher for opportunities to work the Salad Bar or become a Sanitation Specialist.

Limited availability!! So hurry up!

Fall Harvest Day 2015 is coming on Wednesday October 28th!

PS 321 will celebrate the bounty of fall and our Plantville Garden with samples prepared by School Foods Chefs at lunch using produce from the garden and local farmers. Students plant in the school garden ahead of time, harvest, prep and serve the treats. "Harvest Day is always a highlight for students," says Garden Co-Chair Amy Crews. "I usually get tons of requests for the recipes after – often for vegetables that the kids hadn't tried before." "The chickpeas with cilantro dressing were awesome last time!" agrees Jill Dekempe (3-M7). "We LOVED the crunchy apples!" adds Maisie Carroll (3M3) Volunteers are always needed to fill sample cups in the morning and serve during lunch periods. Email Amy with interest: ps321garden@ps321.org

Apples will be for sale in front of school in the morning!

Out To Lunch

Kids can always bring their own 'take-out' from home, or get a grab-and-go bag from the cafeteria and eat and socialize on the red benches in front of the school.

To save money and instill both green and healthy values, consider sending your child with a reusable water bottle. Think if you really need a plastic bag with your take out and use the recycle stations in front of the school. Please tip appropriately in restaurants. Remember that candy and sugary drinks are unhealthy, and impact performance at school.

BAREBURGER Cubby Meals such as sliders or chicken strips w/fries, apples, carrots, juice or milk \$7.80 (10% student discount).

CONNECTICUT MUFFIN Options include– cold mozzarella & tomato sandwich \$7.10, bagel with cream cheese \$2.35, smoothies \$5.15. Organic Valley Milk is \$1.75.



GRAND CANYON Offers a kids menu between \$5.95 and \$6.95 (not including tax and tip) with a free drink.

NEW APPLE TREE DELI Offers a large selection of organic fruits (also pre-cut), yogurt, nuts, etc. Students receive a discount of 15% during lunch.

PAPI'S GRILL All sandwiches are discounted to \$5.00 and include a free water.

PINO'S LA FORCHETTA Slice of pizza with fountain drink such as seltzer \$2.50.

PITA PAN Many healthy options (salads, hummus, pita). Chicken fingers \$4, falafel sandwich \$4, soups \$4. They offer a kids' menu and students are given a discounted price.

RANCHO ALEGRE Chicken or beef tacos/ enchiladas/ burritos with rice & beans, or cheese quesadillas. Includes chips & salsa, juice or seltzer water. Student price of \$5 (including tax)!

STARBUCKS Bistro boxes such as edamame hummus Wrap \$5.95, salad bowl with chicken \$6.95, fruit salad \$3.65, chicken BLT sandwich \$5.95. Plus Tax.

THE NEWSROOM Rolls with any kind of meat and cheese \$5.00 for students, grilled cheese \$2.00, bagel and cream cheese \$1.75.

TUTTA PASTA/TUTTO GUSTO All items on the kids menu for \$5.00 including tax for out to lunch students. For example: pasta, burger, chicken nuggets, and pizza.

YAMATO Lunch specials for students– Either four pieces California roll with three pieces pork gyoza, or four pieces avocado/ cucumber roll with three pieces vegetable gyoza for \$5.44 (includes tax)!

Take-out only.

GRAB-AND-GO-BAG available from the cafeteria to anyone who has a www.myschoolbucks.com account. Includes a sandwich, fresh vegetables and fruit.

For questions, comments and suggestions email us at: [Green & Healthy: greenandhealthy@ps321.org](mailto:greenandhealthy@ps321.org)

Lunchroom and Salad Bar

Volunteer Coordinator:

Catherine Douglass: catherineaseward@gmail.com.

Garden Committee: ps321garden@ps321.org