



## Nutrition Services

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To Whom It May Concern:

As an operator of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs for Weld County School District 6, I wanted to express my overall support of the new meal standards implemented as part of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010. While there are some standards I would have personally written a bit differently, the overall intent of the standards are great, based on sound science and set the stage to combat the rising tide of childhood obesity that our nation is currently facing.

Weld County School District 6 is an urban district of nearly 20,000 with federal meal programs operating in 30 sites. Our district has been proactive in making healthy changes to our meal programs even before the proposed regulations were finalized. We branded our school meal improvement plan "School Food Renaissance" (Complete details at: <http://www.greeleyschools.org/Page/2739>) as it was a return to our roots of cooking healthy, great tasting foods from scratch. Under this plan we have added salad bars to all sites, hired an Executive Chef, provided food safety and culinary arts training to kitchen staff, all but eliminated highly-processed foods and renovated a central production kitchen which now prepares over 75% of our entrée and side items from scratch. And this while still maintaining our budget and finishing last year with a positive fund balance.

Are the new meal standards a challenge? Yes! Are they the right direction for national meal programs? Yes! Should they be repealed? No! Instead of repeal, let's work to continue to add the right supports to make all programs a success. Some of us need technical assistance. For others, new ideas for food products and menus. Still others, equipment and infrastructure concerns. None of these obstacles are insurmountable, but rather opportunities for local, state and federal teams to work together along with our industry partners and allied health organizations to continue to develop solutions for all US students.

Respectfully submitted,

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Weld County School District 6