

# Montana School Food Service Peer Educator Network



## *Connecting the dots between experience and commitment to healthy kids*

Creating school meals that are healthy, cost effective, USDA compliant, and kid-approved is no easy task. Yet, many schools across Montana achieve all these things for Breakfast, Lunch, Summer, and After School programs each day. The Montana School Food Service Peer Educator Network is designed to bring Food Service Directors together to connect, share, and work on expanding the reach of wholesome and nutritious foods to Montana's kids.

## *Sounds pretty awesome, right?*

Here are some examples of how to use the program:

- ★ Observe an alternative breakfast or afterschool snack program.
- ★ Learn tips for growing a farm to school program and buying fresh local foods on a budget.
- ★ Witness marketing magic in action for increased participation in meal programs.
- ★ Gain best practices knowledge to help start or improve a summer meals program, including activities and promotion.
- ★ Meet with meal quality champions who have cracked the code to maximizing the use of USDA Foods and serving more whole foods.
- ★ Discuss ways to approach stakeholders and integrate wellness efforts into school culture.

## **We can help with funding!**

Want to plan a trip to observe another school's expanded breakfast program like Breakfast After the Bell, see the Recess Before Lunch process firsthand, or learn innovative strategies for including more fresh, local foods in your menu?

We are able to connect you to a peer educator and provide financial support for travel, meals, accommodation, and stipends to cover substitutes and wages as necessary.

There are lots of ways that a peer educator can provide support and guidance.  
Check out this list to see some of the educators' areas of expertise:

## MEAL QUALITY

- Farm to School
- Harvest of the Month
- Use of USDA Foods
- Fresh Fruit/Veggie Program
- Smart Snacks
- Food Procurement
- Recipe Development
- Food Production

## PROGRAM INNOVATION

- Increasing Participation
- Marketing Strategies
- Expanding School Breakfast
- Summer Food Service
- Afterschool Snacks
- School Lunch
- Smarter Lunchrooms
- Nutrition Education

## LOGISTICAL ASPECTS

- Menu Planning
- Sanitation and Safety
- Recess Before Lunch
- Personnel Management
- Record Keeping
- Inventory & Cost Control
- Technology
- School Wellness Leadership

*OK, so you want to connect with a school ... Now what?*

We will help connect you with a fellow Montana Food Service Director from our list of peer educators to plan a one-on-one consultation, site visit, or group training session focused on your interests and needs. A peer educator may travel to you, or vice-versa, and we can discuss assistance with expenses. Reach out to any of the contacts below to start the process!

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<http://opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Management-Operations/School-Nutrition/School-Nutrition-Professional-Standards-Training>  
[www.montana.edu/teamnutrition/training/index.html](http://www.montana.edu/teamnutrition/training/index.html)  
<https://mt.nokidhungry.org/food-access-resources>  
<http://opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Management-Operations/School-Nutrition>