



CASE STUDY

MATHER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (PREK-6), MUNISING PUBLIC SCHOOLS, MUNISING, MI

FUNDRAISING—OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL DAY

Fans who visit the concession stand at the yearly basketball tournament sponsored by Mather Elementary School can purchase nutritious fare such as turkey or ham subs on whole wheat, fruit, yogurt, chocolate milk, lower-sugar sports drinks, water, string cheese, granola bars and nuts. These snacks take center stage while the usual concession stand choices such as candy and chips are farther from reach.

Parent volunteers coach the basketball team and organize the yearly tournament, which is the culmination of the school's free after-school basketball program for students in grades 2-6. On average, 80 students participate in the program, which represents approximately 32 percent of the students in the second through sixth grades. Through donations and the sale of tickets, t-shirts, program ads and concessions, the tournament generates revenue that is used for uniforms, other local tournament fees, improvements to the basketball court and a free summer basketball clinic.

During the 2008-09 school year, Paula Ackerman, parent, registered dietitian, Coordinated School Health Team (CSHT) leader, and basketball tournament committee member, recommended that the concession stand menu get a nutrition upgrade. During the three months prior to that year's basketball tournament, the CSHT developed a new concession menu. Now, almost half of the items are healthy choices.

Dee Jay Paquette, principal and coordinator of the basketball tournament said, "We've been making positive changes to improve our school's health—this just seemed to be the right thing to do."



"Because we've been making several positive changes to school health and wellness, when we included more healthy options, there was no negative feedback. In fact, many kids and parents welcomed the change. Many parents commented that it was nice to see healthier options offered during a school function."

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PAULA ACKERMAN, PARENT,
REGISTERED DIETITIAN

The healthier items are sold at equal or lower cost than the candy and the introduction of chocolate milk was hailed with a promotional flyer highlighting its nutrient profile. After the new concession menu debuted, about one-third less candy was sold compared to the previous year. However, total revenue from concession sales remained constant. The stable revenue was due, in part, to donations of healthier snacks by parents and of bottled water by local grocery stores.

"I definitely appreciate it," said Libby Blank, a parent. "It's nice when you can send your kids to the concession stand and not worry about having to argue with them about eating a bunch of junk. [The healthy choices] go hand in hand with this tournament, which promotes physical activity."