


CASE STUDY
ROSCOMMON AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HEALTHY CHOICES AT THE CONCESSION STAND

During the 2010-2011 school year, Roscommon Area Public Schools implemented the *Michigan Nutrition Standards* in their district. One of the areas that they felt was more challenging was food served outside the school day in areas such as the concession stands for sporting events. Previously they had the traditional concession stand selections: popcorn, pizza, hot dogs, nachos, sugar sweetened beverages, and candy. The challenge was how to overhaul the menu and still make money. Using the 50% healthy standard, they set out to offer as many healthy selections as there were traditional. They decided to keep the popcorn (based on popularity) and hot dogs. The pizza was something that they thought could be improved.

They provided the nutrition standards to the three local pizza restaurants and asked them to make a proposal to supply the concession stand with a pizza that met the requirements. Two of three restaurants submitted bids and the winning restaurant agreed to supply the district with three different pizzas for \$5 each. The three pizzas were: veggie (peppers, onions, mushrooms, black olives and tomatoes), cheese, and the "Bucky," which included turkey and mushrooms.

The other healthy options at the concession included: milk (white and chocolate), diet sodas, no calorie sports drinks, water, flavored waters, baked chips, low sodium nuts, cheese sticks, and granola bars.

They did not receive any complaints from fans and parents. Much of that was due to the education work done prior to the start of the athletic season. During the meetings with athletes and their parents, they explained the changes to the offerings. They also went to several of the local service groups and explained the changes that they were making and why. On the windows of the concession stand, they explained the offerings and why they made some changes. The only complaints heard were from the visiting teams' fans, who were unaware of why they had made changes.

SAMPLING NEW FOODS

To celebrate nutrition month, Roscommon Area Public Schools elected to introduce new food items to the lunch menu. In an effort to get more students to try the new foods, they hosted a taste-test the day before the new item was served. The first entrée was a chicken and vegetable stir fry in a ginger sauce served with brown rice. During lunch time, kitchen employees set up a stir fry table and gave students free samples. Students loved getting something free and jumped at the offer to try a new food. Overwhelmingly, students liked the new stir-fry and were excited that it was the next day's menu selection. Given the success, the practice was repeated every week for a month with a four bean salad, a black bean and corn salsa served with baked chips, and hummus and pita chips. By offering students a chance to try the food, they were more inclined to have it for lunch when it was on the menu.

