



FRAC: Summer Nutrition Programs

Model Program

Fresno Commission Reaches Thousands of Children with SPSP

Fresno County Economic Opportunity Commission, CA

Program Demographics

- The Fresno County Economic Opportunity Commission runs six afterschool programs in Fresno serving 30-90 children at each site.
- The students range in age from 5 to 14 years old.
- All of the programs are located in urban areas.

Meal Program

- The commission uses the Summer Food Service Program to serve afterschool snacks and summer meals.
- From June to August, the commission serves lunch to 67 sites throughout the county, serving approximately 95,000 to 100,000 children each day.
- The program also serves breakfast and lunch to around 3,000 children at Head Start Programs through the Child and Adult Care Food Program and 800 seniors through the senior nutrition programs each day.

Menus

- Some of the children's favorite snacks include fresh peaches, nectarines and apples.
- Popular meals include pizza pockets, hamburgers, enchilada casserole and spaghetti.
- During the summer months, the commission serves cold sack lunches and recently introduced turkey and cheese wraps (made with whole grain tortillas) as a new item on the menu, which has been very well received by the students.

Process for Meal Service

- Staff at each afterschool and summer program serve the snacks and meals and have been trained to follow all of the health and safety requirements and keep accurate meal count records.
- The commission runs the area's Meals on the Wheels program so they have included delivery of the afterschool snacks and summer meals to their preexisting delivery routes, which allows both programs to share the cost of transportation.

Funding and Costs

- The commission is able to run all of the nutrition programs without going over the federal reimbursement they receive.
- The staff puts together a budget each year for program expenses and uses historical data to estimate labor, food, transportation and overhead costs.
- Staff members have noticed that it is easier to operate the nutrition programs when they are serving a large volume of snacks and meals because it allows them to run the program more cost effectively.

Challenges and Solutions

- One challenge the commission has found in running the summer food program is that it is hard to get children to attend the summer meal sites. They often do not know that the program is available to them.
- To help increase participation in the summer meals program, the commission, sends flyers out to each summer food site to distribute, encourages children to invite their friends and family members to the meal program, uses local media to get the word out,

hosts "grand openings" for their sites each year to raise awareness and asks other organizations in the community including churches, Parks and Rec programs, Boys and Girls Clubs, and schools to tell their participants about the meal programs.

Response to the Program

- Food service staff really appreciate the summer meals program as a source of summer employment opportunities. Typically, the food service department is forced to lay off people when school is out but because of the summer nutrition programs they are able to not only retain their regular staff but often need to hire additional summer employees.
- The superintendent appreciates the fact that the commission is able to serve children throughout the district with the nutrition programs and is impressed that it does not cost the school district any money and does not require students to fill out an application or request extensive paperwork from parents.
- The children are excited to be together when school is out. Eating with their peers in a school setting is very familiar to them and provides them with a place to eat healthy food, play, socialize and gives them a sense of routine during the summer months.
- Parents often bring all of their children to summer food sites and tell staff members how grateful they are to have a place where their children can receive meals when school is out.

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