

LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOOD & NUTRITION

Growing Healthy Kids

FoodCorps service members Alissa Haskins and Veronique Ok (pictured right) have been encouraging students to try new foods, eat more fruits and vegetables, understand where their food comes from, and share their thoughts on school meals. Alissa and Vera will continue to serve up food-related fun at all 28 schools in the district this Winter/Spring 2022. Look for them in your cafeterias and school gardens!

What is FoodCorps?

FoodCorps' mission is to connect kids to healthy food in school. We are a nationwide team of AmeriCorps leaders, serving in many states across the country and throughout Lowell Public Schools. We focus on delivering hands-on lessons in gardening, cooking, and tasting healthy food; improving school meals; and encouraging a schoolwide culture of health.



WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?

CAFETERIA ENGAGEMENT

In cafeterias, Alissa and Vera promote nourishing school meals served on the LPS Breakfast and Lunch Menu everyday. They highlight locally sourced ingredients by featuring new menu items, hosting taste tests, and creating digital media about fruits and veggies. They connect further by chatting with students about their preferences and handing out stickers to courageous students who try new things!



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CLASSROOM ENGAGEMENT

Lowell Public Schools FoodCorps Members were able to teach hands-on both during school and after school through nutrition and gardening lessons offered throughout the district. Lesson topics included: "Eat a Rainbow Salad," garlic planting, and Harvest of the Month cooking like the December Carrot Hummus Session (pictured right).



FRESH FRUIT & VEGETABLE PROGRAM (FFVP)

Over 450 students at the Morey Elementary School participate in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. The program, funded by the USDA, helps promote different fruits and vegetables, helping expose students to more varieties. 2X per week, FoodCorps members distribute a fruit or vegetable to the entire student body. The program also includes nutritional videos and fruit and veggie fact sheets to learn more!



GATHERING FEEDBACK

LPS Food and Nutrition Services values student voice and choice, especially when it comes to school meals. For this reason, Vera and Alissa engage students in cafeterias and student advisory committees conducting taste tests to sample new fruits and vegetables, and offering surveys to gauge student satisfaction with meal items. This feedback drives menu changes and spurs inspiration around the development of new menu items.



FARM TO TABLE COOKING CLASSES

This Fall, students at the Morey Elementary School participated in a four-week cooking class hosted by our FoodCorps Members and Food Service Staff. Recipes centered around local foods and Harvest of the Month menu items. Families were able to create recipes such as Butternut Mac and Cheese and Kale Pesto Pizza. Stay tuned for future offerings of this program this Spring 2022!

