



REAL **FOOD** *for* **KIDS**®

2020 CULINARY CHALLENGE

Saturday, March 21, 2020
Hayfield Secondary School
Alexandria, Virginia

LUNCH COMPETITION GUIDELINES

THEME: 2020 FUSION

Introduction

The Real Food for Kids Culinary Challenge Puts Students in Charge of School Meals!

Persistent high levels of childhood hunger and obesity highlight the need for ambitious school nutrition programs that bring healthy, high quality meals to every kid in every school.

Research proves that school meals have the potential to be a powerful academic and public health intervention, helping close academic achievement gaps, reduce disciplinary problems, increase physical and emotional well-being, and even lead to higher levels of attainment in the workforce.

But for school meal programs to be successful, students must want to eat what is offered. Meals must not only meet federal nutrition guidelines and strict per-meal budgets, they must be varied, appealing, delicious and accessible to every student. School meals should also represent the diverse culinary traditions students bring to our school communities and be served in environments that promote healthy eating habits and positive social interaction.

The **Real Food for Kids Culinary Challenge** puts kids in the shoes of the school nutrition professionals who work every day to meet these demands. The Culinary Challenge gives students the unique chance to present their ideas for healthy, delicious meals that they would like to see in their cafeterias. Since its inception in 2012, meals created by participating teams have been served to thousands of students throughout the Greater Washington Region. Your team's meal could be next.

What is the Culinary Challenge?

The **Real Food for Kids' Culinary Challenge** is an annual competitive event

- **designed to showcase the talent and creativity** of students in middle and high school Family and Consumer Sciences and Culinary Arts programs;
- **offering a competitive culinary experience** for students and the **opportunity to network** with food industry professionals;
- **providing an unparalleled opportunity** for students to **directly influence school meal programs** with delicious, appealing foods that meet federal guidelines;
- **complementing academic objectives** with **valuable goal-directed experience** in research, time and financial management, creative and critical thinking, collaboration and communication.

Objectives

The goal of the Lunch Competition is to provide a platform for students to drive change on their school menus. The winning dish from the Culinary Challenge will be featured in school districts throughout the region. Other dishes may also be considered. To achieve this goal dishes must be created according to **National School Lunch Program** guidelines and vetted for compliance.

The Lunch Competition is a JUDGED category of the Culinary Challenge

Teams will create a school lunch that meets the **Nutrition Standards for School Meals** and complies with **National School Lunch Program** guidelines. Meals will be presented at the Culinary Challenge on March 21, 2020. Teams will:

- create a plan to meet the specific benchmarks of the competition within the calendar window provided;
- bring all required cookware, equipment and display/sample pieces (excluding public tasting supplies) to the competition to prepare their meal;
- prepare at least one (1) complete school meal for display at their table for members of the press, invited guests and members of the public;
- prepare twelve (12) complete sample-sized meals for evaluation by the judges and staff, respond to questions about their recipe, to include the inspiration for their dish, ingredients, preparation techniques, and student appeal;
- be available to members of the press, other invited guests and members of the public who may inquire about their dish;
- prepare 250 tasting portions in 3 oz. cups (provided by RFFK) for the Public Tasting. Teams are encouraged to prepare samples of all components of their meal (suggested 1/3 entrée, 1/3 each side).

Culinary Theme

The theme of the 2020 Culinary Challenge is **2020 FUSION**. **Fusion Cuisine** is cuisine that combines elements of different [culinary traditions](#) that originate from different countries, regions or cultures. A “fusion” recipe is one in which two unique cuisines are combined into a cohesive dish. For example, an Asian-inspired dish fused with flavors from Latin America, a combination of cuisines from different countries in the same continent, or dishes that represent different regions of the same country. Students should be prepared to “tell the story” of their dish, it’s inspiration, blend of ingredients, and why it would appeal to students when they present to the judges.

More information on Fusion Cuisine can be found at [Wikipedia](#) and [YouTube](#).

Important Dates

September 11, 2019	Team Details and Documents Released Registration Opens
October 9, 2019	Registration Closes
December 11, 2019	Competition Recipes Due by 11:00 PM
January 13, 2020	Recipes Returned for Revisions
February 5, 2020	Recipe Revisions Due by 11:00 PM
March 21, 2020	Culinary Challenge (<i>duration for teams: 7:45 AM – 2:15 PM</i>)
April TBA	Recipe “Re-Create” Event

Registering Your Team

- **Team Registration opens September 11, 2019 and closes October 9, 2019.**
- A school may enter only **one** team for the Lunch Competition. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis and will be **capped at 12 teams**. Teams registering after the cap will be placed on a waiting list.
- **Teams must have a minimum of two (2) students, but no more than four (4) students, from the same school.** Confirmation of official team members must be provided by January 29, 2020 to meet publication deadlines.
- Schools may also register one team for the Showcase (see separate Guidelines) but **no more than two (2) teams in total**.
- Teams may withdraw from the Culinary Challenge up until **November 5, 2019**. Teams on the waiting list will be notified November 6 if spaces have become available. ***Schools whose teams withdraw after November 5 may* not be permitted to participate in the Culinary Challenge the following year. (*reviewed on a case by case basis).***
- Registration for the Culinary Challenge constitutes your agreement that all recipes created for this event become the property of Real Food for Kids.

Submitting Your Recipe

- Recipes must be approved by Real Food for Kids for teams to be eligible to compete on March 21, 2020. **This is to ensure National School Lunch Program guidelines have been met** prior to judging. Vetting will be done by a panel of school nutrition professionals
- Teams should refer to the document entitled **What’s Required in My Recipe?** to understand recipe and nutritional requirements and use the **Is My Recipe Ready?** checklist to ensure requirements have been met.
- Recipes must use ingredients approved by the National School Lunch Program. Teams should refer to the **Approved Ingredient List** for this information.
- Recipes must be emailed to Mary Porter (mporter@realfoodforkids.org) using the **Recipe Template** provided. **Recipes must be submitted in MS Word format. Incomplete recipes and PDFs will not be accepted. Recipes may not be sent via sharing platform link.**
Teams must submit the first draft of their recipes by **11:00 PM December 11, 2019**. Teams not able to meet this deadline must request an extension.

- Extensions will be granted for 3 business days only.
- Teams not able to submit recipes following the extension must withdraw.
- Withdrawn schools may* not be permitted to participate in the Culinary Challenge the following year. (**reviewed on a case by case basis*).
- Real Food for Kids will return recipes with required changes no later than **January 13, 2020**.
- Teams must resubmit their recipes to Real Food for Kids no later than **February 5, 2020**.
- No changes may be made to recipes once they have been approved.

Presenting at the Event

Teams are expected to provide:

1. All cookware, equipment and serving pieces for your dish (excluding public tasting supplies). **Teams do not have access to the host school's pots, pans, utensils or serving ware.**
 2. Tablecloth and display items.
 3. Food thermometers with anti-bacterial probe wipes.
 4. Chafing dishes (if needed).
 5. Tabletop butane burners (if needed – electricity is not available).
 6. Sterno (if needed).
 7. Sanitizing solution in spray bottles and towels for cleaning.
- Teams must be dressed in aprons or chef coats with hair properly restrained.
 - All transport equipment must be stored underneath team tables.

Real Food for Kids will provide each team:

1. Access to prep kitchen throughout the event. Your recipe prep requirements will determine kitchen assignments, e.g., stovetop, oven, warming oven, counter space only.
2. Access to running, potable water.
3. Two 6-foot tables with white skirt for display.
4. Trash container.
5. Cart to transport samples to judges and public tasting.
6. 3-ounce sample cups, napkins, eating utensils and disposable gloves.
7. Team sign with menu and school/team names.
8. A budget of \$100 to defray expenses (*provided once your recipe has been approved*).

Judging and Evaluation

1. School lunches will be evaluated by a panel of 8 judges including celebrity chefs, students, school nutrition professionals and food industry leaders.
2. Teams will have a total of five (5) minutes in front of the judging panel.
3. Entries will be rated on the following scale:
 - a. Creativity (20 points)

- b. Taste (30 points)
- c. Appearance –student appearance, meal presentation (20 points)
- d. Verbal Presentation (30 points)

The verbal presentation will provide each team with three minutes (strict time limit) to make a presentation to the judges about their school lunch. Teams should prepare their presentation according to the following format:

- introduce your team (30 seconds);
- introduce your menu (1 – 2 minutes);
- answer questions, which will include “what was the inspiration for your dish” (1-2 minutes). Judges may ask additional questions as well.

4. Teams should refer to the **Judges Score Sheet** to prepare for the competition.

Awards

Awards apply to each member of your team

1st Place Wüsthof 5-Piece Professional Knife Roll Set Recipe featured in school districts throughout the D.C. Region	All Participants Free registration Small Kitchen Wares Package Certificate of Participation
2nd Place \$75 Gift Certificate for chef apparel / equipment	
3rd Place \$35 Gift Certificate for chef apparel / equipment	

Event Day Logistics

A final schedule with logistics for the Culinary Challenge will be provided to teams in early March detailing arrival times, scheduled time with evaluators/judges, prep time for tastings and awards presentation. Teams will be provided details on **What to Expect on the Day** in their Welcome Packet to prepare for the event.

Questions?

Real Food for Kids:

Mary Porter, mporter@realfoodforkids.org

Lori Ochoa lochoa@realfoodforkids.org

Family & Consumer Sciences:

Reggie Morrone, remorrone@fcps.edu

Ms. Morrone is the FACS Manager for Fairfax County Public Schools and available to assist with FACS questions from all school districts participating.