

# Real Food, Real Focus: How Eat Real Supports Student Learning

When students are given real, nutritious food, they're more likely to:

Stay focused longer during lessons

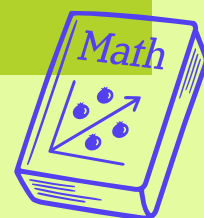
Participate actively in class

Have fewer energy crashes and behavior challenges

Feel better overall — physically and mentally



Quality nutrition fuels the brain and body in ways that matter for day-to-day learning.



## What Eat Real Does

Eat Real partners with school districts to provide a clear, science-backed roadmap to support school meals—at no cost.

Our program helps districts:

- Reduce added sugar and ultra-processed foods
- Boost whole grains, fresh produce, and healthy fats
- Offer a variety of flavorful, culturally relevant options
- Support local farmers and strengthen community food systems
- Increase student participation in school meals by making food kids actually want to eat

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Here's a quick message you can send to your foodservice team about Eat Real:

Hi [Name],

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Thanks!





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# ABC Unified School District

## Initial Report Overview

This report summarizes ABC Unified's assessment results against Eat Real's 10 evidence-based standards that go above and beyond federal requirements.

**Certification:**  
**On the Path**

### Why ABC Unified Joined Eat Real

1

To collaborate with like minded school foodservice professionals

2

To institutionalize our goals for long-lasting sustainability in the district

3

To teach and feed kids healthy food

## Your Results

Points  
Earned  
XX pts

Points to  
Green  
XX pts



## Assessment Snapshot

Assessment  
Month

Oct. 2025

Sample Menu  
Week

Oct. 1-5

We've reviewed  
documentation for:

X menus

X recipes

X product specs

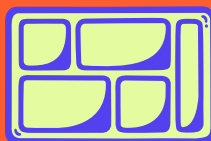
X pounds of produce

6 site-level strategies  
checklists

## Standard by Standard Scores

| Standard                                                                                                        | Description                                                                                               | Points Earned | Opportunity Points |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|
|  <b>Reduced Sugar</b>          | Reducing consumption of added sugar and artificial sweeteners                                             | 11            | 28                 |
|  <b>Whole Grains</b>           | Encouraging intact whole grains and whole-grain flour products                                            | 4             | 4                  |
|  <b>Fresh Choices</b>          | Increasing the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables                                                 | 19            | 28                 |
|  <b>Healthy Fats</b>           | Encouraging fats from the healthiest possible sources                                                     | 2             | 8                  |
|  <b>Minimal Processing</b>   | Replacing ultra-processed items with scratch cooking and minimally processed alternatives                 | 11            | 16                 |
|  <b>Menu Variety</b>         | Providing students with a variety of relevant and appealing choices                                       | 4             | 8                  |
|  <b>Sustainable Produce</b>  | Championing sourcing strategies that support local communities and protect the environment                | 4             | 12                 |
|  <b>Responsible Proteins</b> | Choosing proteins that maximize animal welfare and minimize environmental impact                          | 2             | 12                 |
|  <b>Waste Prevention</b>     | Implementing food and solid waste prevention and recovery strategies that put resources to their best use | 9             | 12                 |
|  <b>Real Food Education</b>  | Connecting students to their food through farm to school, culinary, and nutrition education               | 4             | 8                  |
|  <b>Bonus!</b>               |                                                                                                           | 5             | 5                  |
| <b>Total:</b>                                                                                                   |                                                                                                           | <b>75</b>     | <b>141</b>         |

# Key Highlights



## 12+ Unique Entree Options

Each week, elementary lunch menus feature an average of 12 unique entree options, and middle and high school lunch menus offer 17 unique entrees.

## Key Opportunities



### Over 1/3 Locally Sourced

Coupeville sources over a third of its produce locally, including a significant portion from small farms, nourishing kids and strengthening the local economy.



### 78% Minimally Processed

Nearly 8 out of 10 meals are made from minimally processed, whole ingredients that support student health, focus, and long-term growth.

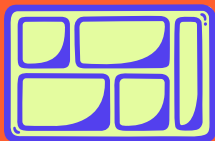


### Salad Bars in 100% of Schools

Salad bars are offered at all Coupeville schools, giving students access to fresh fruits and vegetables — improving their mood, energy, and ability to learn.

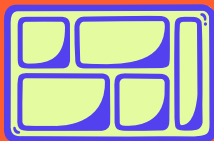
Summary here...

## Key Findings & Highlights



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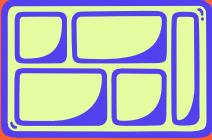


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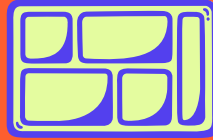
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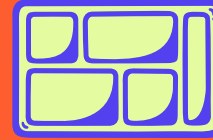
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Summary here...

# 7 Billion Meals

served to our nation's students  
every year



Each meal is an opportunity to:

- Improve the health of our nation's kids and prevent disease before it starts
- Keep dollars in communities by increasing local sourcing
- Reduce our environmental impact to protect the planet our students will inherit

## Small changes can result in big wins!



### Reduced Sugar

| Original Item                  | Swapped                                             | Outcome                                                  |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Vanilla yogurt parfait         | Cut vanilla yogurt with regular yogurt              | Fewer added sugars while maintaining the original flavor |
| Packaged sweet breakfast bread | Savory breakfast (burrito, bagel with cream cheese) | More protein, fiber and reduced sugar                    |



### Fresh Choices

| Original Item                           | Swapped                                                                  | Outcome                                      |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Whole fruits (apple, orange)            | Sliced or bite-sized pieces                                              | Increased consumption, more variety on trays |
| 1 vegetable option in grab and go boxes | 2+ vegetable option in grab and go (ex: carrot sticks + cherry tomatoes) | More variety and exposures each day          |



### Minimally Processed

| Original Item                | Swapped                                          | Outcome                                                                       |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Premade dressings and sauces | Move to scratch recipes                          | Reduce likelihood of undesirable ingredients (ie: food dyes) and added sugars |
| Pre-packaged cheeseburgers   | Sourcing whole grain buns and pre-cooked patties | Add more nutrients and decrease the number of additives.                      |

# Eat Real with us

Eat Real harnesses the power of school food to deliver a fast, scalable, and enduring upstream solution to improving the health of America's kids.

Through our K-12 certification, we work with our district partners to put real food in schools. We are now **working with school districts in 20 states, impacting over 1 million kids!**

Our certification program is offered at **no cost to districts**—because every child deserves access to proper nutrition and a healthy life.



Contact our team to learn more:



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## The 10 Eat Real Standards



Reduced Sugar



Menu Variety



Whole Grains



Sustainable Produce



Fresh Choices



Responsible Proteins



Healthy Fats



Waste Prevention



Minimal Processing



Real Food Education

Contact our team to learn more:



# We provide fast, scalable food systems change through school cafeteria certification.



## The 10 Eat Real Standards

|                                                                                    |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | <b>Reduced Sugar</b><br>Reducing consumption of added sugar and artificial sweeteners                                  |    | <b>Menu Variety</b><br>Providing students with a variety of relevant and appealing choices                                           |
|    | <b>Whole Grains</b><br>Encouraging intact whole grains and whole-grain flour products                                  |    | <b>Sustainable Produce</b><br>Championing sourcing strategies that support local communities and protect the environment             |
|   | <b>Fresh Choices</b><br>Increasing the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables                                      |   | <b>Responsible Proteins</b><br>Choosing proteins that maximize animal welfare and minimize environmental impact                      |
|  | <b>Healthy Fats</b><br>Encouraging fats from the healthiest possible sources                                           |  | <b>Waste Prevention</b><br>Implementing food and solid waste prevention and recovery strategies that put resources to their best use |
|  | <b>Minimal Processing</b><br>Replacing ultra-processed items with scratch cooking and minimally processed alternatives |  | <b>Real Food Education</b><br>Connecting students to their food through farm to school, culinary, and nutrition education            |

## Our award-winning K-12 school food certification

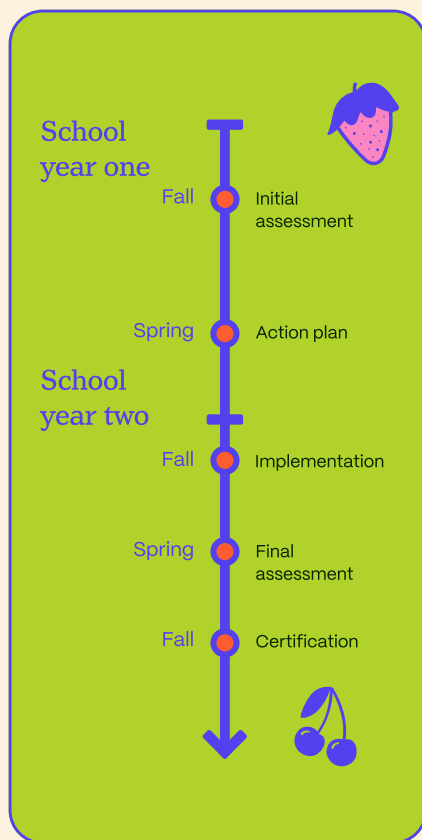
Eat Real works with school foodservice leaders to implement lasting changes that improve the health and wellbeing of their students and community. Our certification program consists of a 10 evidence-based standards that measure 34 key performance indicators in a school district's menu plans and procurement practices. Our team works with each district to find the path to certification that best supports their unique goals and circumstances.

## Impact areas: childhood nutrition and planetary health

We believe that every child deserves a healthy, delicious future on a livable planet. Our standards emphasize nutritional value for students, while encouraging more local and responsible procurement practices.



# Lasting change in as little as two years.



The average time from initial assessment to Eat Real certification is 23 months. Our team sticks with districts every step of the way, helping identify their greatest opportunities for impact, introducing them to best practices and new resources, and connecting them with fellow changemakers and potential funders.

Certification lasts for three years and many districts choose re-certify. But meal program improvements tend to last much longer than that, as districts reap the ultimate benefit of their improvements: a better bottom line, as more kids eat and love lunch at school.

**"Our school food program decided to partner with Eat Real because we wanted to go above and beyond what's standard."**

**— Christina Lawson, Food Service Director at Western Placer Unified School District, CA**

## Our certification scoring and tiers

Four tiers of certification make room for a district to join the program at any point in their real food journey, and set their sights higher when they re-certify.

|                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <br><b>Eat Real</b><br>CERTIFIED GREEN<br>68–84 pts | <br><b>Eat Real</b><br>CERTIFIED SILVER<br>85–101 pts | <br><b>Eat Real</b><br>CERTIFIED GOLD<br>102–118 pts | <br><b>Eat Real</b><br>CERTIFIED PLATINUM<br>≥ 119 pts |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Learn more about our program by visiting [eatreal.org/certification](https://eatreal.org/certification)





Located in the northwestern Atlanta area, the nutrition team at **Marietta City Schools** has created a program rooted in community partnerships. The team sources produce from minority-owned farms and provides skill-building for their students with their high school culinary program.



## Student Favorites

- Whole Grain Biscuit with Apple or Peach Compote
- Cherry Blossom Chicken Paired with Fresh Fruits & Vegetables
- Catfish Sandwich with Chili Coleslaw
- Sheet Pan Frittata with Toast

## Staffing & Operations

 **60**

total staff members prepare, deliver, and serve fresh meals with local ingredients, daily

 **Nearly 1.2 Million**

About 1.2 million breakfasts and lunches are made and served by MCS's nutrition team each year

## District Highlights

### Doubled Breakfast Participation in High Schools

High School breakfast participation has DOUBLED with their "Breakfast After the Bell" program, which serves meals in the classroom to support student performance throughout the day.

### 100% of Schools Have Salad Bars

Every single school at MCS is equipped with a salad bar—ensuring that every student, every day, has access to fresh, nourishing choices.

### 30 Unique Entrees per Week

Students have access to an average of 30 unique lunch choices including vegan and vegetarian options each week. This variety introduces students to different fruits, vegetables, and types of foods!

## District Snapshot

Year MCS started working with Eat Real:

**2024**

Number of students served:

**8,642**

Number of schools served:

**12**

Percentage of students who depend on school meals (F/R%):

**67%**

 **Eat Real**



**"The Eat Real Certification Program provides focus to our continued progress in serving more fresh foods and increasing the number of scratch cooked items we serve to our students on a daily basis."**

— Cindy Kanarek Culver, Director of School Nutrition