

A Chance to Test and Taste

It's all about involving students and inviting them to provide input. According to Kyleen Harris, Food Service Director, the Abilene High School's Culinary Arts class is testing new recipes for the school's lunch program. Earlier this semester they dished out samples of Asian cabbage salad, whole grain corn bread and taco soup for students to sample during lunch. Students were then asked to complete an online survey, and according to Kyleen, "We received great feedback." As a matter of fact, the taco soup was such a big hit that it has been added to the lunch menu.

One of Kyleen's goals this year is to get the high school students more involved in selecting menu items for the lunch and breakfast programs. She said, "I collaborated with the high school FACS teacher, Deb Farr. The Culinary Arts class tested new recipes for the school's lunch program as part of their final grade last semester. We used recipes from the Healthier Kansas Menu and from the *Vermont's New School Cuisine* cookbook that was provided by KSDE Child Nutrition and Wellness. Mrs. Farr and I selected about 16 different recipes that included a variety of entrées and side dishes. The selected recipes were made with ingredients that help us meet the new federal meal standards, such as whole grains, dark green vegetables like kale and legumes. We let the students pick out 12 recipes to test. After testing, the class selected their favorites to be sampled by the AHS student body during lunch. They also designed attractive posters to promote their food items and encourage other students to sample their food."

Kyleen is excited about the collaborative efforts between the School Food Service Program and the high school and definitely plans to continue the food testing and tasting. She hopes to eventually set up taste testing at all the schools.