

Lunch Lessons LLC

BVSD Nutrition Services Feasibility Study

Progress Report One – July 2, 2008

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Introduction and Report Assumptions

The focus of the first visit to Boulder by the study team was site visits. Over two weeks, three of us; Beth Collins, Coleen Donnelly and Marguerite Lauro, visited 40 of the 46 sites covered in the study. I use the term “site” as opposed to “schools,” as several sites house both a middle school and an elementary school, or in Nederland’s case, a middle school and high school. The goal of the site visits was to inventory the physical plants of the kitchens and dining rooms and, when possible, to meet the manager and staff of the site, observe work habits and meal service. The team used the same set of questions to guide their visits, took photographs and logged the equipment IDs into spreadsheets. As the visits progressed the team shared their observations daily, identifying patterns of practice. Those patterns play significantly in some of the conclusions we’ve drawn at this stage of the study.

It should be noted at this point that the time frame of site visits on this trip was the last two weeks of school and we were aware that getting ready to shut down for the summer did affect some of what we saw. Because of closing we did not see typical inventory capacity of many sites, meaning that some sites might look like they have a lot more available space than they really would if they were running normally. Menus were also affected by the end of the year as sites tried to run down overstocks of items not on the menu. In some cases that meant they were not serving the published menu at all. The other point that reflects this time of year is attitude as it’s obvious that many employees are simply “done” and looking forward to their break.

We will be returning when the schools are open again in the fall and will visit the remaining sites as well as spot visit sites where we did not talk to anyone and in some cases, given what we saw previously, we feel it would be important to see them in service at full production level. Schools where renovations were taking place this summer may be bringing a new look and organization or even in some cases a new location to the site, so we will also re-visit any construction completions.

This report is organized in sections relating to summarizing the types of sites the district has, namely; production sites where they prepare their own food as well as order, stock and prepare foods that are shipped to satellites or what the district calls “carry outs.” The next category is what we refer to as solo sites. Solo sites are self contained and order, stock and prepare food only for their own population and occasionally may prepare food for a Head Start contract. And finally, satellites, which are the recipient partners of the production sites.

Aside from the purpose these categories serve within the department, it should be noted at the outset that the district operates its schools from a site-based management perspective, meaning that school principals have more influence over the individual operation of each site. This does affect nutrition services in that they at times must satisfy both the direction of the individual school as well as following the policy and procedure laid out by the department. This is particularly important as we move forward to evaluate BVSD’s capacity to shift practice. It adds an additional layer in the evaluation that is difficult to pin down because the nuance of a particular school’s management and how that affects food service is not always apparent when the site is visited.

When referring to “meals produced” we will focus on reimbursable meals, as ala carte sales are more reflective of foods that the schools do not cook or prepare themselves and the formula the department uses to equate a “meal” for ala carte is an average sale of \$2.50. Through our discovery it appears that \$2.50 would be a low estimate for many middle and high school customers and for elementary age purchases \$2.50 may be too high. Discovery data the study team wishes to examine, but have not yet had access to; are descending dollar reports for each school site so we can interpret the volume of sales in particular categories and compare that to sales records data from the Point of Sale computer system (POS). The POS register set-up used in the past does not detail out the actual items so it’s difficult to evaluate what the “average” sales reflect.

Another factor affecting the content of this report is the amount of data we currently have. At the current time we do not have complete detailed data on Nutrition Services (NS) staffing from the district offices and although we can describe preliminary impressions about staffing, lack of, too much etc. until we have a full disclosure of NS staffing assignments throughout the district, including detail of job splits; meaning bus driver/dishwasher or delivery driver/server, FTEs in the NS department who work in other departments, etc. we will not draw many conclusions about staffing. This report will briefly summarize our time spent in the NS District office and outline the next steps in our discovery process for this study.

FACILITIES/SCHOOL SITES

Production Sites

There are 11 production sites in the district. They are evenly split between high schools and middle schools with one elementary school also in the mix. The production sites appear to be chosen for their location – in that they are strategically located to be efficient locations from which to move food in a particular area. To a lesser extent production sites might have been selected for size and equipment, but clearly over time the newer schools have created an imbalance in scale, particularly reflected in storage space both dry, freezer and refrigerated. For example, one of the largest and most well equipped kitchens in the district, Monarch High School ships out an average of 228 reimbursable meals to two sites, while Southern Hills, a much older and smaller site ships out over 400 meals to four sites. One factor that is consistent among all the production sites except two, Angevine and Fireside, is that their own reimbursable meal production is below 140 and some as low as 41 (Southern Hills) or 50 (Platt). Ala carte volume among the various production sites is marked by high school sites having the largest volume overall, middle school production sites ala carte numbers are lower, presumably because there is more parental control at the middle school age level or in the case of Angevine the population of the school is less advantaged and uses the free/reduced meal program. Since the fresh ala carte items like pizza, “Wok and Rolls” and “Subway” are sold the day they are delivered, there is no storage issue related to them. More significant is adequate storage for drinks, and bulky dry goods items like chips or freezer space for the cookies, muffins etc.

Solo Sites

The solo sites also vary quite a bit as far as their equipment and space depending on age and location of the site, but with the exception of a few sites where a high meal count is paired with inadequate footprint and storage (Columbine and Emerald Elementary are good examples of this) the solo sites would be characterized as adequately equipped small kitchens even by scratch cook standards. Many solo sites possess ovens, mixers, walk-in coolers and freezers and adequate room to move around and organize their service. On the East side the K-8 solo sites possess large footprints and lots of equipment relative to the number of meals they actually produce. Eldorado and Monarch K-8s produce meals for 17 percent of their populations, while Aspen Creek produces meals for 37 percent of theirs.

Satellite Sites

Satellite sites fall into three categories; sites that may have been solo sites in the past and so have more equipment or storage than their meal count would actually call for (Mesa, Bear Creek and Foothills are good examples) or sites that simply lack footprint and facility to comfortably and in some cases safely support meal service (University Hill, Pioneer, Louisville Middle and Whittier are good examples of that category) and finally sites that fall somewhere in between the last two.

Satellite sites are characterized by limited staffing, meaning much shorter hours, though some staff split their days between sites. The combination of lesser facilities and lack of staff time and what appears to be less training on these sites is evident in what we found to be less organized and dirtier sites. There appears to be more use of these kitchens by other groups, such as YMCA and afterschool programs – sometimes taking up as much as half the dry storage space and adding the heat of residential refrigerators in the dry storage areas. We did not as a whole meet as many of the site managers at the satellites because of their limited hours of operation, so many of the sites were visited after or before hours.

Equipment

When assessing BVSD's sites from the standpoint of cooking equipment, the district on the whole has large numbers of ovens, stoves, deck ovens, steam kettles and mixers. Though the district houses all this equipment, for the most part the menu does not require much actual cooking. There is a noticeable favoring of baking equipment as compared to other standard items, for example large numbers of cake pans and many schools with more than one standing mixer. Baking appears to be the last vestige of regular scratch preparation to have been removed from the district menus. This was reflected in the repeated lament by long time employees who used to bake bread, rolls, cakes and cookies from scratch.

We were told that the decision to remove scratch baking from the repertoire was initiated by the retirement of 7 long time kitchen managers and the challenge of hiring and training appropriate replacements. We have not analyzed the cost difference in labor and supplies of scratch baking of prior years to the current budget, but when considering a total meal as served in the district today, the value

of a scratch baked roll, cookie or bun within the framework of a largely processed meal program does carry some contradiction.

For the most part, items like convection ovens fell along numbers and types equating with production kitchens having the most and satellites having the least - one single convection oven. There is also a presence of very old deck ovens and stoves sprinkled throughout the district, even in kitchens that also have newer equipment. In many cases, the deck ovens are no longer used though they do take up a large footprint under the hoods.

Though cooking and baking equipment numbers may be high, by and large refrigeration space including both walk-in freezers and coolers varies much from site to site. Larger and/or newer schools fare better in the balance of refrigeration space and dry storage than some of the smaller sites to the volume of food they have to store and prepare, but some sites, even if they are satellites do not have adequate dry storage or refrigeration for their operation. Concern with regard to this is food safety and because of that we will address sanitation as a separate area.

We did obtain school specifications for build outs of kitchens at the elementary, middle and high school levels, but the specifications are only general descriptions and are not tied to square footage, population, meal count, menu type or service style. All three sets of specifications were exactly the same with the only determining factor being whether the site was to be a preparation unit or a serving unit and that the determination would be decided before design work begins. What is apparent when looking at the equipment is that the district did cook food from scratch at one time and have continued to build kitchens with the assumption that they would be cooking as opposed to reheating and selling ready to eat ala carte items. Even plans currently on the table don't align well with the type of service they are currently providing.

A detailed cumulative district kitchen equipment distribution spreadsheet will be provided with the final study report materials in October.

Food buffet lines also vary throughout the district and because many of them are built-ins for the most part they remain even in sites that need a different set up. Use of mobile three and four well steam tables is common but it should be noted that many sites are using tables intended for dry heat as "wet" units and there appears to be a general lack of understanding of proper use and cleaning of the units. In sites where the existing built-in line is not sufficient or the layout of the space means the mobile table is also not quite right, it's not uncommon to see trays laid out on counters being pre-plated so the server can hand the students their food more quickly or serve the last hot item more easily since the server maybe working alone (very common in smaller sites).

The Food

The contradiction between the equipment and the actual food is distinct. The key ingredients of the reimbursable meal entrees are processed items compiled of either frozen or canned goods. Essentially, the necessary equipment for reheating and assembling most of the meals is minimal. As our discovery

process into the district’s procurement and vendor choices has not yet been completed, these impressions are based only on what we saw during the site visits.

Regardless of how little cooking is actually happening; all meals are not created equal. There is a great degree of difference in food handling from site to site so even food that is not actually prepared from scratch has a range of whether it’s going to be handled well and look appealing or not. The differences can be largely attributed to skills or lack thereof among the nutrition services staff, both from a basic food handling and organizational standpoint and the managerial abilities at a particular site. In addition, the supervisory team at the district level is not staffed in great enough numbers to routinely address consistency and competence at every site in addition to managing the overall basic departmental necessities. Visits to sites are apparently driven more by “problems or absence” rather than a concerted effort to maintain quality, efficiency and consistency from site to site.

This overall system may have been structured based on the site management model, but if that is true the degradation of the overall skill set both at the hourly worker level and the site managerial level has resulted in an uneven quality of service throughout the district. In addition, there is no budgeted professional development for the nutrition services staff, so with the exception of sanitation training which happens every five years, no system is in place to train, maintain, correct or improve performance of the department’s staff.

The introduction of Harvest Bars in 2008 at the elementary level has broadened the access to fresh product at the participating schools; however in observation, the education around how to build a “salad” may be lacking. In following strict offer vs. serve guidelines the only limitation to choice is guidance on portion size so students tend to choose more familiar foods and may avoid vegetable components altogether. Regardless of that fact, the addition of the Harvest Bars is a key factor in improving meal quality at the elementary level where most of the meals consumed are reimbursable meals.

Ala Carte food choices are everywhere in the district, but again they vary from site to site. Equity of food offerings (ala carte versus reimbursable) vary widely depending on where one visits and what grade level. At the elementary level ala carte offerings could be as few as selling water, juice or soy milk to a full array equivalent to the middle school level choices (Eldorado 3rd grade and above), but overall the offerings at the elementary level are more consistent in that the primary choice is the reimbursable meal. Again, site based management comes into play with regard to ala carte sales at the elementary level and in Eldorado’s case there is a demand for full access for elementary where at a school like Bear Creek the choices are much more restricted. What is actually more surprising is that ala carte choices are offered at the elementary level at all, beyond the typical sale of milk or juice to cold lunch kids.

At the middle and high school levels the students are inundated with the sight of countless choices. In addition to the reimbursable meal, there are snacks, entrees, frozen treats, cookies, drinks and the ubiquitous “Juice Alive,” a neon colored slushie, which is doubling as a component of the reimbursable meal (a fruit) or as an ala carte item sold in a larger size. The list of available lunch ala carte items that site managers can stock tops 30 items ranging in sales price from 50 cents to \$4.00. To comply with

Federal requirements of not separating snack or ala carte items from reimbursable meal distribution, in many sites they have had to adapt a service line that was not designed to be compatible with “blended entry.” Staff still struggle with the “free” kids only coming to the “old side”. Some of these service line adaptations have resulted in the reimbursable meal components being pre-plated and sitting for long periods of time (unappetizing and potentially unsafe), sometimes not sitting on, under or in the proper heating element ().

Overwhelmingly at the middle and high school level the ala carte fare is dominant to the eye. Only at sites where the population of free/reduced students is higher does the emphasis shift to the reimbursable meal and the visual impact of ala carte lessens. Our impression of the ala carte impact on the district food service was that with so many choices, often the choice or combination of choices will be poor. From a staffing standpoint, some sites simply seemed overwhelmed with managing that many choices. The middle and high school sites resemble 7-Elevens more than school cafeterias, except the oversight of their control; from inventory, storage, sales and ordering is much looser. There appear to be no checks in place to manage shrinkage. Items like drinks end up in the walk-in because that is the only secure place, plus there’s room since there is so little fresh food in the middle and high schools.

Future study research into the cost and sales of ala carte and their attendant staffing needs across the district will be needed to discover how shifts can be successfully achieved. The culture of the district population around having choice and access to these types of food will play greatly in the strategy the district may want to employ in the future.

Dining Rooms

It should be noted from the outset that overwhelmingly when asking nutrition services staff about the dining room their answer was “we have nothing to do with it.” The disconnect in the relationship of the service of the food to the consumption and atmosphere that food is intended for was definitive and should be considered when discussing a future vision of nutrition services. It should also be noted that the introduction of Harvest Bars does engage the staff in dining room activity, however the prevalence of cashiers who are not working as directly with the food itself, limits what could be a very positive link between the staff and the students directly around consuming fresh foods.

The good news is Boulder has some dining rooms, even very bright and cheery ones with windows and space. The elementary schools in some cases are fairly challenged on seating space and across the board when asking staff if they could feed more kids, if more kids were purchasing meals, the schedules of the lunch periods come into question.

Adult supervision and interaction in the dining rooms vary and this appears to be driven in part by the site based management, as far as how many or how often a lunch room may have an aide or whether teachers assist their elementary age students through the line. For the most part teachers are not purchasing meals and in the case they do, they usually eat in the teachers lounges. There are a few exceptions; for example at Heatherwood teachers go through the line with the students and sit and eat with them. Potential dining room based education that reflects having adults present who are vested in

healthy food choices and positive social interaction in the dining room is possible. We did observe aide-student relationships in the dining room that I would describe as very positive (Pioneer Elementary) and demonstrate an understanding of dining as a valuable, positive and educational point in the students' day.

Maintenance of the dining rooms is assigned to the custodial staff and in most sites we visited custodians were present and active during service, handling compost programs at elementary schools that have begun the Eco-Cycle Program and managing waste and recycling in middle and high school dining rooms. Few dining rooms have access to water and the sales of water appear brisk. Only at Centennial MS did we observe a water fountain designed for cups, but they do not have cups so it didn't appear to be used.

Some custodians appear to have a vested interest in the students during lunch (Manuel at Uni Hill is a good example and custodians at Creekside and Fireside are other examples), and help them get what they need as well as assist nutrition services in moving trays, condiments and the like back to the kitchen area. Other schools appear to have less cooperative relationships with custodians [REDACTED] and this may result in dirtier floors and just overall less cooperation.

When questioning how tables are cleaned and sanitized the answer was either that they didn't know or that they provided a container of sanitizer water and a rag. There appears to be no cleaning system or series of steps that custodians universally follow on surface cleaning in the dining rooms and this is a concern and will be noted under sanitation. This would also be a question when considering the floor cleaning and cleaning of floor mats in the kitchens. There were kitchens where it was clear the mats were never picked up, or washed. And the variety of mat washing techniques varied, so addressing some uniform practice with regard facility cleaning is needed.

SANITATION AND STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

This area with regard to the entire district is a primary area of concern. Though most sites do have copies of the district's HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) and Standard Operating Procedures Manual as mandated under the National School Lunch Program since 2006, there is great inconsistency in practice throughout the district.

Basic food safety practices, common in food service even before the implementation of HACCP programs are spotty. For example, practices such as wearing hair restraints, washing hands, proper use of gloves, FIFO (first in, first out), product date labeling, and temperature logs were extremely inconsistent and often non-existent. Another widely accepted method that monitors food safety, the use of freezer and refrigeration temperature logs, is rare in the district. When asked, most staff said they looked at the thermometers (often there were not internal thermometers in place for more accurate monitoring) but did not record temps. At satellite sites there was less evidence of food safety practice and by and large their refrigeration lacked internal thermometer devices. All staff is required to go through STAR training, a sanitation training program offered through the Colorado Department of Health and when asked most staff said they had attended training. But what is lacking is a thorough

systemic practice and oversight district wide of implementing required food safety practices, and continued monitoring, support and training.

Food temperature logs though part of the records handled with regard to production of foods to be transported and foods received are not regularly maintained at all sites. The SOP handbook is substantial and covers all the necessary tasks, but it's clear that the system was never really implemented. The site managers' experience and organization are paramount to whether a site has a steady practice, and even in what we would describe as "well managed" sites, none was actually doing all the basic required practices.

Notable as well with regard to sanitation is the role of linen in the department. Common to food service is the practice of wearing hair restraints, aprons and the use of side towels, as well as hot pads by the stoves. When asked if the district provided hair restraints the answer was no. Aprons, which we observed on most employees throughout the district, are also not provided. And finally side towels which were in most kitchens, but often hanging to dry in on boiler room pipes or piled up on the dividers of a sink, had the most variety of responses. Towels were sometimes ordered from the warehouse, sometimes acquired from custodial staff, brought in or purchased by the employee, sometimes sent to the warehouse for washing, sometimes provided by the production site and sent back there to wash, occasionally washed in the "Home Ec" rooms, but too often the response to how do your side towels get cleaned was that the workers were taking them home. In some cases employees log in hours on their time sheets for that service of taking the towels home to clean them, but not always.

This leads us to dress code. "Professional appearance, neat and clean" is the line listed under BVSD Food Service Sanitation Training Check List. There was a variety of dress found throughout the sites. "Neat and clean" is not specific enough to ensure a safe and sanitary working environment. We saw sleeveless shirts, shorts, CROCS (specifically listed as not acceptable), no aprons, capri shorts, and most hair un-restrained, despite the fact the HACCP manual lists the need for a clean apron and "BVSD approved hair restraints".

This inconsistency is tied to the lack of oversight by the department but starting clearly with a lack of thorough training. From a sanitation and food handling perspective this is unacceptable. Regular linen service whether in-house or contracted is a standard in the food service industry. A clean hat or a hair net, a clean apron and the provision for clean side towels and hot pads is the minimum one would want to observe in a food service environment, and in a situation where your average worker is not a professionally trained food service worker, it's best to provide these basics and work to train them to respect the need for closed toed shoes, sleeves, legs covered etc.

This is a primary area of concern because if the district has any desire to handle freshly prepared and cooked foods it must staff adequately and train and retrain adequately to maintain safe operating procedures. In this instance the lack of centralized management of food services and inadequate training throughout the district would be tagged as the primary reason for this issue. The supervisory team is aware that their staff lacks training but it appears that department is between a rock and a hard place as there is no budgeted staff or time to accomplish adequate training. The fact that various

schools are passing Board of Health inspections means nothing, as it was clear from talking to long time managers that the Board of Health inspections are brief and perfunctory. Colorado Board of Health is aware that the district by Federal mandate must have a HACCP plan in place, but their own inspections and standards are not requiring HACCP for every food service establishment they license so they would not be inspecting to that level of detail, however the CRE reviews from the State should be looking carefully at HACCP compliance.

Our basic response to this level of inadequacy with regard to food handling and sanitation practice is that the district will have to take five steps back before they can take one step forward. Implementing a standardized plan and adequately training all staff that have contact with food should be at the top of the list for BVSD. This extends also to warehouse practice where we observed improper rotation, no case dating and out of date product throughout. The fact that non-nutrition services staff are the first response handlers of most of the food product in the district is a concern, and further that product is being moved from the warehouse into sites – often directly into the refrigeration units - by staff who are not operating under nutrition services HACCP standards and do not answer to the Director of Nutrition Services is an issue that must be addressed.

NUTRITION SERVICES OFFICE

The Team

As the focus of this trip was the site audits our time spent in the district office was minimal, but was enough to follow the paper trail of recordkeeping and ordering back from the sites to those who are either handling the orders, [REDACTED], managing the Point of Sale records, [REDACTED] or writing menus and production records, [REDACTED]. At the end of the first week of sites visits we met with Leslie Stafford and the supervisory team. Ms. Stafford is district CFO and oversees the nutrition services department under the new district reorganization. Present at that meeting was Sue Anderson, now director, Deb McCormick, supervisor and Sara Acker, who has recently moved into a supervisory role in the department from her previous position as site manager at Monarch High School. Sara will prove to be a valuable member of the team as she represents real on the ground experience in the commercial food industry outside of schools, as well as proving to be a solid manager and trainer within BVSD. Her ability to troubleshoot, assess and train throughout the district will be a real asset.

It should be noted that as far as leadership of nutrition services, at the time the study team was engaged the district did not have a nutrition services director. The prior director, [REDACTED], departed in April and Sue Anderson, nutrition services supervisor, was playing double duty, managing her supervisor duties as well as working as acting director. The first week of our visit Sue Anderson was selected as the new nutrition services director. The history of the department's leadership is relevant as over the past five years the department has had the retirement of a long time director, [REDACTED] in 2003, a very short term replacement, 7 months, then a return appearance by [REDACTED], followed by the hiring of [REDACTED] in 2005 until this past spring. Sue Anderson worked under all of those directors so her ability to understand the prior status of the department and the various changes it has made in the last few years is very valuable and will serve the district well as it considers future growth.

One notable point when studying the department is the fact the district food service is managed with so few staff. The intended supervisory team is the director plus three supervisors, but there has been only a director and two supervisors prior. And the only year round position is the director. With our study of the sites and our feeling that there is not enough oversight to keep a system running efficiently or effectively, coming to the office and experiencing the number of tasks this small group is charged with drives home our first point – the management structure as it exists now, which is heavily weighed for site based management is not effective with the present style and content of food service and certainly would not be effective if the district wishes to transform itself into a more health focused and whole foods focused program.

Technology and Recordkeeping

From what we saw it looks like [REDACTED] began to update the paper based system that the department had been running for a long time. Within the last two years Point of Sale (POS) has been instituted throughout the district, and within the past year several modules of food service software made by Horizons called VBOSS has begun to be implemented. We will be auditing these systems more fully on our next trip but first impressions from the interviews we did with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as well as speaking to all the managers in the field about the systems in place at their sites is the department is tied to both old and new and there are some real obstacles to fully realize efficiency in these system changes, primarily because of the disconnect between management and systems of the warehouse and nutrition services.

The number of software systems or technology related pieces used include; Nutrikids for recipes and nutritional analysis only (though BVSD is a not nutrient based district and the program can also do free/reduced apps/POS, production records, menus and more), MCS for free and reduced application processing which works with Data Business Systems, QSP, which is local company that is the vendor for the POS as well as operating a Pay For it option. These programs interface with Infinite Campus, which is the student information database.

The newer software, Horizon's VBOSS is now being implemented for placing and tracking orders from the production sites, creating production records, and taking inventory, but the program's capabilities can't be fully taken advantage of because the warehouse system both from a management and technology side (Lawson) is usurping the food service department as far as control of inventory, ordering and receiving. Horizon's K-12 offerings do include free/reduced application processing; POS, menus, production records, warehouse, inventory and purchasing, but at this point we do not know which modules BVSD owns. We will meet with technology in July to better understand the history and future plans with regard to the existing systems.

There are still a number of paper based records managed within nutrition services, namely menu production records, food transport temperature records and sales reports sent from satellites to production sites. Overwhelmingly we heard from production site managers that they took work home or that they stayed late to complete all the paperwork required. There were also a number of managers who were not fully aware of all of their paperwork responsibilities. Another area we need to explore is

the role of the cashier. It appears that the district is not really taking advantage of the potential for a cashless system. Though there are some elementary schools that appear to have totally removed handling cash in the dining room, for the most part it was approximated that at least 50% of sales at the middle and high school level involve cash.

What this represents when looking at the whole system is simply more opportunity for loss, much more time consuming tracking and records and the loss of potential labor hours to the food side because the district is hiring people whose only job is to sit at the cash register. This is particularly a disadvantage at the satellite sites where the labor hours are much more limited. Some sites have teams that are fully cross trained, but that is not the accepted norm.

Ordering

As a subset of technology and recordkeeping the procurement piece in the department will be researched more fully on our next trip, but in the few hours I spent with [REDACTED] and in the questioning of managerial staff throughout the district, the procurement system is not efficient as it currently exists. For starters, [REDACTED] variety pak of hats that she wears is too broad when we consider that her handling of ordering and processing of invoices alone is enough for a full time position. The complexity of this is expanded when viewing the overlay of systems she's working with between vendor orders, warehouse orders, and orders from sites either via VBOSS, Lawson or on paper. To complicate matters the fact that the previous director handled all the commodity entitlement orders and did not cross train any member of the office on the process leads to a current supervisory team that is not well balanced from the stand point of being able to step in and cover this very important task of ordering and procurement.

Menu and Wellness Policy

Menus, recipes and production records are handled by [REDACTED] and at the point of our first visit the menu for the following school year was incomplete. She had Aug/September done. This is very unusual in a school district. Particularly when one considers that the commodity entitlement orders for the following year are placed in January, so it's customary to at least have a sense of where that product is going to fit within your menus. In addition the weekly set of production records that [REDACTED] maintains is very complex and appears to take more time than it should. It is unclear how implementation of VBOSS will shift the efficiencies in this area but when considering the roles of the various supervisors, the importance of efficiency in the basic system is vital as they are also expected to be monitoring quality at the sites. Obviously that is not happening to the extent it needs to.

The menu choices as far as the prepared foods used and sold appears to be following the USDA guidelines but not moving beyond that. The current selections are apparently a few steps up from the past, but the ramen soups which are an ala carte mainstay at all grade levels, which are known by their nick name of "Sodium Soups," is enough to make us question what the commitment in the district to redirect energy to helping kids make healthy choices. Breakfast offerings such as 4 mini pancakes in a cellophane wrapper that is heated in a warmer and served with maple flavored high fructose corn syrup

is a very poor excuse for a nutritious breakfast regardless if it's "label" meets the minimum USDA guidelines.

The Board Policy on Food Choices offers a viable vision of school health and wellness, but the practice we observed in the district is not meeting the challenge as yet. The Healthy Food Guidelines offer a starting point for change in the district, but without real implementation, follow up and annual review processes engaging a broad spectrum of the district, these guidelines just remain as a document fulfilling federal requirements.

STUDY NEXT STEPS

In our next visit to the district in July we will focus more heavily on the technology systems, procurement and warehousing system, including commodity entitlement and vendor contracts, personnel and budget and further assessment of potential system changes that would work best to bring BVSD to a whole foods and local procurement system.

APPENDIX

List of Site Visits to Date:

Angevine Middle
Pioneer Elementary
Aspen Creek K-8
Boulder High
University Hill Elementary
Broomfield High
Birch Elementary
Broomfield MS
Kohl Elementary
Centaurus High
Centennial Middle
Casey Middle
Foothill Elementary
Whittier Elementary
Columbine Elementary
Creekside Elementary
Crest View Elementary
Eldorado K-8
Emerald Elementary
Fairview High
Fireside Elementary
Coal Creek Elementary
Heatherwood Elementary
Manhattan Middle
High Peaks Elementary
Monarch High
Louisville Middle
Monarch K-8
Nederland MS/HS
Nederland Elementary
Platt Middle
Arapahoe Ridege High
Douglass Elementary
Sanchez Elementary
Southern Hills Middle
Bear Creek Elementary
Community Montessori
Flatirons Elementary
Mesa Elementary
Superior Elementary