Superintendent’s Report  
October 14, 2021

I believe deeply that every aspect of the school day experience is important and impactful. From the way in which students are welcomed when they arrive, to the purposeful social interactions, to the substance of the academic lessons, to the ritual of closing out the school day, each part of the day reflects our values and is approached with planning, careful thought, and individual attention. We know that these elements and more impact a student’s learning and growth. Related, breakfast and lunchtime are important parts of the school day. The opportunity to connect in low stakes fashion with peers, take a mental break, and recharge and refresh with a healthy meal is critical to the success of the day. Given the recent concerns about the quality of meals served at the elementary level, it seemed prudent and necessary to make clear where lunch sits in terms of our thinking and beliefs about the day as well as processes that are engaged each day to ensure that this part of the day is successful.

Reflective of our beliefs, the Lynn Public Schools sought membership under the Community Eligibility Provision in 2017. Doing so allowed the district to provide universal free breakfast and lunch to all Lynn public schools students. Free meals do not and should not convey any reduced care or concern about the quality of the meals. In 2020, the district entered into a partnership with Revolution Foods. Key in this selection of this provider is its guarantee of fresh, never frozen food that meet a strict set of guidelines set by the United States Department of Agriculture and include proteins, whole grains, fruit/vegetables, and milk with every meal. What is more, in response to feedback in the 2017-18 school year, the purveyor has the capability of creating culturally relevant meals. The meals are prepared in a kitchen approximately 10 miles from Lynn, packaged, and delivered to schools to be served the next day. The meals also undergo a quality check to ensure freshness.

Collecting and responding to feedback continues to be the centerpiece of our work. With all expressed concerns about meal quality, we have engaged a full investigation with Revolution Foods and Chartwells, the district’s meal service management provider. This approach allows us to change a process if need be or correct a misconception. The feedback can also lead to decisions around what to serve. We will encourage families to continue to provide feedback directly to the school and foodservice team.

Partnership and transparency are key factors in the path forward. Accordingly, a formal invitation to LPS families to attend a food service exposition on November 3rd is forthcoming. At this evening event, families will have the opportunity sample meals served in our schools. Additionally, representatives from Revolution Foods and Chartwells will be on site to answer questions and hear feedback.
In the opinion of many, the road to recovery from the pandemic will be long and winding. It will require a thoughtful strategy, consistency, and patience. It will also require a willingness by representatives from the school district and their partners and families to collaborate on important matters. I believe that is what is happening relative to the matter involving meals.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Tutwiler, PhD