

SHARE TABLES

COMING TO

GREENSBURG COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Greensburg Community Schools (GCS) are excited to announce the introduction of share tables in all of our schools. The share tables are scheduled to start Monday January 8th and we want you to be aware of what a great program this is.

What is a Share Table?

A share table is a table or station where a child may return whole food or beverage they choose not to eat. These food and beverage items are then available to other children who may want additional servings. These food items are available at no cost to the student.

Why a Share Table?

The new school lunch guidelines require students to take certain food items for their meal to be reimbursable. Some children may not particularly like some of these foods. Without a share table a large amount of the food ends up in the trash. It is estimated that over \$16 million worth of food is wasted every day in school cafeterias across the country. In an effort to reduce food waste and encourage kids to consume more “healthy” food items, the USDA has created the option for Share Table in school cafeterias.

Do you ever hear your child say “There is too much food at lunch.” or “I like the school lunch, but there just isn’t enough food.”? Not only is the food items we serve to the student regulated, but so is the serving size. In the K-5 grade levels the serving sizes are the same for kindergarten as they are for 5th graders. While the serving sizes may be too big for some kindergartners, they leave some 5th graders feeling hungry when they leave the lunch room. This is a problem that we want to address at GCS. The share table will allow those kids who feel like they have too much food to place uneaten and unopened food on the share table and allow other students who would enjoy an additional serving. This keeps the food out of the trash in the student’s body for nourishment.

Share Table @ GCS Facts:

- Share tables are regulated and encouraged by the Indiana Department of Education School Nutrition Program.

- Share tables are voluntary. No student is required to participate. However, if they would like to enjoy something off of the share table, they must first have received a meal from the cafeteria serving line, or eaten their lunch brought from home.
- No opened or unsealed items are allowed on the food table.
- Items such as milk, juice and cheese are placed in ice to keep them at an appropriate temperature.
- Share tables are monitored by staff throughout the meal service to ensure sanitary practice are being followed.
- Food left on the share table at the end of service can be donated to local charities.
- Food is inspected and stored properly and carts are cleaned and sanitized after each meal period.

Discussion point with your student:

- If your child has food allergies, please discuss the risk with them and make sure they understand your expectation for their participation. Each cart will have a list of children with their allergies, however we cannot ensure that your child will not pick something they have an allergy to.
- Discuss with your child the importance of eating a well balance meal, including fruit, vegetable and milk. The national school lunch standards were put in place because most children do not consume the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables.
- Discuss your child the importance of reducing food waste. At GCS we encourage children to make mindful and responsible decisions. Wastefulness is something all students should be mindful of.

Additional Info can be found at:

<https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/nutrition/doe-sharing-tables-update-003.pdf>

https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/SP41_CACFP13_SFSP15_2016os.pdf

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