

fresh from the farm

A school-based healthy eating program of seven generations ahead

As part of the educational activities accompanying the pilot healthy lunches, three Beye Elementary School students enjoy the wonders of fruits during a fresh food tasting.



Oak Park District 97 Board Votes to Extend Healthy Lunch Pilot to All 10 Schools!



Healthy fruits and vegetables are offered daily at Beye and Irving.

Oak Park School District 97 (D97) voted to extend its pilot healthy lunch program at Beye and

Irving to all ten D97 schools in Fall 2007. This change will soon have OPRF District 200 High School Food Service providing healthy school lunches to all D97 elementary students.

Three years ago, Seven Generations Ahead (SGA) began advocating for an overhaul of the lunch program. By implementing *Fresh from the Farm* salad bar lunches in collaboration with school PTOs and D200 Food Service, SGA demonstrated that healthy lunches could not only be served at existing price points but also that kids would enjoy

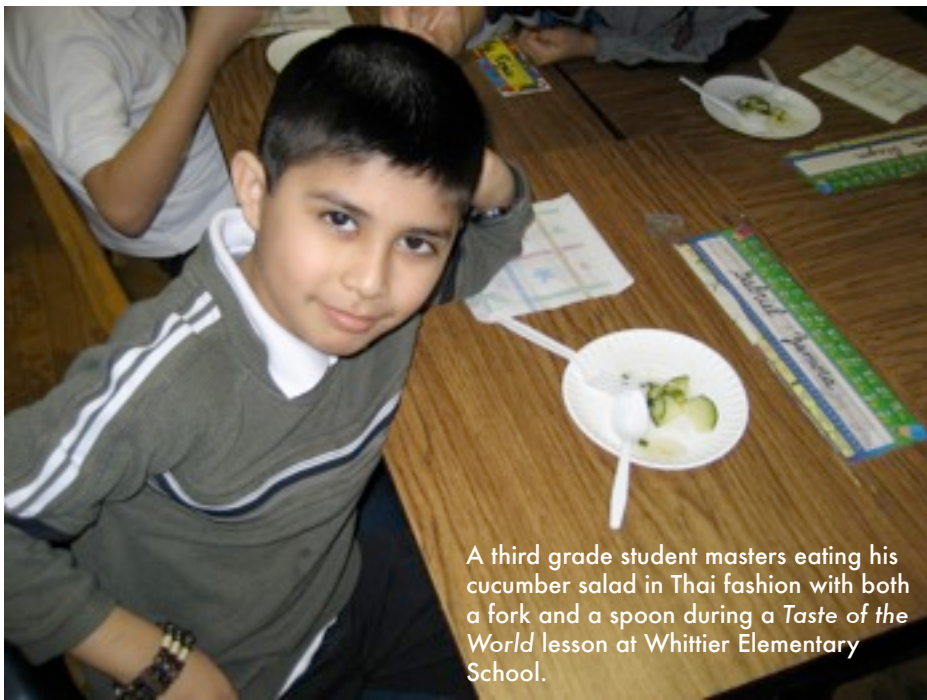
eating them. The success of the salad bar paved the way for the expansion of this program.

Last March, D97 Superintendent Connie Collins and area parents attended the 2006 SGA Healthy Lunch Forum that highlighted exemplary lunch programs across the country, including the Evanston "satellite" model that uses the high school to prepare and deliver lunches to elementary schools. After a visit to Evanston, the Beye/Irving pilot was born, offering healthy, fresh foods. Congratulations Oak Park D97 and all who worked to make this district-wide change!

Farmer Feature: Sandhill Organics, Grayslake, IL

Peg and Matt, who farmed in Wisconsin for four years before moving to Grayslake in 2004, believe that their farm is a beautiful oasis in a rapidly developing area. The Sheaffers enjoy life on their organic farm because they love being connected to nature and educating people to care for the environment by eating locally grown food. Students at McAuliffe and Lozano enjoyed learning about Peg's experiences as a farmer during her classroom visits earlier this school year. Sandhill Organics specializes in growing a wide variety of certified organic vegetables, herbs, and flowers that can be purchased at the Oak Park Farmer's Market Saturdays during the summer or through their CSA.





A third grade student masters eating his cucumber salad in Thai fashion with both a fork and a spoon during a *Taste of the World* lesson at Whittier Elementary School.

Culinary Globetrotting in Pilsen Elementary School

Whittier elementary students are traveling the globe on a culinary adventure this spring, all from the comfort of their very own desks. Third and fourth grade students at the Pilsen school are taking part in SGA's eight-week program, *Taste of the World*. Every Thursday, students are taken on a global journey with SGA staff, learning about culture, geography, the environment, and nutrition through use of language, artifacts, and story telling. Students observe whole foods common to different regions of the world and learn the nutritional benefits of ingredients like sweet potato, olive oil, and couscous. At the end of each lesson, students celebrate the culture du jour by tasting a healthy, unique dish. By the end of the program, students will have traveled to all seven continents, experiencing a wide range of cultures, climates and nutritious fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. And along the way they may pick up a craving for a new healthy snack as a souvenir! Bon Appetit!

From Wellness Policy to Action

Now that Wellness Policies are in place, many people are wondering how to transform these nicely-worded documents into on-the-ground action. As school Wellness Committees begin moving forward, here are a few tips:

- 1) Create a "baseline" list of the activities and programs your school is already doing related to the wellness policy.
- 2) Use a checklist to review new strategies for your school to pursue and explore best practices being implemented in other schools (request at act@sevengenerationsahead.org).
- 3) Select a handful of strategies that your committee can realistically achieve by year's end.
- 4) Develop an action plan to implement specific strategies.
- 5) Meet periodically to review the group's progress and evaluate the results at year's end.
- 6) Repeat process until you've achieved all of your goals. GOOD LUCK!

Take Advantage of Your Taste Buds!

Did you know that people with a "sweet tooth" prefer fruits and those who like savory foods prefer vegetables? Sweet eaters can easily increase fruit consumption by replacing dessert with seasonal fruit or by adding orange slices, strawberries or grapes to a salad. Savory eaters can replace salty fried snacks with roasted vegetables or a snack mix of dried fruit and lightly salted nuts. You will still enjoy the tastes you crave while gaining added nutritional benefits from eating more fruits and vegetables!

Market Basket Success



Thanks to the great work of parents and Growing Power, the Ascension School is increasing the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables in their Parish by selling more than 50 Market Baskets each week! Have you gotten your five servings today?

Thai Cucumber Salad

(serves 4)



Ingredients:

- ½ cup rice or white wine vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon brown sugar
- ½ lb. cucumbers, sliced
- 1/3 cup scallions, minced
- sesame seeds (garnish)
- 1 Tablespoon cilantro or parsley

Preparation:

Mix all ingredients together and marinate for at least 30 minutes. Garnish with sesame seeds (optional)