

Request for Proposals: Designing School Kitchens and Cafeterias to Promote Healthy Eating

Many Whatcom County school districts are embarking on facilities projects that include renovating or rebuilding school cafeterias and school kitchens. These projects represent a significant opportunity to design school facilities that implement best practices based on research about how the physical environment can positively affect students' eating behaviors. [Whatcom Farm-to-School](#), with the support of the Whatcom Community Foundation (WCF), is offering grants and technical support to [Whatcom County public schools](#) for facilities infrastructure changes that enable districts to serve more fresh, healthy, and local food, and also to facilitate implementation of new practices that increase the likelihood that students will eat the healthy options presented.

Successful applications for funding and technical support will apply evidence-based practices to increase healthy eating behaviors (for examples of evidence-based practices see: [Smarter Lunchrooms](#), [Healthy Eating Design Guidelines for School Architecture](#)), and have a plan for how the project will be evaluated and sustained over time. Funding should not be used to purchase food, but to create the conditions that enable more fresh and local food to be served and eaten in school meals.

Several types of projects will be considered for funding:

1. **School kitchen/cafeteria facility design process:** Envisioning the possibilities for doing things differently takes time, knowledge of best practices, exposure to new ideas, and the input of many key stakeholders. The Foundation is offering funding and technical support throughout the visioning and design process of building or remodeling school kitchens/cafeterias.

- o Project examples: Hiring a consultant to assist principals and district administrators in facilitating community visioning meetings to gather input regarding facility design; fieldtrip for district administrators to visit exemplary facilities

2. **Structural changes (i.e., capital or equipment) to the school cafeteria/kitchen, or related areas, that can increase students' access to fresh and local foods, and encourage healthy food choices.**

Some ideas:

- Improve the capacity of the school kitchen and staff to provide healthy, fresh, and local options
 - o Project examples: Salad bars; food processing and cooking equipment; increased food storage, refrigerator and/or freezer capacity
- Implement Smarter Lunchrooms strategies shown to motivate healthy food choices
 - o Project examples: Modify the flow of people through the cafeteria and lunch line; change ways food items are displayed
- Develop eating environments that facilitate positive social interaction
 - o Project examples: Seating options, noise reduction, cafeteria aesthetics
- Enhance the extent to which the cafeteria can function as a classroom where students learn about healthy eating
 - o Project examples: Wall space and areas for educational displays and signage

3. **Implementation of new practices for how school food is prepared and served.**

Some ideas:

- Introduce menu changes that increase use of minimally processed, fresh, and local foods
 - o Project examples: Hire a chef consultant to develop new menu options and train staff; revise menu offerings to use staff time most efficiently; address breakfast menu and service options to use healthier ingredients and increase participation
 - o Stipends for staff to work together to increase ordering, preparing and serving fresh and local foods
- Ensure adequate time for students to eat
 - o Project examples: Schedule, staffing, and structural changes that makes it possible to have recess before lunch (e.g., easily accessible hand washing stations); strategies to increase the efficiency of serving lunch

Funding: Grants will be given for up to \$10,000. Please consider the funding your project actually needs, which may be less than \$10,000, and apply for this amount.

Eligible Applicants: Projects selected for funding will be focused on improving healthy eating behaviors among Whatcom County public school district students. Whatcom school district administrators, faculty and staff, school groups (e.g., PTA's, clubs), and community groups working in partnership with schools, are eligible to apply for a grant. Applicants must be either a government agency (e.g., a school district), 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, or tribal agency, or have an agreement in place with a qualified fiscal sponsor (i.e., your fiscal sponsor must be either a government agency, 501(c)3 nonprofit, or tribal agency). **Note: Funding cannot be granted to an individual.**

Partnerships are Preferred: Applicants must develop their proposals in communication with all school district administrators who will be directly involved and/or impacted by grant activities (e.g., Food Service Director, District Facilities Director, Capital Projects Manager), and these district administrators must demonstrate their support for the proposed project by signing the proposal forms. In addition, preference will be given to projects which involve a variety of stakeholders. Ideally, projects will become models for other schools.

Instructions:

► **STEP 1:**

Submit a **Letter of Interest**, including the form and attachments, by **5:00 p.m. on October 1, 2015.**

- Familiarize yourself with [Whatcom Farm-to-School](#), and evidence-based practices to increase students' healthy eating behaviors (for examples of evidence-based practices see: [Smarter Lunchrooms](#), [Healthy Eating Design Guidelines for School Architecture](#)).
- [Download Letter of Interest Form](#).
- Fill it out completely.
- Applicants that are not a government agency, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, or tribal agency must attach a Letter of agreement from fiscal sponsor.
- Include all required signatures, either handwritten or electronic.
- Scan document, if signatures are handwritten, and email completed form to: coordinator@whatcomfarmtoschool.org

► Applicants will be notified by **Oct. 13** if they have been selected to submit a full proposal.

► **STEP 2:**

Full proposals, including the **Farm-to-School Funding Proposal Form** and attachments, must be submitted by **5:00 p.m. on November 3, 2015.**

- [Download and complete Farm-to-School Funding Proposal Form](#).
- Observe all word limits as indicated.
- Include all required signatures, either handwritten or electronic.
- Include required attachments:
 - Letter of agreement from fiscal sponsor for applicants that are not a government agency, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, or tribal agency
 - Project budget
- Scan document, if signatures are handwritten, and email completed form to: coordinator@whatcomfarmtoschool.org

► Grants will be awarded by **November 17, 2015.**

Contact Mardi Solomon with any questions

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