



Food Service Program Operational Update

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Key Contributors

- Dee's Organics (Vendor)
- RUSD Community, PTA Volunteers
- Shagy Farasati, District Office
- Sayaka Prestia, Bel Aire Elementary
- Isabelle Moattar, Reed Elementary
- Laura Kristy, Del Mar Middle School
- Ryan Gomes, School Food Solutions
- Sarah Jones, Consultant & Trainer





Strategic Plan Alignment

Pillar #2: Social Emotional Learning

Category #3: Food Service and Student Nutrition

- RUSD will provide a student-centered nutrition program that establishes healthy eating habits, uses environmentally sound practices, and empowers students to become lifelong ambassadors of health, wellness and sustainability.

FY 25/26 Vertical Goal Alignment: Participation Rates

- In the 2024/25 school year, the average student participation rate was approximately 11% for breakfast and 21% for lunch. The goal is to double participation rates in 2025/26.



History and Background

1. Choice Lunch

RUSD's prior school food vendor that does not meet the requirements of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and California's Universal Meals Program.

2. California's Universal Meals Program

AB130 became law and took effect in the 2022/23, requiring Districts to provide breakfast and lunch free of charge with funding contingent on participation in the NSLP and School Breakfast Program.

3. School Food Authority (SFA)

RUSD serves as the SFA for the Ross and Kentfield School District. RUSD is the legal entity responsible for administering the program, ensuring compliance, and managing the finances necessary to secure federal and state reimbursement.



History and Background

4. School Food Solutions

Supports School Districts with operating a sustainable NSLP compliant meal program, ensuring full adherence to all state and federal (USDA) regulations and program requirements.

5. The LunchMaster

The LunchMaster is a large food service vendor specializing in providing meals to public schools in California. RUSD contracted with this Vendor between the 2022/23 and 2024/25 academic years.

6. Taste Testing Event

Following a joint taste-testing event on April 2025 with 30 staff, student, and parent participants from the Reed, Ross, and Kentfield School Districts, Dee's Organics, was selected as the clear favorite based on the quality of its sample breakfast and lunch offerings.



History and Background

7. **Dee's Organics**

Dee's Organics is a Marin County-based catering company and food service vendor specializing in providing meals to public and private school districts.

8. **Request for Proposals (RFP) & Contract Award**

The contract for the 2025/26 academic year, following a competitive proposal and bid process, was awarded to Dee's Organics based on its status as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

9. **Sarah Jones, Nutrition Consultant and Trainer**

Supports the District (on site) with training and coaching, standard operating procedures, vendor coordination, and operational supports.



Preliminary Results

- Observed increase in food quality and reported satisfaction based on conversations with students and parents.
- Increased Lunch Participation Rates:
 - Average student participation rate was approximately 11% for breakfast and 21% for lunch in FY 2024/25.
 - As of September 2025 (most recent data), average student participation rate was approximately 11% for breakfast and 43% for lunch.
 - Reed Elementary: 9% Breakfast / 47% Lunch
 - Bel Aire Elementary: 16% Breakfast / 43.4% Lunch
 - Del Mar Middle: 9% Breakfast / 38.5% Lunch



Program Updates:

1. New Vendor Challenges:

- Delivery timing and logistics
- Distribution channels for compostable containers
- Sourcing challenges (i.e. milk)
- Adapting to NSLP regulatory requirements

2. Adjustments in Progress:

- Breakfast and lunch menus
- New sourcing and distribution agreements
- Breakfast and lunch delivery route adjustments
- Revised standard operating procedures

3. Ongoing Check Ins

- Weekly check-ins with the SFA coalition with Ryan Gomes
- Ongoing on-site training and coaching by Sarah Jones
- Daily district office support to school sites by Shagy Farasati

Questions?

