



Ineffectiveness in US School Lunches

Food is one of the basic necessities of life. It doesn't just keep us alive, however. It enables us to excel. Without proper nutrition, we can't learn and grow to our full potential. This is where the issue of school lunches comes in. They don't provide the proper nutrition that students need, and thus hinders them in learning and physical health.

Because of a push towards healthier school lunches in 2012, which is well meaning and a step in the right direction, the new healthier lunches are geared more towards meeting the new requirements of "lower in fat, calories and sodium and contain lean proteins, more fruits and vegetables and whole grains." (Murphy) As a result, "school districts nationwide say that their trash cans are overflowing while their cash register receipts are diminishing as children either toss out the healthier meals." (Murphy) The new lunches are leading to a lot of wasted food as well, since, coupled with the short lunch time, the students just aren't eating them. Really, a better solution is "moderation (rather) than deprivation." (Murphy).

Other countries are good examples for this, such as Japan, France, or Italy. Specifically, Japan has a good model. "Schools in Japan, by contrast, give children the sort of food they'd get at home, not at a stadium. The meals are often made from scratch. They're balanced but hearty, heavy on rice and vegetables, fish and soups." (Harlan) Now, based on the push for "healthier" lunches in the US, this kind of lunch wouldn't be within the guidelines. However, obesity rates in Japan are significantly lower than in the US, so clearly there is evidence showing that the US standards for lunches are not 100% effective. Also, by having lunches be "a scene of communal duty," (Harlan) they have the students become personally invested in their own food. This leads to even healthier students. A good quote to summarize the kind of mindset that the US should move towards is this: "Japan's standpoint is that school lunches are a part of education...not a break from it." (Harlan)

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Lunches shouldn't be produced by companies that are so far detached from the actual consumers of it, since they have no investment in it. That's why they're just jumping through metaphorical hoops set by the government. Lunches should be more personal, and moderation should be emphasized.

I am working on this same topic with [Evan McNall](#), so our posts will be somewhat similar.

Links Used:

[NY Times](#)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/on-japans-school-lunch-menu-a-healthy-meal-made-from-scratch/2013/01/26/5f31d208-63a2-11e2-85f5-a8a9228e55e7_story.html?utm_term=.8a6804d28343