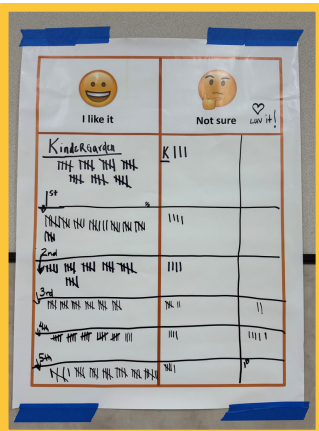


Vancouver Public Schools

Katy Bretanus
Director of Nutrition Services

While participating in Power Up Your Program, Katy focused on gathering student and family feedback to create school meals that reflect and celebrate the district's cultural diversity. With help from interpreters, she and her team reached out to families through surveys, phone calls, and in-person conversations. These efforts sparked meaningful dialogue and uncovered rich stories, ideas, and excitement around potential new school menu items. From these conversations, Katy and team developed a series of pilot recipes for students to taste test.



One standout success from this year was the Beef Picadillo taste test. The meal team partnered with WSU SNAP-Ed to host a fun and engaging cafeteria event across all 39 schools in the district. Most students provided great feedback and learned about the dish and its origins. Additional pilots focused on Indigenous and Middle Eastern inspired menu items, included bison with wojape sauce, and dal with golden rice.

By centering family voices and building excitement around new recipes, Katy is promoting the meal program and showing every student that they matter. This is just the start! Katy plans to embed this feedback model into the team's routine operations to keep community voice at the heart of the meal program.

Project Highlights

- Gathered feedback from school community through surveys, calls, and in-person meetings
- Connected with dozens of families and learned about foods traditions
- Used feedback to develop several new recipes
- Hosted student taste tests across the district to gauge acceptability of new recipes
- Received positive feedback on new beef picadillo recipe!
- Plan to continue outreach and integrating feedback

