

North Mason School District

Mackenna Long
Director of Child Nutrition



Mackenna joined the Power Up Your Program Nutrition Education cohort eager to enhance student buy-in and interest in nutrition activities.

She surveyed students around the district to learn about their school meal priorities. When students shared they were interested in trying new cultural flavors, she instituted an international flavors week. Students enjoyed globally inspired meals including ramen bowls (pictured above), poutine, flautas, and bratwurst.

By creating a monthly “Flavor of the Month” feature on menus, Mackenna was able to share nutrition information and spark conversations with families.

Mackenna also connected with families, school staff, and child nutrition colleagues to gather input for fostering learning around mealtime. Looking ahead, she would like to explore adapting family-favorite dishes to meet school meal requirements and seek out more ways to bring nutrition education into the cafeteria.

Sparking Lifelong Healthy Eating Habits

- Child Nutrition Programs are learning laboratories that teach lifelong skills.
- During school meals, students learn to recognize and choose nutritious foods, building habits that extend beyond the cafeteria. Research shows students who eat school meals have more balanced diets overall.
- Nutrition education builds curiosity and confidence. It can include learning about food origins, preparation methods, sensory qualities, and more.
- Taste tests provide low-pressure exposure to new foods, increasing acceptance and shaping food preferences.