



COALITION
for **HEALTHY**
SCHOOL FOOD

Leading the Way • Annual Review

Healthy Plant-Based School Meals & Nutrition Education



Our Wonderful Volunteers

As a small nonprofit, we value the crucial role that volunteers play in our work. Many of our volunteers have been with us for years. They assist in classrooms for our school curriculum and help out at Family Dinner Nights; prepare delicious food as Visiting Vegan Chefs and serve on our speakers bureau giving presentations to students, parents, teachers, and food-service professionals; help in many ways at our Gala and when we are tabling at outreach events; and participate in many behind-the-scenes roles, such as graphic design, marketing, proofreading, and fundraising. Our diverse group of volunteers come from all walks of life, including college interns, people in the workforce, and retirees — in numerous fields including nutrition and medicine. They are united in their belief in the value of healthy plant-based options in schools and of nutrition education.

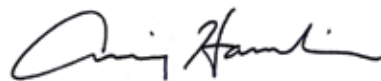
Dear Friends,

We hope you are as excited as we are about our accomplishments over the past year, building on the work we have been doing since 2004. **The Coalition for Healthy School Food (CHSF)** provides nearly all of our services for free, which removes the barriers to receiving healthy nutrition education, and provides support for the addition of plant-based foods on school menus. While we help schools across the country, we have ongoing formal partnerships in New York City and Ithaca, N.Y. We continue to learn valuable lessons through these partnerships and are then better able to help other schools.

In 2022, schools began the process of allowing outside organizations to come back in person, though there were starts and stops. We were thrilled to go back into schools!

All the pieces are in place for change and many schools and school districts are asking for our help. With your support, we can reach even more schools, staff, students, and their families. We invite you to take part in making history by changing how schools feed kids and increasing whole school communities' understanding about the impact of food on health, climate change, equity, and animals.

FOR THE KIDS,



Amie Hamlin, Executive Director



Kelley Wind, Program Director

AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Spreading the Word

By exhibiting and presenting at conferences, we efficiently reach many decision-makers at once.

- **NYC Vegetarian Food Festival (5/22)**

We tabled and were responsible for the children's area. The children's area included yoga classes, storytime, and arts & crafts, including making bean mosaics at our own table.

- **Plant-Based World Expo (9/22)**

We had an exhibit table and our Executive Director, **Amie Hamlin**, gave two presentations. This was a business-to-business expo. One presentation was about how schools are looking for healthy manufactured vegan foods; the other presentation was a panel about school food.

- **New York School Nutrition Association (10/22)**

At this conference, attended by school food service directors and cooks from around the state, we gave a presentation about getting plant-based foods on school menus. Our Executive Director, **Amie Hamlin**, presented jointly with **Stephen O'Brien**, Director of Strategic Partnerships and Policy, NYC Department of Education, Office of Food & Nutrition Services, and **Beth Krause, RD**, Food Service Director for Ithaca City Schools. In addition to the presentation, we did a food tasting for attendees which included North African Red Lentils, Chinese Tofu Fried Rice, Crispy Tofu Bites with Orange Ginger Sauce, and Pasta Fagioli.



- **New York State School Boards Association (10/22)**

At this conference, attended by school board members and school superintendents from around the state, our exhibit aimed to expose attendees to the concept that school food can impact school performance indicators: attendance, grades, and behavior. We featured a food tasting including two scratch-made recipes – North African Red Lentils and Crispy Tofu Bites with Orange Ginger Sauce, and three manufactured foods: **American Bean Falafels** and **Impossible Burgers** and **Nuggets**. Staff of **Impossible** participated both days, and the CEO, **Peter McGuinness**, joined us at our table for a few hours. We collected contact information and are following up with many school districts.

Inspiring Plant-Based School Menus

It has been a primary mission of **CHSF** to help schools add plant-based main dish entrées to their menus. We have accomplished this by developing recipes (*see next page*) and then working with schools in a number of ways to help make the addition of the recipes to their menus successful. We have done this by providing educational programs for students, staff, and families, creating promotional flyers, conducting taste tests in the classroom and in the cafeteria line, and offering recipe-specific curricula.

We provide educational programming to school food service professionals and communicate with over 10,000 food service directors in 32 states each month. In 2019, we brought **CHSF** Board Member **Michael Greger, MD** of nutritionfacts.org and author of *How Not to Die* and *How Not to Diet* to speak to over 500 managers, supervisors, and administrators for the **NYC Office of Food and Nutrition Services (OFNS)**.

In 2012, **CHSF** asked **OFNS** to create and offer a vegetarian menu that schools could opt into, replacing the standard menu containing meat and cheese-based entrées. **OFNS** agreed to do this, and then we worked together to help four schools adopt the vegetarian menu.

We continue to seek additional schools that would like a vegetarian-only menu, with an emphasis on plant-based (vegan) foods.

PS244 in Flushing, Queens, was the first school to adopt this menu as a result of our partnership, and it was the first public vegetarian school in the country.

PS343 in Manhattan was the second vegetarian school, followed by **PS971** and **PS90** in Brooklyn.



Chef Kavon Langley

Developing Recipes

New York City-CHSF Partnership

RECENT AND PAST SUCCESSES

- **Plant-Powered Fridays**

CHSF is the non-profit behind **Plant-Powered Fridays** in NYC. In March of 2020, we asked **OFNS** for plant-based (vegan) lunches to be offered one day a week in all NYC schools, and they agreed. Then the pandemic happened. In February, when schools started to return to more normal service, Plant-Powered Fridays became a reality. Increasingly, vegan recipes are being added on other days of the week as well.

- **Hummus**

In 2018, at the request of **CHSF**, hummus was added to lunch as a plant-based entrée option, in all NYC public schools.

- **Elimination of Processed Meat**

When the World Health Organization formally recognized processed meats as known human carcinogens, **CHSF** brought this information to the attention of **OFNS**. Processed meat, including deli meat, pepperoni, and sausage were then removed from NYC public school menus.

We are very proud to work in partnership with the world-famous **Moosewood Restaurant** to develop many recipes that are now on school menus around the country. They have devoted countless hours to our recipe projects. Many years ago, these recipes were shared with schools in New York and California statewide. More recently, they have been shared with food service directors in 30 additional states, for a total of nearly 10,000 school districts.

Most of our recipes are inspired by foods from around the world and offer opportunities for students and the whole school community to learn about cultures different from their own. Some of our recipes were created by friends we have met along the way, including Ms. Patel's Rajma, an Indian kidney-bean curry, and Roy's Cuban Wraps. **Ms. Patel** is an employee of the Ithaca City School District and **Roy Despaigne** is a former employee.

Go to healthyschoolfood.org/recipes and click on "Family Size Recipes" for recipes that you can use at home, in Family & Consumer Science classes and after-school cooking classes.



Student enjoying a Roy's Cuban Wrap

Teaching Students to Make Plant-Based Recipes

Our after-school cooking classes introduce students to a variety of different plant-based foods that they might not have tried before.

All
Grade
Levels

A few of the tasty recipes we made were lentil salad, veggie chili, and a rainbow cabbage salad. For a sweet treat, the students chopped fresh fruit and created their own non-dairy yogurt parfait choosing from a selection of delicious toppings. This past fall we taught eight classes at PS 134 in Kensington, Brooklyn.



Learning About Food, Our Health & the Environment

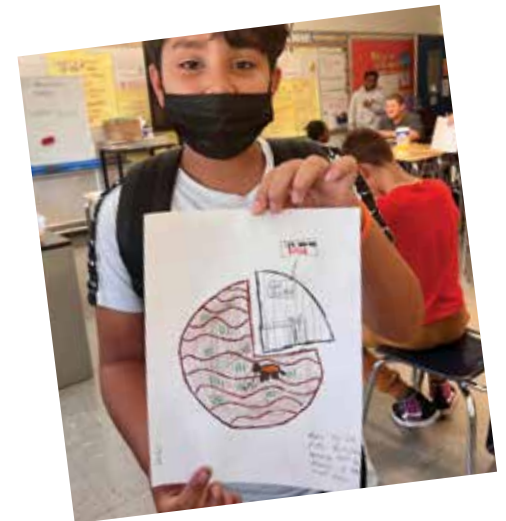
All
Grade
Levels

Our program services model allows us to provide customized programs for schools depending on their needs. At **City Knoll Middle School** in Manhattan, we taught a series of ten classes last spring. Topics included food and mood, media literacy, label reading, and the role of animal agriculture in climate change. A healthy snack was included with each lesson. This series of lessons also included hands-on cooking classes, which are a fun and interactive way to introduce students to new foods and provide students with take-home skills.

For many, the highlight of the cooking lessons was learning how to make hummus. This traditional Middle-Eastern dip is served in all NYC school cafeterias every day as a result of our efforts, but many of the students had never tried it before. The opportunity to make their own hummus in class made the students more open to trying it at lunchtime.



Our talented teacher, *Tashya Knight*



Visiting Vegan Chefs



Classes for Culinary Students

Our Visiting Vegan Chefs program brings vegan chefs to culinary high schools in New York City.

We have been told that if it weren't for our program, the students would not have exposure to vegan culinary skills and to the reasons why more people are choosing to eat and live vegan lifestyles. It is vitally important that students understand how to prepare vegan food as they go forward in their culinary careers, given that more and more people are eating vegan and it is a top food trend for reasons of health, the environment, and social justice, including animal suffering.

High
School
Program

- **Jillian Mariscal** (*Sabrosa Vegana*, above) taught at **Boerum Hill School of International Studies** in Brooklyn.
- **Yesenia Mendoza** (*Healthy As A Motha*, right) taught at **Food and Finance HS** in Manhattan and at **Francis Lewis High School** in Queens.



Teaching Food Justice

High School Program

CHSF regularly incorporates a social justice lens when providing our programs. The programming we bring to **The Door** is one example.

The Door is a non-profit organization in NYC with a mission to provide comprehensive youth development services in a diverse and caring environment. We were introduced to the organization by **The Door** co-founders, and Coalition supporters **Lorraine Henricks, MD** and **James Turanski, MD**. Since then, we have been honored to offer **CHSF** programming at **The Door**.

Over the years, we have had a variety of community activists and organizers teach Food Justice classes at **The Door**. In 2021, **Eric Adams**, elected later that year as **Mayor of NYC**, shared about his health journey and how he reversed his type 2 diabetes with a plant-based diet. **Eloisa Trinidad**, Founder of *Vegan Activist Alliance* and Executive Director at *Chilis on Wheels*, and **LoriKim Alexander** from *Black VegFest* taught a series of Food & Equity classes, with topics including intersectionality in social justice movements, decolonization, cultural influences of our food choices, and the economic and political decisions that harm BIPOC communities.

This past spring we were invited to be part of **The Door**'s culinary internship program. We provided a cooking class, a non-dairy milk tasting with a discussion about dairy, and a screening of the film "*They're Trying to Kill Us*" along with delicious vegan pizza.



Being Together, Even When Apart



We have been providing **Family Dinner Nights** to New York City schools for nearly two decades. When we were not able to do in-person Family Dinner Nights due to COVID, we switched to creating community with virtual dinners starting in 2020.

In 2022, we hosted four online dinners with **PS 971** in Brooklyn. We provided the families with all of the ingredients to cook via Zoom along with our friends, **Chef Terence Smith** and **Marcel Rosegreen-Walters** from **Sentient Wellness**. Families asked questions, exchanged recipe ideas, and acquired valuable plant-based nutrition knowledge while having fun cooking together. At the end

of class, everyone held up their food for a mosaic image of their culinary creations. Once the class ended, families sat down to eat the meal that they had made together in the comfort of their own homes.

We distributed food to families through our partner schools during the pandemic. **Spicy Moon** provided 100 meals six times in 2020. We also partnered with **Support + Feed**, a non-profit founded by actress Maggie Baird (also Mom to Billie Eilish) to support vegan restaurants during the pandemic and feed people in need (the organization continues with an expanded mission). We distributed 100 meals each time – eight times between 2020 and 2022.



Bringing Families, Staff & Healthy Food Together

In 2022, we resumed in-person **Family Dinner Nights**, inviting the school community (students, their families, teachers, and staff) to a free plant-based meal.

Each Family Dinner Night includes an educational component for the adults led by a medical professional and a separate activity for the kids that includes a nutrition education component. Alternatively, we provide hands-on activities for adults and children alike.

The events are catered by a partner restaurant or **OFNS**. When catered by **OFNS**, attendees are able to try the **Plant-Powered Friday** recipes to see how delicious vegan food can be.

This past year our in-person dinners were limited because of COVID restrictions. We did hold successful dinners at **PS 1** in the **Bronx** with speaker **Dr. Moaz Kasubhai**, at **City Knoll Middle School** in **Manhattan**, and **PS/MS 278** in **Inwood** featuring hands-on learning activities. We look forward to a robust calendar of in-person dinners in 2023.

Professional Development for Teachers

CHSF provides programming (professional development and Lunch & Learns) for teachers, administrators, and other school staff. Last year we provided two **Lunch & Learns** at our partner school **PS244, The Active Learning Elementary School** in Queens.



From The Wellness Coordinator at PS/MS 278:

“To date, we are still receiving compliments and enthusiasm about our Fall Family Festival (which was a Family Dinner Night). Anecdotal evidence even shows an increase in consumption and interest in the Plant-Powered Friday Meals.”

Food UnEarthed: Uncovering the Truth about Food



Chef Rootsie, our Classroom Chef

Elementary School Curriculum

Our 24-week long elementary school curriculum helps children become critical thinkers about food as they learn many new concepts that are not taught in traditional nutrition lessons. A main concept that they learn in Pre-K and K is that food comes from plants and animals and that when they have a choice about what to eat, plant foods will help them be healthier, have more energy, and be in a better mood.

Each week includes a healthy snack to expose students to plant foods in all five plant food categories (vegetables, legumes, fruits, whole grains, nuts & seeds). Part of the goal of each lesson is to learn about the ingredients and foods that are in their snack.

During several of the lessons, we teach hands-on food preparation, including black bean tacos, three-bean salad, homemade corn tortillas, and hummus.

This past year we taught the lessons to eight classes in three elementary schools in New York City including **PS343** in Manhattan, and **PS971** and **PS90** in Brooklyn. These are three of the four schools that we helped transition to a completely vegetarian menu.



Creating Change in Ithaca, NY

Ithaca has been a testing-ground for our programs since 2008 when we first introduced a private version of the very popular **Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program** at **Beverly J. Martin Elementary School**.

Then, in 2011 we began creating and offering plant-based entrée recipes that were mostly created in partnership with **Moosewood Restaurant**. In the spring of 2022, we provided numerous taste testings of our plant-based entrées in five Ithaca schools: **Beverly J. Martin, Caroline, Enfield, Fall Creek, and Northeast Elementary**.

We are excited that we forayed into breakfast by piloting a hot oatmeal with toppings bar at **Northeast Elementary** and **Caroline Elementary** schools. They were such a hit that the school district is now offering oatmeal with toppings in all of the schools, though modified due to supply chain and labor shortages.

This year, we will return to our **Cool School Food** in the Classroom program. This program is a recipe-specific curriculum that explores the cultural origins of various foods, through slide shows featuring landscapes, architecture, transportation, animals, families, food, and more! Students then see, touch, and smell the individual ingredients in the recipes. This includes digging their hands into bowls of dry beans, which they really enjoy. After that, we taste the recipe (the cafeteria makes extra), and then we have an inquiry-based discussion about the power of plants.



Beth Krause, RD, Ithaca Food Service Director

Hosting Expert Forums

We were thrilled to introduce “The Doctor is In” in 2022. This program featured free online educational presentations available to the public featuring medical doctors (and PhDs, RDs and a chef).

CHSF created this program as a project for four students in CUNY’s Masters of Public Health program. They organized the series and served as hosts. They gained a great deal of knowledge from the project and from hearing the presenters. The students indicated that they had made changes to their diet as a result, and would be taking this information into their new careers. We also want to thank **Bob Franki**, Communications Director at the **Rochester Lifestyle Medicine Institute** for his invaluable assistance with this project.

The program was so successful that we will continue it in 2023 with a new format of one doctor (or other presenter) per presentation.

View the presentations on our YouTube channel:
www.youtube.com/@coalitionforhealthyschoolf5284

How Food Can Change Your Life

A FREE Online Speaker Series With Plenty of Food for Thought!

Presented in English, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese

All presentations from 7 - 8 PM Eastern Time

Food & Mood

Tuesday, January 25
Depressed? Anxious?
Bad Mood? Find out
how food can make a big
difference for you, and
school children too.



Angela
Crawford,
PhD



Ashok
Nagella,
MD

Food: Nature’s Medicine

Wednesday, February 9
Plant-powered nutrition can
help us prevent and treat the
top health challenges.



Bandana
Chawla,
MD



Munish
Chawla,
MD

Food Addiction & Weight Loss

Thursday, March 10
The food industry intentionally
addicts us. Learn the secrets to
weight loss while eating more
than ever!



Shayla
Toombs-Withers,
DO



Chef AJ

Reversing Type 2 Diabetes: You Can Do It!

Wednesday, April 13
We’ll debunk myths and
learn how to reverse Type 2
Diabetes in as little as 3 months!



Neal
Barnard,
MD



Robby Barbaro,
MPH &
Cyrus Khambatta,
PhD

Food & Equity

Tuesday, April 26
Racism in the official food
guidelines hurts people’s
health & the environment.
Learn the truth about the
food that will help you thrive!



Tracye
McQuirter,
MPH



Milton
Mills,
MD

High Blood Pressure or Cholesterol? Heal Your Heart with Food

Tuesday, May 3
Learn what to eat and
what to cut out, to reverse
America’s #1 Killer.



Jane
Esselstyn,
RN



Kim
Williams,
MD

- **Universal Free Meals (Federal & NY State)**

The **USDA School Meal Program** generally provides reimbursement to schools at three levels – for children who meet requirements to receive either a free or reduced-price meal, and for children who pay “full price”.

Schools that exceed a certain percentage of students who qualify for free meals may offer “Universal Free Meals,” where all students, whether or not they qualify, eat for free.

New York City is a school district that offers Universal Free Meals in all of its schools. School districts that don’t meet the requirement for Universal Free Meals district-wide can opt into offering Universal Free Meals at individual schools that meet the requirement, as done in Ithaca, NY.

During the pandemic, the USDA made meals in all public schools free. This ended in June of 2022. Some states, including California and Maine, already offer free meals, and Colorado just voted to do the same. Massachusetts, Nevada, and Vermont are continuing

free meals at least through June 2023. New York State is one state that has a Universal Free Meals bill that did not move in 2022 but we hope to see the bill introduced again in 2023.

- **Requiring Schools to Offer Vegan Food Upon Request (NY State)**

Introduced prior to the pandemic, efforts to advance this legislation will be renewed in the new legislative session in 2023. This is a bill that we have been actively advocating for in partnership with **Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine**. Illinois just independently passed a similar bill.

- **Plant-Based Meals Pilot (Federal)**

This bill would be part of the “**Healthy Meals, Healthy Kids Act**” also known as the **Child Nutrition Reauthorization**, which is supposed to happen every five years to update the school meal, and other child feeding programs. This is a \$10 million pilot program to support plant-based meals and beverages in schools. We have actively worked on this bill in coalition with over 100 organizations.



OUR MISSION

The Coalition for Healthy School Food (CHSF) is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit that introduces plant-based foods and nutrition education in schools to educate the whole school community about the health, environmental, and social justice issues of our food choices.

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Our corporate sponsors play a crucial role in supporting our work, most of them having contributed for many years. They provide support that we can count on, and this helps us to provide the vast majority of our programs to schools at no cost. Corporate sponsors receive visibility and positive vibes. Their logos and links to their websites are included on the homepage and Gala information page of the CHSF website and in our monthly email newsletters.

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