

**OBESITY, DIABETES AND YOUTH: REAL  
WORLD STRATEGIES TO IMPROVING  
NUTRITION AND INCREASING  
ACTIVITY**

# INTRODUCTIONS

- **Mary Meyer - Kids Cook Executive Director:** Mary brings 25 years of experience as a New Mexico Women Infants and Children (WIC) Program Manager and eight years as the Director of Kids Cook! Mary is well-versed in state and federal policies and procedures and has a passion for bringing meaningful change and innovative solutions to low-income communities and families, and now brings her expertise in to a school based setting.
- **Kendal Chavez - Farm to School Program Director at Farm to Table:** Kendal focuses on food systems work at local, regional and national levels through community-driven programs and partnerships. She serves as the FoodCorps New Mexico State Partner and National Farm to School Network – New Mexico Core Partner. Kendal's work is rooted in both program and policy, with a focus on coalition building and systems change.
- **Cynthia Grajeda - APS Student Wellness Coordinator:** Cynthia is dedicated in providing resources for all students so they can be prepared to learn and succeed in school. She provides best practices, strategies, and tools to ensure student wellness, promote School Health Advisory Councils (SHAC), and promote school gardens. In addition, Cynthia provides tools and guidance to support school compliance with USDA Smart Snack Guidelines.

- *Mary Meyer, Kendal Chavez, and Cynthia Grajeda have no relevant financial relationship with any commercial interests that create a conflict of interest to affect CME content about products or services.*

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand how to create a safe environment to explore food with kids.
- Understand the landscape of healthy eating initiatives in New Mexico, and how these support systems play out in Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) and statewide.
- Understand how local, state and federal policy shapes intervention strategies in schools, including - but not limited to - the Smart Snack Standards as a Federal requirement, garden to cafeteria policies, and local procurement strategies.

# ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS CONTEXT

- Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) is the 31st largest school district in the nation!
- 82,000 Students
- 142 Schools
- 70% of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch
- 80 school gardens

# CREATIVE WAYS TO INCREASE ACCESS TO FRUITS AND VEGETABLES KIDS COOK!



# KEY CONCEPTS

- Provide a safe environment for students to explore and enjoy food.
- Everyone (adults and students) has the choice of if and how much food they will taste.
- We all have preferences for different foods and that's okay.
- Food is not good or bad. All food should be eaten with variety and moderation.
- Two ways everyone can influence their own health is by healthy eating and active living.

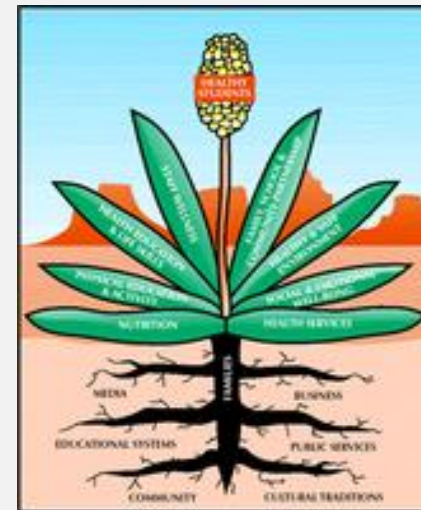
# WHAT THE DATA SHOWS

- **2013-14 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) evaluation:** based on baseline and follow up parent surveys-the increase in Fruit and Vegetable consumption of students participating in Kids Cook! was statistically significant.
- **2015 Kids Cook! parent surveys:**
  - 65% of families reported purchasing more fruits and vegetables as a result of the Kids Cook! program
  - 76% of families reported their child's vegetable intake had increased
  - 52% of families reported cooking Kids Cook! recipes at home
  - 63% of families reported they were cooking more with their child at home

# APS COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH COMPETITIVE FOODS AND SCHOOL GARDENS

A coordinated, comprehensive approach to creating health-promoting schools provides a framework for developing and strengthening practices to address the health-related issues that can be barriers to learning and student success.

- APS Gardens
- Nutrition: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Nutritional Standards
- District Wellness Policy
- SHAC (School Health Advisory Council)





# APS SCHOOL GARDENS

School gardens offer opportunities to engage in learning and physical activity while serving as an important educational tool to help students understand how healthy food is grown.

- ❑ 80 APS School Gardens
- ❑ School gardens are being used as live, experiential outdoor classrooms, a place for on-campus field trips.
- ❑ The primary uses of the school gardens are for growing vegetables/flowers/herbs, reflection spaces, nutrition/hunger awareness, community services, art, composting and many other curriculum related activities.



# UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA) SMART SNACK STANDARDS

Smart Snack Nutrition Standards are Federal regulations implemented in all schools across the country. Smart Snack applies to all foods and beverages sold to students outside the school meal programs.

- Includes vending machines, a la carte, school snack stores, snack carts, and fundraising.
- Nutrition standards begin at **12:01 am** until **30 minutes after the last bell** rings across the entire school campus.
- 33% of APS students in grades K, 3, and 5 are classified as either overweight or obese (APS Student Healthy Weight Assessment).

# FARM TO SCHOOL POLICY AND PROGRAMS FARM TO TABLE



# FARM TO SCHOOL POLICY IN NEW MEXICO

- New Mexico spends \$197,000,000/year in Federal child nutrition programs – ¼ of this number is spent on fruits and vegetables. The NM Public Education Department, NM Children Youth and Families Department, and the US Health and Human Services Food and Nutrition Services manage the programs. Current overall local purchasing is unknown.
- School Food Authorities (SFA) in New Mexico are overwhelmingly utilizing Federal child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program and National School Breakfast Program to feed students.
- Each SFA is authorized to procure as much local food as they want, and can use informal or formal bidding processes to navigate the process.
- Schoolyard gardens and farms are beginning to emerge - garden to cafeteria policies and procedures are currently being piloted and/or implemented in Magdalena Public Schools and Albuquerque Public Schools.
- Funding and lack of technical knowledge are the primary barriers.



# NEW MEXICO DISTRICTS ARE PURCHASING LOCAL!

- Model districts in the state:
  - Bernalillo Public Schools
  - Roswell Public Schools
  - Carlsbad Public Schools
  - Santa Fe Public Schools
  - Las Cruces Public Schools
  - Magdalena Public Schools
  - Albuquerque Public Schools



# STATEWIDE SUPPORT SYSTEMS

## INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

- New Mexico Grown Produce for School Meals:
  - State investment into local procurement through direct reimbursement to schools
  - Integrated into larger campaigns to increase state investment into both local purchasing and educational programming
- NM Department of Agriculture Recurring Funds
  - \$85,000 for APS Valley Cluster
- October is New Mexico Farm to School and School Nutrition Month

## PROGRAM RESOURCES



Q & A