

CONNECTICUT

Section 1: School Demographics

School Name

Crosby High School

Principal's name

Jade Gopie

School Address

300 Pierpont Road
Waterbury, Connecticut 06705
United States

[Map It](#)

Number of students (total enrollment)

1246

Lowest grade

9

Highest grade

12

This school is:

- A public school

Please explain:

Number of students by grade level

Elementary or lower Middle grades High or upper school

1246

Number (or percent) of students eligible for free or reduced lunch

Free lunch Reduced lunch Neither free nor reduced lunch

100%

Section 2: Background about school lunch

How many students buy lunch in the school's cafeteria?

Less than 10 percent

How many minutes do students have to eat lunch?

25

Are students allowed to eat lunch in rooms/buildings other than the cafeteria?

No

Are students allowed to leave campus for lunch?

No

Which students are allowed to leave campus for lunch?

Are there any times during the school year when breakfast or lunch is free to all students?

Yes

Please explain:

Breakfast and lunch is free for every student at our school. Almost all students eat lunch, but only around 30% of students eat breakfast.

Who controls the portions and servings students receive?

Cafeteria staff plate lunch items, students do not choose serving size

Please explain:

Does the school serve set meals (e.g. chicken nuggets with potatoes and carrots) or can students choose what they want from the menu?

The students receive sides with the entree, whether they want them or not

Please explain:

Are fruits/vegetables required with every meal?

Yes, fruits/vegetables are included in the price

In your teams' opinion, are students content with the meal options at school?

No, very dissatisfied

Please explain:

Many students complain about the lack of choice, especially when it comes to alternatives to meat and dairy for vegan or vegetarian students, as well as those with other dietary restrictions.

What type of utensils do students use to eat?

Disposable utensils, such as traditional plastic

Please explain:

What type of plates/trays are used to serve the food?

Disposable paper plates or trays

Please explain:

Section 3: Food waste activities at the school

Does the school use any of the following waste reduction activities?

Please explain:

Has the school performed a food waste audit previously?

No, a waste audit has not been considered

Please explain:

Which of the following generates the majority of food waste at your school?

Student food waste

Please explain:

On average, do you think food waste is an issue at your school?

Yes, very important

Section 4: School Waste Data Form

School name

Crosby High School

Date of audit

03/28/2017

Students in attendance on day of audit

231

Numbers of lunches served on day of audit

231

Menu served on day of audit

Sandwiches (turkey and American cheese)

Milk (chocolate, strawberry, regular)

Fruit (apples, pears, strawberries)

Vegetables (carrots, salad)

French Fries

Waste type: Unopened food

A: Type of food	B: Number of items	C: Weight of empty bin	D: Total weight	E: Net weight (Total - Empty)
Milk cartons	9	12.3 kg	14.54 kg	2.24 kg

Total net weight of unopened food

2.24

Notes regarding unopened food

At our school, almost all of our food is served without a package. The only item that could be left unopened was a milk carton, and most people in the cafeteria at least partially drank their milk.

Waste type: Food waste

A: Bin/Bag Number	B: Weight of empty bin	C: Total weight	D: Net weight (Total - Empty)	E: Picture taken of the bin? (Y/N)	F: Percent full
1 - Sandwiches	12.3 kg	24.87 kg	12.57 kg	N	70%
2 - Fries	12.3 kg	16.49 kg	4.19 kg	N	25%
3 - Fruit	12.3 kg	22.78 kg	10.48 kg	N	50%
4 - Vegetables	12.3 kg	20.68 kg	8.38 kg	N	60%

Total net weight of food waste

35.62

Waste type: Liquid waste

A: Bin/Bag Number	B: Weight of empty bin	C: Total weight	D: Net weight (Total - Empty)	E: Picture taken of the bin? (Y/N)	F: Percent full
1 - Milk	12.3 kg	24.69 kg	12.39 kg	N	20%

Total net weight of liquid waste

12.39

Waste type: Recycling

Total net weight of recycling

Waste type: Other (Landfill)

A: Bin/Bag Number	B: Weight of empty bin	C: Total weight	D: Net weight (Total - Empty)	E: Picture taken of the bin? (Y/N)	F: Percent full
1 - Plastic waste	12.3 kg	20.89 kg	8.14 kg	N	20%

Total net weight of other wastes (landfill)

8.14

Notes regarding food, recycling, and other (landfill) wastes

Our school has no recycling program, so we were unable to collect any data on recyclables.

Describe the process you used to establish clear guidelines for students to follow to sort their food waste.

As our school has over 1,000 students that are separated into multiple lunch waves, it would be impractical to collect data from each individual in each lunch wave. Each lunch wave is separated by only three minutes, and it would be impossible to collect the necessary data in such a time constraint. In light of this, we decided to choose a representative sample of students from which to collect data from, and to do this in the last lunch wave of the day. The sample we chose consisted of 50 students out of the 231 who ate during the last lunch wave. These students were instructed to sort their food into several garbage bins that were each labeled with different categories. Each bin had the name and a drawing of the kind of items it was to hold.

Upload photos

- [IMG_6222.JPG](#)
- [IMG_6223.JPG](#)
- [IMG_6224.JPG](#)
- [IMG_6225.JPG](#)
- [IMG_6226.JPG](#)
- [IMG_6227.JPG](#)

Link to files unable to upload

Would your team be interested in being part of the food waste panel at Nationals?

Yes

Section 5: Critical Thinking

Based on your observations during the food waste audit, make three recommendations to your School Board to reduce food waste.

After completing this food audit, we realized there are several ways our School Board could reduce the large amounts of food wasted at our school. We believe that our school should offer different portion sizes, or allow students to choose their own amount of food. Too often, students are served more food than they plan to eat. We also believe that the school should offer more meal options for students. At such a large school, many students have dietary restrictions, whether based on religion, health, or personal values. If there was more variety, students would have to waste less of their meal. For example, some students do not eat dairy because they are lactose intolerant. Instead of wasting food with cheese, they should be able to get something better suited for their needs. Further, one of the most important issues we see with our school concerning food waste is the lack of a recycling and composting programs. All of the waste our school produces is sent straight to landfills. If we had a recycling program, we could save massive amounts of plastic each year. A composting program would help turn the uneaten food at our school into something positive for the environment. The fertilizer we would produce could be used in a school garden to help grow fresh food for our students.

Justify a school's role in teaching children about food waste and the impact food waste has on school budgets, the environment, and hunger in the community.

In today's world, schools have an important role when it comes to teaching children about food waste. School leaders can be incredible role models for conservation and sustainability. If children learn about how to prevent food waste in school, they can develop habits that will follow them throughout their life. The amount of food wasted by our school was shocking, and we can only imagine that other schools have similar amounts of waste. When food is wasted, the impact is wide-reaching. Schools waste massive amounts of money that could go towards books, school supplies, and enrichment programs. When plastic forks, Styrofoam trays, and food are sent to landfills, the environment suffers as well. The carbon footprint of produced and uneaten food is estimated at over 3.3 gigatons of carbon dioxide equivalent, which makes food waste a major source of harmful emissions. Further, the massive amount of food waste produced by schools, the nation, and the world is a major disservice to impoverished people. Food that ends up in landfills could feed many people, and our communities would be better places if those resources were no longer wasted.

The US Environmental Protection Agency has set a goal to reduce food waste by 50% by the year 2030. Based upon your experience conducting this food waste audit, will the US meet this goal? Explain why or why not.

Detail two or three findings or observations that surprised you. Describe how conducting this food waste audit has impacted you and your team, and the way you think about food in America.

Before completing this food waste audit, we had no idea just how much food our school wastes each lunch wave. Over 40% of the food served during the last lunch wave was wasted on the day we completed the audit. This data concurs with the approximately 40% of food wasted in the United States. Though we all knew food waste was an issue, seeing the bins full of wasted food was an eye-opener. When holding a bag full of hardly-eaten sandwiches, it becomes clear that hunger is entirely unnecessary. Through this audit, we realized that hunger in America is not caused by a lack of resources, but by an abundance of wastefulness. We are all more mindful about wasting food, and take our food choices far more seriously.

What is one obstacle your team faced during the audit and how did you work to resolve it? If the issue went unresolved, what steps would you take to reevaluate your approach?

Bonus Question

Should all schools be required to do food waste audits on a regular basis? Why or why not?

Support your answer.

After conducting a food waste audit at our school, it has become obvious that every school should do food waste audits regularly. The amount of money schools waste on uneaten food is reason enough - it is entirely likely that thousands and thousands of dollars are wasted each year on food at our school alone, and throughout the entire nation this number is likely in the millions. Further, wasted food and plastics have a heavy impact on the environment. Landfills are major producers of greenhouse gases, and climate change gets more serious each day. By conducting a food waste audit, school officials will be able to see for themselves the quantities of perfectly edible food that goes to waste. The insight gained from food waste audits can also be passed down to students, who will grow to realize how important conservation truly is. Further, school officials and students could work together to find solutions to reduce the food waste in their own school once they have data from the audit. Hopefully, armed with knowledge, these officials and students would go on to help reduce food waste and prevent hunger in their communities.