

MAINE

Section 1: School Demographics

School Name

Hermon High School (United Technologies Team)

Principal's name

Brian Walsh

School Address

2415 Route 2
Hermon, Maine 04401
United States

[Map It](#)

Number of students (total enrollment)

500

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
		500

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

Free lunch	Reduced lunch	Neither free nor reduced lunch
122	29	349

Section 2: Background about school lunch

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

31 to 50 percent

How many minutes do students have to eat lunch?

30

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:

When the school has to standardized testing a free breakfast is offered to students each morning of testing.

Who controls the portions and servings students receive?

Cafeteria staff portion items into servings (i.e fruit into cups) but students select items and number of servings themselves)

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, somewhat dissatisfied

Please explain:

The students tend to complain about school lunch food and an observation is that many students either don't eat or bring cold lunch from home.

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?

Styrofoam plates or trays that are recovered for recycling

Please explain:

Section 3: Food waste activities at the school

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

- Menus revised to reduce commonly wasted food items
- Procedures put in place to reduce food loss to expiration
- Food is served in the most efficient way possible to reduce food waste
- “Offer versus serve” policy in place
- Share table created for unopened food items

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

Hermon High School

Date of audit

03/31/2017

Students in attendance on day of audit

462

Numbers of lunches served on day of audit

158

Menu served on day of audit

BBQ Chicken Panini

French Bread

Cheese Burger

Cold Sandwich

Parfait

Salad Bar

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)
Fruit Sides	5	1.5 lbs	3.1 lbs	1.6 lbs
Crackers/Granola Bar	1	1.5 lbs	1.7 lbs	0.2 lbs

Total net weight of unopened food

1.8

Notes regarding unopened food

Students didn't seem to waste many of the items on the menu and when discussing this with the Food Services Director they try not to offer as many of those options.

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	9.97 lbs	19.27 lbs	9.3 lbs	Y	10%
2	9.97 lbs	20.47 lbs	10.5 lbs	Y	10%
3	1.5 lbs	18.2 lbs	16.7 lbs	Y	50%

Total net weight of food waste

36.5

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	1.5 lbs	3.8 lbs	2.3 lbs	Y	2%

Total net weight of liquid waste

2.3

Waste type: Recycling

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	0.1lbs	8.8 lbs	8.7 lbs	Y	85%

Total net weight of recycling

8.8

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	9.97 lbs	18.2 lbs	8.23 lbs	Y	100%
2	9.97 lbs	16.6 lbs	6.63 lbs	Y	90%
3	9.97 lbs	17.4 lbs	7.43 lbs	Y	90%

Total net weight of other wastes (landfill)

22.29

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

This included paper products, plastic bags and Styrofoam trays that were used for serving food. They currently do not have a recycling option for these items at the school. The only items they recycle are bottles that have a deposit paid on them.

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

1. The first thing we did was to place the trash bins in places that were easily noticeable for the students.
2. We then put the correct sign on each of the trash bins so the students would know which bin to throw their trash in.
3. Then when it was time for the students to leave the lunchroom, our principal made an announcement. He stated who we were, what we were doing, and to follow our instructions.
4. Finally as the students came to throw their trash away we directed them to the appropriate bin for them to throw their trash away. (If the students were confused we took their trash for them and sorted it for them).

Upload photos

- [UTC-FOOD-AUDIT-UNOPENED.jpg](#)
- [UTC-FOOD-AUDIT-SETUP.jpg](#)
- [UTC-FOOD-AUDIT-RECYCLING.jpg](#)
- [UTC-FOOD-AUDIT-RECYCLING-3.jpg](#)
- [UTC-FOOD-AUDIT-RECYCLING-2.jpg](#)
- [UTC-FOOD-AUDIT-LIQUID-WASTE.jpg](#)
- [UTC-FOOD-AUDIT-LANDFILL.jpg](#)
- [UTC-FOOD-AUDIT-LANDFILL-2.jpg](#)
- [UTC-FOOD-AUDIT-GROUP-PHOTO.jpg](#)
- [UTC-FOOD-AUDIT-FOOD-WASTE.jpg](#)

Link to files unable to upload

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

No

Section 5: Critical Thinking

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

1. Higher quality food, this means that kids would genuinely enjoy the food they were given and it wouldn't be put in the trash instead of a student eating it.
2. Limit the amount of food you can buy at a time, this would mean that kids wouldn't buy more than they could eat. Then the student could go back and buy more food if they desired.
3. The last recommendation could be for the lunches to no longer have the "healthy" substitutions for things like bread. The school needs a balance between the healthy foods, and not so healthy foods. However many student will choose not to eat whole grain bread because it does not taste good. Instead of offering that bread which gets thrown away, the school could offer regular white bread.

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.

The school needs to develop curriculum to teach to the younger kids about food waste to start awareness at an early age. This would mean that youth would grow up in a community which values the importance of saving food. A school is the best place to start because all children are required to go to school. This would impact the school budget because it would require the school to include some sort of lesson plan in their curriculum, but the benefits of teaching about food waste are substantial. Within the lesson plan it should include information about how not wasting food and trash is beneficial for the environment. Food and trash don't have to go to a landfill if there is no food and trash.

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.

If the schools start educating young children now then yes, but if no actions are taken then we will not meet this goal. We believe a lot of Americans grow up now with a mentality that food waste is not a big deal. This goes along with the amount of waste in general like plastic and paper in the U.S. as well as the amount of water we waste. It isn't a need that many Americans worry about because we have an abundance of all of these things. But soon enough we will have to concern ourselves with these things because we will run out of our resources, as well as seriously damage our environment because of the amount of waste we put into it. By educating the children of America we can address this problem and hopefully cut back on all of these types of wasteful habits that we have not managed to break.

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.

Many students didn't care what we were doing. We have a deeper understanding about how much is actually wasted in our schools now that we have completed the audit. Before any members of our team had done this we didn't realize how much food and trash student actually waste. We think a lot of students did not care about what we were doing because they don't realize how much is actually being wasted. It is easy to say that you are only throwing away a small amount of food and a couple of wrappers, but when all of the students do this it quickly adds up. We also don't think of food waste on a large scale. Sure, maybe our school didn't have a massive amount of food and trash waste, but we have to consider that we waste that amount of food everyday, five days a week, and we also have to consider that there are many schools in the state of Maine that all collectively waste quite a bit. It isn't until then, when students fully understand the impact of food waste, will they understand what groups like ours that is trying to do, bring awareness to this problem.

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?

Respect for the audit was the obstacle our team faced. It caused us to have to start taking the lunch trays from the students so that we didn't need to pull all the food from the trash bin. Some students didn't even look at us. Some threw their trash wherever they wanted and didn't care if we had to dig it out of the trash. This just goes back to show that students don't care about the topic of wasting food. We believe student don't want to feel obligated to re-evaluate how much they are actually throwing away. It is easier to not think about it and just throw whatever you want in the trash. We also feel that when groups like ours try to bring awareness to a problem like this students tend to have a negative reaction because they have to go out of their way to help us, when in fact many students are lazy. They don't want to take the effort to help us, but if they understood the significance of a problem like food waste then we think their reactions would have changed.

Bonus Question

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

Support your answer.

All schools should be required to do food waste audits on a regular basis. The school where we did our audit had not done one in over 12 years, this is sad. Schools should have this information in their reports every year to share to the school board to show how big of a problem this is. We feel that like the students in high school the adults also do not realize how big of a problem food waste is.

According to worldfooddayusa.org,

“Every year, consumers in industrialized countries waste almost as much food as the entire net food production of sub-Saharan Africa (222 million vs. 230 million tons)

The amount of food lost and wasted every year is equal to more than half of the world's annual cereals crops (2.3 billion tons in 2009/10)”

It can be seen in our schools that all students have enough food to eat, and those who don't can get lunch for free because of our school policy. However if the students and faculty could see how big of a problem this is for some students in America, and students in other countries, we would be more cautious of the food we waste.

Sources:

"Food Waste: The Facts." World Food Day. N.p., n.d. Web. 10 Apr. 2017.