

MINNESOTA

Section 1: School Demographics

School Name

Willow River Area School

Principal's name

Gregg Campbell

School Address

PO Box 66

8142 Pine Street

Willow River, Minnesota 55795

United States

[Map It](#)

Number of students (total enrollment)

504

Lowest grade

1

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**

299

205

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

Free lunch **Reduced lunch** **Neither free nor reduced lunch**

16%

9%

75%

Section 2: Background about school lunch

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

51 to 70 percent

How many minutes do students have to eat lunch?

30

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

Yes

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:

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment days

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, somewhat dissatisfied

Please explain:

Certain menu options should be offered more frequently.

What type of utensils do students use to eat?

Reusable utensils, such as metal

Please explain:

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

Reusable plates or trays, such as plastic

Please explain:

Section 3: Food waste activities at the school

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

- Procedures put in place to reduce food over-purchasing
- Procedures put in place to reduce food loss to expiration
- Students learn ways to reduce food waste
- Food is served in the most efficient way possible to reduce food waste
- Recess occurs before lunchtime

Please explain:

Has the school performed a food waste audit previously?

No, the school has discussed an audit but decided not to move forward

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?

Neutral

Section 4: School Waste Data Form

School name

Willow River Area Schools

Date of audit

03/22/2017

Students in attendance on day of audit

497

Numbers of lunches served on day of audit

430

Menu served on day of audit

Breakfast: Hardboiled Eggs/Whole Grain English Muffin/Peaches/Milk, Butter Pat, PB & Jelly

Lunch: Chicken Tenders(elem), Fries OR

Chicken Fajitas, Salad

Pears

Milk, variety Sauce

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	62	3.4	57.8	40.4

Total net weight of unopened food

54.4

Notes regarding unopened food

Unopened milk cartons are returned back to the cooler

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
A	15.6	106.6	91	Y	60

Total net weight of food waste

91

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
B	14.4	127.4	113	Y	40

Total net weight of liquid waste

113

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
C	17.6	74.2	56.6	Y	100

Total net weight of recycling

56.6

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
D	17.6	41.8	24.2	Y	45

Total net weight of other wastes (landfill)

24.2

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

Milk cartons don't get crushed so the bin fills up to 100% each day.

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

Our school already has a recycling/ sorting process such as this so the students are used to the procedure.

Upload photos

- [IMG_1856.JPG](#)
- [IMG_1823.JPG](#)
- [IMG_1822.JPG](#)
- [IMG_1820.JPG](#)
- [IMG_1819.JPG](#)
- [IMG_1810.JPG](#)
- [IMG_1802.JPG](#)
- [IMG_1801.JPG](#)
- [IMG_1797.JPG](#)
- [IMG_1796.JPG](#)

Link to files unable to upload

<https://docs.google.com/a/willowriver.k12.mn.us/presentation/d/1WRUZdNB2VzSNEoRRf3Ck6N3SfuiU2FAIajifYZrUBBM/edit?usp=sharing>

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.

One way we believe we can reduce food waste would be to monitor which meals are liked the least and present that we eliminate them out of our meal options. We also believe that reducing the packaged food that is given out to our students would reduce the landfill waste we have. Some of our packaged food includes individually wrapped string cheese and bag of potato chips, juice boxes, carrot bags, and apple bags. A third recommendation would be to give senior high students a larger selection of fruits and vegetables, because they often do not like something but are forced to take it, therefore the item is thrown away.

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 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.

In our experience conducting the food audit, we do believe that it could be possible to reach the EPA's goal to reduce food waste. However, this will be difficult with the fact that it will need to be a nationwide effort, as well as the fact that in our current political situation, the EPA's funds have been reduced. This will be a large obstacle to overcome, but if the nation is able to work together to slash food waste like the EPA's budget, we will be able to meet the goal.

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.

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?

One obstacle we faced while auditing was that students sometimes placed their waste in the wrong bins. Additionally, many elementary students found the signs confusing. To resolve this issue, we redirected them to the correct bins and helped the younger children find the correct bin they were looking for. Furthermore, to make sure students don't make the same mistake again, we can advertise more by placing signs that can be easily read on each side of the bin and have a demonstration made for classrooms. The demonstration will give new students the knowledge of what is happening as well as refresh returning students' will the system.

Bonus Question

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

Support your answer.

We believe that it would be a good thing to require schools to food audit on a regular basis. The work that is needed to make the audit function properly is near minimal and not at all hard. On top of that, there are many things the school can learn from the audit to further improve the reduction of waste that they are putting out, such as which meals are least and most favored and how many students don't drink milk. You are also reducing how much total waste is being sent to landfills by separating different materials, like the cardboard cartons that can be recycled at a local recycling shop. Some waste, the touched food for instance, can even be sent to pig farms where it can be turned into slop and served to the unpicky omnivores.