

MISSOURI

Section 1: School Demographics

School Name

Blair Oaks High School

Principal's name

Gary Verslues

School Address

6124 Falcon Lane
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101
United States

[Map It](#)

Number of students (total enrollment)

432

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

432

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

Free lunch Reduced lunch Neither free nor reduced lunch

7.9%

2.3%

89.8%

Section 2: Background about school lunch

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

71 to 90 percent

How many minutes do students have to eat lunch?

23

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:

Once a year, students get rewarded for taking EOC's and get free pizza for lunch.

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:

The students do not like a majority of the lunches or complain about portion sizes they are served.

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

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, somewhat important

Section 4: School Waste Data Form

School name

Blair Oaks High School

Date of audit

03/14/2017

Students in attendance on day of audit

416

Numbers of lunches served on day of audit

305

Menu served on day of audit

Chicken tenders, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, bananas, and mixed fruits.

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	16	2.5 pounds	3.83 pounds	1.33 pounds
Milk Cartons	15	2.5 pounds	8.07 pounds	5.57 pounds

Total net weight of unopened food

6.9

Notes regarding unopened food

Five milk cartons were recycled and given to other students to drink. Two bananas were also given away.

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
Trash Bin 1	20 pounds	101 pounds	81 pounds	Yes	50%

Total net weight of food waste

81

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
Bucket 1	2.5 pounds	20 pounds	17.5 pounds	Yes	40%

Total net weight of liquid waste

17.5

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
Trash Bin 1	13 pounds	15 pounds	2 pounds	Yes	100%

Total net weight of recycling

2

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
Trash Bin 1	20 pounds	26 pounds	6 pounds	Yes	25%

Total net weight of other wastes (landfill)

6

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

Banana peels, although not wasted because the banana had been eaten out of most of the peels, weighed a lot in the food waste bin. This may skew the results for the weight of the food waste in terms of uneaten food because the bananas were eaten out of the peels but the peels were still thrown into the food waste bin.

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

Our team created a powerpoint a few weeks before the audit that ran on the school's T.V. system so that students in every room could read the information provided. Flyers were designed and hung up around the school, and a copy was given to each student the morning of the food waste audit. Our school news cast informed the students of the audit as well. Each trash can was labeled with what it should be filled with and our team monitored the area and helped students sort the food and waste on their trays. At the beginning of the lunch shifts, we made an announcement and showed the students what each bin was for. We did not have misunderstandings and all the students were clearly informed of what they needed to do.

Upload photos

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Link to files unable to upload

Time Lapse Video - <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B5Hc5ywLy71ucExCdHpBSVF1eUE>

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.

Our LifeSmarts Team could encourage the administration to make a student lunch advisory board to review the lunches and see which meals students are reluctant to consume. If a group of people, distributed throughout the lunch shifts, get together and discuss the lunches students do not seem satisfied with, then we will be able to reduce the amount of food students will probably waste. Then, they can bring their findings to the school board and get them to change unliked lunches to save money and reduce waste.

Creating a share table for unopened foods is also a great idea for reducing food waste. Many students do not eat certain items even when those items are in perfect condition when they throw them away. With the share table, less quality food will be thrown away. Also, those who are hungrier or need more food will be able to get extra and save that food from being wasted.

Another idea to reduce food waste would be to take a lunch count the day before the lunch is served. This would give the cooks a better idea of how much food to make the next day instead of making more than what will be eaten.

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.

Public schools have a responsibility to create citizens who will be productive and beneficial to society. With food waste becoming a more prominent issue in America, it is important that the value of thriftiness is instilled in school children. Food waste causes the school to have to spend more money on food and less on other facets education. In the technological age of today, it is incredibly important for schools to maximize the efficiency of their schools in order to keep up with the rest of the globe in education. In addition, food waste takes up an excessive amount of dwindling space in landfills and decreases the world's sustainable production timeline. Raising awareness in schools for food waste is also essential in the fight against hunger. With 100 pounds of food wasted during our audit, it is safe to say that decreasing our food waste will also decrease the world hunger. These are the reasons while it is essential to inform students on food waste and its impacts on the world.

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.

The reaction from the faculty and staff at Blair Oaks caught us all by surprise. When we presented our plan to tackle the food audit, we received full support. The High School Principal and the Head Food Service Director of our district were both fully on board to do whatever was needed to help us fulfill the project. The cafeteria staff was also willing to help us wherever needed, and they made this process much easier for us to get the most accurate data possible. Once we did collect the data, the administration was interested in the results, and most of the faculty and staff were curious about how the food audit went. We did not expect the full support and willingness to help, but we are thankful we received that support.

We also received a lot of curiosity from the students about what we were doing. Their interest and inclined them to ask questions to which we were able to respond in ways to let them know the food waste situation in America, and we also told them some easy ways they could reduce their food waste. Most of the students were willing to help us as well, which made the collection process much easier for us. Our team was prepared to put everything in the correct buckets for the students, but they were very cooperative and were able to dump their own trays. This helped the students realize what they were wasting and added another great element to the study.

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.

All schools should be required to do a food waste audit at least once a year so that they can get an idea of how much food is going to waste and think of ways to reduce it. If they can figure out where most of the wasted food is coming from, it would be easier to think of solutions that the schools could implement. For example, we found through our data that many of the students did not know that milk was not a required item on the tray. We found that many students were taking a milk and not even opening it. An annual food waste audit would help the staff at each school realize this and be able to inform the students of their options. If schools perform a regular food audit, they would be able to make smarter choices when buying food to serve in the cafeteria by seeing what is most commonly wasted and address that issue by replacing the item with a better option. For example, if the food waste audit showed that students threw away many pounds of mandarin oranges but have hardly any strawberries in the food waste can, the school can provide more strawberries to the students over mandarin oranges. The food waste audit also brings to light the problem of food waste that is often swept under the rug or never brought up in the cafeteria. When the students see the amount of food that they left unopened on their trays and the amount of food that was thrown into the trash can, it leaves a lasting impression on their minds. The next time they choose what foods to take, they will remember the waste they saw and think harder about their choices.