Aramark Student Nutrition Embraces Community, Influence, and Technology to Kick Off the 2025-2026 School Year

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PHILADELPHIA--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jul. 29, 2025-- Aramark Student Nutrition, the U.S.-based leader in K-12 dining hospitality, is meeting the complex school nutritional landscape by integrating community feedback, industry leadership, and AI to create new and innovative dining experiences for the 2025-2026 school year. Powered also by the scope of Aramark's supply chain and its strong vendor relationships, Aramark Student Nutrition has been able to consistently and quickly meet evolving nutritional requirements and student taste preferences.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20250729978123/en/

"Our blend of human insight and smart technology is what sets Aramark apart," said Barbara Flanagan, President and CEO of Aramark Student Nutrition. "We surveyed 50,000 students in the spring of 2025 and paid close attention to every response and data point we received. The findings were then integrated with our nutritional expertise—supported by our vast team of dietitians—and our technological expertise —powered by CulinaryCo-Pilot, our proprietary menu AI—to quickly build more enticing, healthier menus."

Aramark is well positioned to stay ahead of the curve—meeting nutritional standards before they become mandates, and supporting schools operationally, as more states expand free meal programs. Aramark's proactive approach to creating meals with less salt, less sugar, and more whole grains, and combined with nutrition education for students, has already earned school district partners more than 20 USDA Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards in 2025.

What's Next for 2025-2026

This school year, students can look forward to new limited-time offers (LTOs)—dishes that have been taste-tested and approved by students themselves. With 250 new recipes in rotation, school menus are more varied than ever. Breakfast and snack time are getting a boost too, thanks to brand collaborations including a new whole grain cereal bowl from General Mills—a convenient, all-in-one container that doubles as a nutritious snack.

Aramark Student Nutrition is also deepening its commitment to enhanced communication and community engagement—from holding taste-testing at school board meetings and parent events to publishing a monthly "Food for Thought" newsletter filled with wellness tips, menu previews, nutrition education, and upcoming student engagement activities.

For younger students, the ACE Mascot Program continues to inspire healthy habits through interactive learning. Whether it is the ACE Show teaching "bite-sized" wellness practices or in-class activities that reinforce nutrition messages, ACE, "the friendly fox," is focused on making nutrition education memorable.

"Effective communication isn't just about sharing information—it's also about fostering engagement, building connections, and using communication channels to create meaningful relationships," Flanagan said. "We want the school community to be as excited about our nutrition, wellness, and dining programs as we are."

Food Safety remains a top priority, and to address the growing prevalence of food allergies, celiac disease, and other dietary needs, all food service managers are required to complete AllerTrain® K12—a leading, ANAB-accredited training program designed specifically for K–12 settings. With 1 in 13 children affected by food allergies, this certification equips management to recognize allergic reactions, prevent cross-contact, and implement safe kitchen practices.

About Aramark Student Nutrition

Aramark Student Nutrition is at the forefront of powering student potential through exceptional food services in K-12 schools and school districts. With more than 60 years of industry experience and serving over 270 million meals annually to 1.5 million students nationwide, Student Nutrition fosters brighter futures through creative, diverse, and nutrition packed menus featuring fresh, local ingredients. Connect with Student Nutrition on LinkedIn to learn more.

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