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Improving Learning Environments in Schools Through Evidence Based Strategies

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Abstract

Blue Zones Project is a community led well- being initiative serving all of Monterey County. When a school participates it must earn a specific number of points by implementing and enforcing recommended policies and programs. Currently in Monterey County, 45 percent of adults have prediabetes or type 2 diabetes. A big focus of Blue Zones Project is diabetes education for students and their families. The approval process of a middle school in Salinas, Ca is currently in progress and will not be completed by the end of December 15, 2023. School Approval signifies a commitment to creating environments that prioritize physical health, nutrition education, social connectedness, and emotional well-being. The next step for sustainability is to collaborate with Family Resource Centers and Community Centers who will continue to provide support for students and families.

Keywords: Blue Zones Project, Monterey County, Schools, Healthy Eating

Agency & Communities Served

Blue Zones Project is a community well-being initiative that aims to improve the health and longevity of individuals. Founded by Dan Buettner, a National Geographic researcher and explorer, the project is guided by the vision of creating healthier, happier, and longer-lived communities. Blue Zones Monterey County takes a systematic approach to improving well-being through policy, building design, social networks, and built environment. They engage the whole community by bringing residents and business owners together with a focus on improving well-being for everyone. When everyone from worksites, schools, civic organizations, restaurants and grocery stores participate the small changes contribute to great benefits for all. These benefits include lowered healthcare costs, improved productivity, and ultimately, a higher quality of life. Blue Zones Project seeks to achieve this mission by collaborating with local governments, businesses, and residents to implement evidence-based strategies that promote healthier lifestyles. The project focuses on areas such as diet, physical activity, social connections, and stress reduction, with the goal of making healthy choices easier and more accessible to individuals within these communities. Blue Zones Project was invited to the community by Salinas Valley Health in August of 2018. Salinas Valley Health, Taylor Farms, and Montage Health became the 3 sponsors that allow Blue Zones Project to offer their services free of charge to the community.

Salinas Valley is known as the “Salad Bowl of the World”, where an abundance of fruits and vegetables grow. The Agricultural business in Monterey County generates billions of dollars a year. Salinas is the largest city in Monterey County and is home to over 160,000 individuals.

Salinas has a large Hispanic or Latino community totaling 79.8% of the population. The Monterey County Office of Education serves approximately 78,000 k-12 students, 75.1% of the students are socioeconomically challenged. Monterey County Health Needs Collaborative released their 2022 survey findings and determined that the top 5 priority needs list include Diabetes, Mental Health, Access to Health Care Services, Nutrition, Physical Activity & Weight, and Heart Disease & Stroke. Blue Zones Project is committed to engage everyone with fairness and respect, regardless of their income, education, ethnic background, race, culture, age, sexual orientation, abilities, faith, or any other characteristics.

Problem Model Background and Literature Review

Problem Statement

As of 2019, 57% of all adults living in Monterey County are diabetic or prediabetic (2019). There are two types of diabetes: Type 1 and Type 2. Type 1 diabetes is a chronic disease where the pancreas makes little to no insulin and is mostly brought on by genetics, whereas Type 2 diabetes, the most common type, is associated with unhealthy lifestyle choices. Although there is no cure for diabetes, it could be managed by following a healthy diet, staying physically active, and monitoring blood sugar levels. In 2022, Monterey County Health Needs Collaborative survey results showed that diabetes was number one on the Prioritized List of Community Health Needs. This alarming statistic has captured the attention of health leaders in the community. Health institutions have turned their focus on to the prevention of diabetes, which led Salinas Valley Health to invite Blue Zones Project to the community.

According to Montage Health, More than 42 percent of Monterey County children age 5–17 are overweight or obese(2023). Childhood obesity is a serious health concern, this means that a child or adolescent has a higher than normal body mass index (BMI) for their age. Childhood obesity can lead to serious health complications like Type 2 diabetes and other chronic diseases. The high prevalence rates of diabetes and prediabetes in Monterey County adults appear to correlate with the high rate of childhood obesity.

Contributing Factors

Socioeconomic status is a significant contributing factor towards childhood obesity and the high prevalence of diabetes and prediabetes in Monterey County. Low income families typically have limited access to affordable nutritious foods. Poor diet that includes high consumption of low nutrient food and inadequate consumption of fruits and vegetables can result in a high BMI in children and adolescents. According to a Newswire article, “While widely known as "the Salad Bowl of the World," many Salinas residents suffer from food insecurity, and three in seven do not eat enough fruits and vegetables”(2019). How can it be that the region responsible for cultivating the nation’s fruits and vegetables is also the same area where socioeconomically disadvantaged families lack access to nutritious foods? The Food Bank for Monterey County reports, “Levels of hunger and poverty are disproportionately higher in Hispanic and farmworker communities. According to the Racial Disparities Dashboard Poverty Rate by Census Tract, the sectors with the highest levels of Hispanic poverty also have the greatest disparities between levels of white poverty and non-white poverty. In the tract with the highest level of Hispanic poverty-46%” (2023).

A lack of physical activity and sedentary behaviors in children contribute to childhood obesity. Excessive screen time such as watching TV or being on an electronic device will reduce physical activity levels. The CDC claims that, “According to the Kaiser Family Foundation External, kids ages 8-18 now spend, on average, a whopping 7.5 hours in front of a screen for entertainment each day, 4.5 of which are spent watching TV” (2018). Financial constraints can also contribute to lack of physical activity in children. Some parents face challenges in affording the expenses related to extracurricular activities, including youth sports. Economic stress can lead to reliance on cheaper, high caloric food such as “junk food”. According to the Monterey County Office of Education 75.1% of students are socioeconomically disadvantaged (2021). Limited financial resources in the households may restrict access to healthier food options and participation in organized sports, increasing the risk of poor dietary habits and obesity which are linked to the development of diabetes in children.

The intake of Sugar Sweetened Beverages(SSB) among children has increased, playing a role in the development of unhealthy and poor eating habits. The ubiquity and affordability of sugar sweetened beverages in low-income communities intensifies health disparities and contributes to the development of adverse health outcomes in children. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services states, “The association between SSB consumption and weight gain is paramount, given that childhood obesity affects roughly one in six (13 million) children in the U.S., disproportionately impacting children who are low-income and racial and ethnic minorities”(NIH, 2018). Many parents are unaware of the substantial amounts of added sugar in these beverages, leading them to believe it is acceptable for their children to consume. The Current Nutrition Reports article describes the many types of sugar sweetened beverages as such,

“SSBs are defined by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) as drinks including “regular soda, fruit drinks (including sweetened bottled waters and fruit juices and nectars with added sugars), sports and energy drinks, sweetened coffees and teas, and other sugar-sweetened beverages (including horchata and sugarcane beverages).” (Momin, 2018).

Consequences

Parents play a vital role in shaping their children’s lives, but the most influential part of parenting is being a role model. Children tend to mimic their parents' behaviors. Parents who lead a healthy lifestyle when it comes to diet, physical activity, and stress management are more likely to raise children who will also prioritize their own health. When a parent and the child's environment is not encouraging healthy behaviors, then childhood obesity rates go up and chronic disease becomes more probable. A Nutrients article states, “Lack of time, cost of healthy foods, and lack of knowledge were highlighted as barriers to helping children practice healthy eating behaviors. Lack of time to prepare healthy meals is consistently reported by parents as a barrier to healthy eating. This could be due to parents from under-resourced families working long hours and/or having multiple jobs” (2020).

Contributing Factors	Problem	Consequences
Socioeconomic status	Monterey County has a high rate of diabetes and prediabetes as well as a high rate of childhood obesity.	Childhood diabetes
Lack of physical activity		Graduation rates
Poor eating habits		Poor self-esteem and depression

Project Description

The Blue Zones Project School Pledge will be reviewed with a school administrator. Policies and programs the school already has in place will be identified as well as the new ones they would like to pursue. Blue Zones Project intern will help support the school with resources, expertise, and collateral to help complete the pledge actions. Pledge actions will be documented once completed to meet the validation requirements for each one. Metrics will be collected before and after completing the policies and programs in order to measure the impact they have had. These metrics will include attendance, discipline issues, and diabetes education. A middle School must earn 61 out of 94 possible points by implementing and enforcing recommended policies and programs in the School Pledge in order to become Blue Zones Project approved.

Project Justification

One of the main reasons Blue Zones Project was brought to Monterey County was because of the high percentage of adults with Type-2 diabetes and prediabetes. It is very important that students receive diabetes education to empower them to take control of their own health and wellbeing. Bringing awareness and creating a healthy environment for the students can help create those healthy habits that they will take with them into adulthood. Diabetes education also involves the families, resources are shared through Parent Square. Parents and guardians also receive diabetes education through school site council meetings and coffee with the principal meetings.

The approval of the school will help address the lack of physical activity and poor eating habits in middle school aged children. One of the policies prohibits the sale and consumption of soda and other sugar sweetened beverages on campus, including those brought from home. Blue Zones Project will help create signs encouraging students to drink more water during school hours. A memo will be created enforcing the policy and will then be signed by the principal and shared with students, staff, and parents. Another policy will enhance the lunchroom environment to encourage students to choose healthier foods, such as food placement, posters, and suggestions by cafeteria personnel. Nutrition posters will be strategically placed in the area that is most visible and visited by students. Colorful nutrition posters are educational and can motivate students to choose the healthier option. Scratch cooking will be encouraged in order to incorporate more whole foods into the menu. The salad bar will be placed front and center, it will be the first stop in the lunch line. A salad bar increases vegetable consumption. An equally important policy will require 225 minutes per week of physical education for all students in a middle school. The policies stated above will create a school environment that inspires students to make the healthy choice.

Benefits

Blue Zones Project uses evidence-based strategies to help children grow up to be healthier, more productive members of society. Implementing Blue Zones Project policies and programs increases student engagement and excellence in the classroom. Healthier students earn higher test scores, have higher attendance rates, and tend to be better adjusted and socially connected. The students gain newfound knowledge and take it with them into adulthood, which creates healthy habits. The goal is to create long-lasting impact by aligning with the good work already happening in schools and the community.

Implementation Process

The process begins with connecting with a school staff member and setting up a time where a Blue Zones Project Organization Lead can give a “story speech”. A story speech is a PowerPoint presentation that details how the project came about, the research behind it, and how it will be implemented into the community. This speech is usually given at a school site council meeting, a staff meeting, or a coffee with the principal meeting. The goal is to introduce the project to the school staff, students, and parents. Once the school is on board the school staff member will register on the Blue Zones project website as an organization, then the work can begin.

A notification is received via email to notify that the athletic director of a middle school has registered, the athletic director will then receive an email to set up an appointment to go over the approval process. During the meeting the athletic director and the intern will review the school pledge and identify the policies and programs that the school already has in place and

choose the ones to implement. A middle school must achieve a minimum of 61 out of 92 possible points to be approved. Each policy and program count as 2-4 points. Once the policies and programs have been chosen, an appointment will be scheduled with the district's nutrition director and the cafeteria lead from the middle school. The meeting will be held in the school's cafeteria where the cafeteria lead, the nutrition director, and intern will go over the Smarter Lunchrooms Scorecard. This scorecard is a list of simple strategies that help reduce food waste and increase selection and consumption of healthy foods for students. Pictures of the cafeteria equipment and prepared food, including the salad bar will be captured for documentation . Additionally, the cafeteria environment will be assessed to ensure the lunch menu is visible to students and colorful nutrition posters are prominently displayed. A bi-weekly meeting is arranged with the athletic director to review the procedures and obtain any required verification, such as pictures or lesson plans, demonstrating the implementation of the selected policies and programs. A commitment is made to share resources for the school such as compost for the school garden, cafeteria posters, and information regarding nutrition grant opportunities. As the school fulfills the actions outlined in the pledge, validation requirements for each pledge action will be recorded. Metrics will be collected before and after to measure the impact the policies and programs have had on the school environment. Once the 61 points have been met and the policies and programs have been implemented, a PowerPoint presentation and excel sheet detailing the process will be submitted to the central team for approval. Upon the school's approval a small celebration highlighting their accomplishments will be planned. A celebration is usually held at a morning assembly or an existing school event such as a school festival.

Assessment Plan & Expected Outcomes

There are 645 students that attend the middle school, the goal is to show every student the diabetes education modules that Aspire Health provides for the teachers. A meeting will be held with representatives from Aspire Health to receive the diabetes modules teacher information and the bilingual diabetes resource page to share on Parent Square. The information will then be shared with the athletic director. The three physical education teachers at the school will teach all grade levels these diabetes modules and then sign an attestation form that Aspire Health will collect. Once Aspire Health receives the attestation forms they will input the data into their Excel tracking sheets and share the information with Blue Zones Project. BZP will then access the data collected and gain information about the total number of students that received the diabetes education.

The project currently has 20 approved schools across Alisal Union School District, Salinas City Elementary School District, and continues to collaborate with many of the high schools. Salinas is projected to become a Blue Zones Project certified community by mid 2024 and the project is starting to focus on sustainability. Although the focus will shift to how the project will sustain their support of all approved schools, it will continue to collaborate with any school that reaches out or is interested in joining BZP. The partnerships and relationships with high schools are very important and the goal is to have at least one high school on board and ready to go through the approval process. Through the partnerships with these high schools, students are encouraged to volunteer with the project and in turn receive their required volunteer hours. High school students will help with clean-up events, such as park or elementary school

garden clean-ups. They may also assist with data entry or help set up and clean up for a community event. It gives them the opportunity to grow more confident and find their purpose all while making those strong social connections.

Project Results

Approval was not reached in time and the school is not yet a Blue Zones Project approved middle school. The work continues and the middle school has reached 51 out of 61 points so far, it is projected to be approved by January, 2024. The diabetes modules have yet to be shown and taught to the students. Once they are complete we can receive more points towards approval. The approval process is a long process that requires the buy-in of the staff and parents in order to make a difference and impact the student's learning environment. The athletic director continues to be a huge supporter and it was through his advocacy that he was able to get the district on board to move forward with the approval process. The first Blue Zones Project parent presentation at one of their wellness meetings was a success. A walking Moai ensued and the group continues to meet every Thursday morning to walk 2 miles around the track. A Moai is a group of people that meet for a common purpose. In this case it is a group of parents and staff members that walk together to incorporate natural movement and connect with one another.

A few resources were shared with the school including a large no tobacco or vape pledge banner that was given to the school before Red Ribbon Week. This week is the largest drug-abuse prevention campaign in the United States. The students were able to sign the banner

and display it in the school. Nutrition posters were added to the cafeteria lunch room and signs that encouraged water consumption were posted around the campus. Through a partnership with the Resource Conservation District of Monterey County the school was delivered 9 cubic yards of compost for their garden. 9 cubic yards is about a truckload of compost. For the month of November, which is National Diabetes Awareness month a date snack demonstration was given to parents after the Thursday morning walk. It was an impactful demonstration, dates are low glycemic food index, when eaten in moderation they are a safe and nutritious choice for individuals living with diabetes. A mother in the group shared that she had thrown out her dates because she thought they were bad due to their high sugar content. She was very happy to learn their nutrition facts and incorporate them once again into her diet. The cafeteria lead continues to attend farm to table conferences and is incorporating more scratch cooking into the school menu. Everyone from parents to staff are committed and working towards making the necessary changes.

Conclusion & Recommendations

Education is key in bringing awareness about the importance of preventing or managing type -2 diabetes. Providing diabetes education promotes awareness and understanding of healthy lifestyle choices, emphasizing the importance of nutrition and natural movement in the prevention of diabetes. Diabetes education contributes to the development of informed health-conscious individuals who will share their newfound knowledge with their families. The small

changes that encourage natural movement not only for the students, but for the staff and parents is very important in fostering long lasting healthy lifestyle choices.

Blue Zones Project is an amazing asset to the community. It not only provides resources to schools and helps reinforce district policies already in place, but helps bring small health conscious changes around the community that makes it easy to choose the healthy option. Once Salinas becomes a BZP certified community the project will shift and focus on sustainability. Partnering with Family Resource Centers and Community centers will help continue the support to students, parents, and staff. An all schools symposium can be implemented, where all Salinas school district well-being champions meet quarterly and share best practices. As mentioned previously, outdoor learning environments are one of the project's main focuses and facilitating a way where school garden champions can connect with one another would be a great way to share ideas and also share garden supplies and plants. Forming an interdistrict garden club that meets once or twice a year for an outdoor learning environment workshop will equip these champions with the knowledge to help school gardens flourish. Implementing these small changes will help cultivate and sustain strong partnerships that will benefit the well-being of the community as a whole.

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Appendix A

Project Implementation Plan

Activities	Deliverables	Timeline/Deadlines	Supporting Staff
Attend first meeting	Chosen policies and programs the school will pursue	By August 21, 2023	Clarissa Delgado
Attend cafeteria meeting	Completed Smarter Lunchroom Scorecard	By September 1, 2023	Griselda Reyes
Attend coffee with the principle meeting	N/A	By September 19, 2023	Clariss Delgado
Attend Meeting with the Athletic Director	N/A	By September 28, 2023	Griselda Reyes
Start walking group with parents	Parent engagement	By October 5, 2023	Clarissa Delgado
Add posters in the Cafeteria	N/A	By October 5, 2023	Griselda Reyes
Drop posters that encourage water consumption	N/A	By October 12, 2023	Griselda Reyes
Emailed Wellness Survey	N/A	By October 16, 2023	Griselda Reyes
Deliver garden compost	N/A	By October 28, 2023	Genevieve LeBlanc
Check-in Meeting with the Athletic Director	N/A	By November 13, 2023	Griselda Reyes
Parent Snack Demonstration	N/A	By November 16, 2023	Griselda Rreyes

Let's walk!
¡A caminar!



Join Blue Zones Project and Gavilan View Middle School every Thursday morning for a fun 10-week walking Moai!


¡Únase a Blue Zones Project y La escuela Gavilan View para caminar por 10 semanas cada Jueves por la mañana!

Dates | Fechas
Every Thursday starting Oct. 5th
Cada Jueves comenzando Oct. 5
Time | Horario
8:15 AM
Location | Ubicacion
Gavilan View Middle School



BROUGHT TO MONTEREY COUNTY BY





Blue Zones Project Approved Schools Overview

FIVE STEPS TO BECOMING BLUE ZONES PROJECT APPROVED™

1. **Strategize:** Discuss the current state and importance of well-being for your school. Identify which best practices and metrics of success your school has in place and which ones you would like to pursue. Keep in mind how these practices align with your organizational goals.
2. **Implement:** Complete chosen best practices and track metrics of success.
3. **Validate:** When implementation efforts are completed, contact a Blue Zones Project team member to review the work you've done.
4. **Celebrate:** Acknowledge and celebrate your school's status as a Blue Zones Project Approved School!
5. **Sustain:** Maintain your Blue Zones Project Approved status by establishing a sustainability plan.


REQUIREMENTS

- ❑ **Elementary Schools:** Earn at least 63 of 95 possible points by implementing and enforcing recommended policies and programs.
- ❑ **Middle Schools:** Earn at least 61 of 92 possible points by implementing and enforcing recommended policies and programs.
- ❑ **High Schools:** Earn at least 58 of 88 possible points by implementing and enforcing recommended policies and programs.
- ❑ **All Schools:** Complete at least one pledge action from each category: Policy and Programs.

BEST-PRACTICE EXAMPLES

- ❑ **Policy:** Establish a health-and-wellness council that meets regularly at the school. Discontinue using unhealthy foods for fundraisers. Enhance your lunchroom environment—for example, with food placement, posters, and suggestions by cafeteria personnel—to encourage students to choose healthier foods.
- ❑ **Program:** Implement a Walking School Bus and/or bus-to-walk program. Plant and maintain a school garden. Create a Blue Zones Project youth leadership group for middle school and high school students to identify and implement creative ways to improve student well-being.

The Blue Zones Project team is here to partner with your organization by offering resources and expertise to help you achieve Blue Zones Project Approved status.



SMARTER LUNCHROOMS SCORECARD

Date _____ School Name _____ Completed by _____

The Smarter Lunchrooms Scorecard is a list of simple, no-cost or low-cost strategies that can increase participation, reduce food waste, and increase selection and consumption of healthy school food.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Review the scorecard before beginning.
2. Observe a lunch period. Check off statements that reflect the lunchroom.
3. Ask other school nutrition staff, teachers, or administration about items that have an asterisk.*
4. Tally the score.
5. Discuss the results with stakeholders. Choose unchecked strategies to implement in the lunchroom.

SmarterLunchrooms.org

FOCUS ON FRUIT

- At least two kinds of fruit are offered.
- Sliced or cut fruit is offered.
- A variety of mixed whole fruits are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of stainless steel pans).
- Fruit is offered in at least two locations on all service lines, one of which is right before each point of sale.

- At least one fruit is identified as the featured fruit-of-the-day and is labeled with a creative, descriptive name at the point of selection.
- A fruit taste test is offered at least once a year.*

Focus on Fruit Subtotal _____ of 6

VARY THE VEGETABLES

- At least two kinds of vegetables are offered.
- Vegetables are offered on all service lines.
- Both hot and cold vegetables are offered.
- When cut, raw vegetables are offered, they are paired with a low-fat dip such as ranch, hummus, or salsa.*
- A serving of vegetables is incorporated into an entrée item at least once a month (e.g., beef and broccoli bowl, spaghetti, black bean burrito).*

- Self-serve spices and seasonings are available for students to add flavor to vegetables.
- At least one vegetable is identified as the featured vegetable-of-the-day and is labeled with a creative, descriptive name at the point of selection.
- A vegetable taste test is offered at least once a year.*

Vary the Vegetables Subtotal _____ of 8

HIGHLIGHT THE SALAD

- Pre-packaged salads or a salad bar is available to all students.
- Pre-packaged salads or a salad bar is in a high traffic area.
- Self-serve salad bar tongs, scoops, and containers are larger for vegetables and smaller for croutons, dressing, and other non-produce items.

- Pre-packaged salads or salad bar choices are labeled with creative, descriptive names and displayed next to each choice.

Highlight the Salad Subtotal _____ of 4

MOVE MORE WHITE MILK

- Milk cases/coolers are kept full throughout meal service.
- White milk is offered in all beverage coolers.
- White milk is organized and represents at least 1/3 of all milk in each designated milk cooler.
- White milk is displayed in front of other beverages in all coolers.

- 1% or non-fat white milk is identified as the featured milk and is labeled with a creative, descriptive name.

Move More White Milk Subtotal _____ of 5

BOOST REIMBURSABLE MEALS

- Cafeteria staff politely prompt students who do not have a full reimbursable meal to select a fruit or vegetable.
- One entrée is identified as the featured entrée-of-the-day, is labeled with a creative name next to the point of selection, and is the first entrée offered.
- Creative, descriptive names are used for featured items on the monthly menu.
- One reimbursable meal is identified as the featured combo meal and is labeled with a creative name.
- The combo meal of the day or featured entrée-of-the-day is displayed on a sample tray or photograph.

- A (reimbursable) combo meal is offered as a grab-and-go meal.
- Signs show students how to make a reimbursable meal on any service line (e.g., a sign that says "Add a milk, fruit and carrots to your pizza for the Power Pizza Meal Deal!").
- Students can pre-order lunch in the morning or day before.*
- Students must use cash to purchase a la carte snack items if available.
- Students have to ask a food service worker to select a la carte snack items if available.*
- Students are offered a taste test of a new entrée at least once a year.*

Reimbursable Meals Subtotal _____ of 11

LUNCHROOM ATMOSPHERE

- Cafeteria staff smile and greet students upon entering the service line and throughout meal service.
- Attractive, healthful food posters are displayed in dining and service areas.
- A menu board with today's featured meal options with creative names is readable from 5 feet away when approaching the service area.
- The lunchroom is branded and decorated in a way that reflects the student body.
- Cleaning supplies or broken/unused equipment are not visible during meal service.
- All lights in the dining and meal service areas work and are turned on.
- Compost/recycling and trash cans are at least 5 feet away from dining students.
- There is a clear traffic pattern. Signs, floor decals, or rope lines are used when appropriate.
- Trash cans are emptied when full.
- A menu board with tomorrow's featured meal with creative names is readable from 5 feet away in the service or dining area.

Lunchroom Atmosphere Subtotal _____ of 10

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

- Student artwork is displayed in the service area or dining space.
- Students, teachers, or administrators announce today's menu in daily announcements.*
- Students are involved in the development of creative and descriptive names for menu items.*
- Students have the opportunity to volunteer in the lunchroom.
- Students are involved in the creation of artwork or marketing materials to promote menu items.*
- Students provide feedback (informal – "raise your hand if you like..." or formal – focus groups, surveys) to inform menu development.*

Student Involvement Subtotal _____ of 6

SCHOOL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT


- A monthly menu is posted in the main office.
- A menu board with creative, descriptive names for today's featured meal options is located in the main office.
- A monthly menu is provided to students, families, teachers, and administrators.*
- Information about the benefits of school meals is provided to teachers and administration at least annually.*
- Nutrition education is incorporated into the school day.*
- Students are engaged in growing food (for example, gardening, seed planting, farm tours, etc.).*
- Elementary schools provide recess before lunch.*
- The school participates in one or more food promotion programs such as Chefs Move to Schools, Fuel Up to Play 60, Share Our Strength, etc.*
- The school has a partnership with Farm to School, local business(es), or a farmer's market.*
- Smarter Lunchrooms strategies are included in the Local School Wellness Policy.*

School Involvement Subtotal _____ of 10


SMARTER LUNCHROOMS SCORECARD TOTAL

Focus on Fruit	_____ of 6
Vary the Vegetables	_____ of 8
Highlight the Salad	_____ of 4
Move More White Milk	_____ of 5
Reimbursable Meals	_____ of 11
Lunchroom Atmosphere	_____ of 10
Student Involvement	_____ of 6
School Involvement	_____ of 10
Scorecard Total	_____ of 60


AWARD LEVEL



Bronze 15-25
Great job! This lunchroom is off to a strong start.



Silver 26-45
Excellent! Think of all the kids that are inspired to eat healthier!




Gold 46-60
This lunchroom is making the most of the Smarter Lunchroom Movement. Keep reaching for the top!

For Scorecard FAQs visit: SmarterLunchrooms.org

The asterisk * indicates items that may need input from other school nutrition staff, teachers, or administration.

Smarter Lunchrooms Scorecard 2.0



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DEFINITIONS

Point of Sale (POS): Anywhere students leave the line with food and are charged or counted, such as a register, check-out, or PIN pad

Point of Selection: Anywhere students select food or drink

Service Line: A designated line for meal selection—deli bar, salad bar, hot lunch line, snack window, etc.

Grab-and-Go: A pre-packaged reimbursable meal

Reimbursable Meal/Combo Meal: Any meal that meets all the USDA meal requirements and is priced as a unit

Featured Items: A fruit, vegetable, milk, or entrée that has been identified for promotion

[Questions](#) [Responses](#) [Settings](#)

Section 1 of 5

Gavilan View Middle School- Wellness Survey



Gavilan View Middle School is working with Blue Zones Project Monterey County to optimize your school environment to better promote physical, social, and emotional health. Please complete this short survey to help your school become Blue Zones Project approved. Thank you!

Email *

Valid email

This form is collecting emails. [Change settings](#)

Name *

Short answer text