



Suppers on the Rise in Paterson

What started as a pilot program has rapidly expanded to a major initiative that is helping nourish more than 1,500 Paterson students a day.

The Paterson School District first piloted dinner in six schools in the 2017-18 school year and is now serving supper to about 1,500 students each day, accounting for between 11,000 and 13,000 suppers a month, said David Buchholtz, food services director. Plans call for further expansion in the 2019-20 school year to 26 schools.

“The pilot went really well and we have expanded every year,” he said. “I have other schools saying they want to participate so it just keeps growing. Afterschool program coordinators like the program. They know the kids need to eat. A lot say a snack is just not cutting it. It’s the dinner meals the kids need. That’s why I’m looking to expand.”

Buchholtz advises districts seeking to serve dinners to meet with vendors and sample menu items. He serves hot meals each day — vegetable lasagna, turkey, Salisbury steak, spaghetti and meatballs — and the students love it.

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*— David Buchholtz,
Food Services Director,
Paterson School District*

“You have to do your research,” Buchholtz says.

