

Pemberton Secondary School: Food for Thought

School:

Pemberton Secondary School

Contact:

Brenda McLeod, bmcleod@sd48.bc.ca

Process:

A few years ago, a student support worker at the local elementary in Pemberton decided to make school homemade soup and bring it to school for students who did not have lunches. It was a smash success as several students needed lunches, and the practice continued for several years.

Moving on to Pemberton Secondary School, that same support workers hesitated to bring homemade soup to school as she thought the students would think it was “not cool” to be seen eating soup. Well she was wrong. She tried making soup one day in a little room in the school with a kitchen, and was amazed at the appreciation for the nutritious food and at the number of students who needed it.

Students asked questions about the contents of the soup, as some had never experienced eating some of the vegetables. They were interested to learn the names of the different vegetables and where they came from. They were excited to know that a nutritious soup could be made from items found in the kitchen cupboard and refrigerator, and from locally produced vegetables and meat. They discussed the benefits of being able to obtain healthy food items close to the community, and the practice continued to grow from there.

Now, on occasion, a group of supervised students make soup from nutritious vegetables and meat donated to the kitchen and offer it to students in need. The smell travels down the hallways creating a home-like atmosphere. Appreciative comments and gratefulness for the homemade soup now flow from the mouths of teenagers to the cooks, and there is a spirit of camaraderie and sharing in the room that has spilled into the hallways and classrooms.

The room has become known as the “Food For Thought” room and has grown to become a place where students who did not have food can get a lunch. The Food for Thought room is still operating at Pemberton Secondary school and providing nutritious home made soup to students in need.

People Involved:

School staff and a small group of students.

Key Changes or Results:

Students are now working together to make soup and enjoy sharing it with other students, and those who are able to afford to bring lunches to school have begun to focus on bringing nutritious food for lunch.



Challenges:

Often it was difficult to find time to make the soup at school so volunteers sometimes make it at home and bring the soup to school. Funding the items to make the soup is sometimes difficult, however, staff have managed to find groups that financially support the Food For Thought program.

Solution/Keys to Success:

The caring commitment of staff and students has made the program a success.

