

# BACK TO SCHOOL WITH DEDICATED FOOD SERVICE DIRECTORS!

FUELING YOUNG MINDS



**FEATURING  
MEAGHAN WILKINS**

**ARGYLE CSD**



**MEAGHAN IS AN ARGYLE CSD ALUMNI!  
AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, SHE ATTENDED JOHNSON & WALES UNIVERSITY  
AND RECEIVED A CULINARY DEGREE.  
SHE THEN CONTINUED HER EDUCATION AT JOHNSON & WALES, TO  
RECEIVE A BACHELORS DEGREE IN FOOD SERVICE MANAGEMENT  
AND A MASTERS IN HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT.**

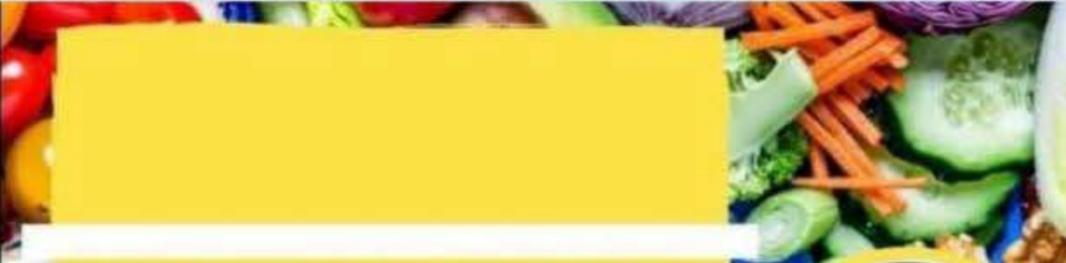
**MEAGHAN MOVED BACK TO ARGYLE 10 YEARS AGO AND HAS BEEN  
THE FOOD SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR THE LAST 5 YEARS! SHE IS  
MARRIED, HAS 2 BOYS. HER DEDICATION TO ARGYLE CSD IS SHOWN  
IN HER ROLE AS THE PTSA PRESIDENT, ATTENDANCE AT SPORTING  
EVENTS, AND HER WORK WITH 6TH AND 7TH GRADERS IN HER AFTER  
SCHOOL BAKING CLUB!**



# COMMUNICATION TO FAMILIES



MEAGHAN AND HER TEAM CREATED THIS NEWSLETTER THAT WAS DISTRIBUTED TO ALL FAMILIES IN AUGUST AND POSTED ON SOCIAL MEDIA TO INFORM FAMILIES THAT MEALS ARE NO LONGER FREE FOR ALL STUDENTS.



**ATTENTION**

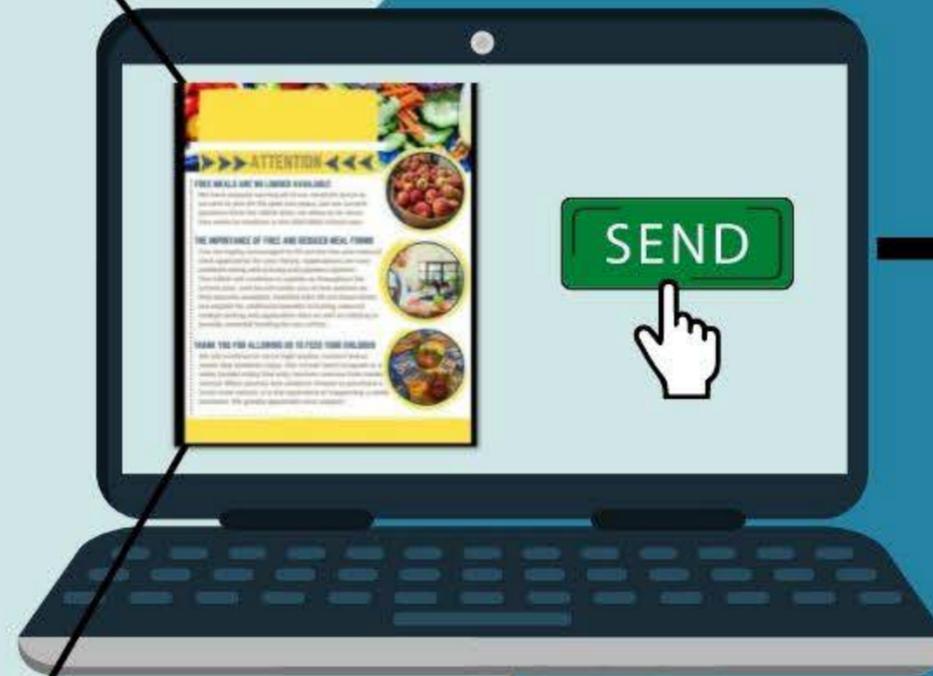
**FREE MEALS ARE NO LONGER AVAILABLE**  
We have enjoyed serving all of our students lunch at no-cost to you for the past two years, but our current guidance from the USDA does not allow us to serve free meals to students in the 2022-2023 school year.



**THE IMPORTANCE OF FREE AND REDUCED MEAL FORMS**  
You are highly encouraged to fill out the free and reduced meal application for your family. Applications are now available along with pricing and payment options. The USDA will continue to update us throughout the school year, and we will notify you of new policies as they become available. Families who fill out these forms are eligible for additional benefits including reduced college testing and application fees as well as helping to provide essential funding for our school.



**THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING US TO FEED YOUR CHILDREN**  
We will continue to serve high quality, nutrient dense meals that students enjoy. Our school lunch program is a solely funded entity that only receives revenue from meals served. When parents and students choose to purchase a lunch from school, it is the equivalent of supporting a small business. We greatly appreciate your support.





**ARGYLE  
CENTRAL SCHOOL**

<<DATE>>

<<GUARDIAN>>  
<<ADDRESS>>

Dear Parent or Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that <<STUDENT>> currently has a negative balance of <<ABSOLUTE BALANCE>> on their account. We allow charges because we feel it is important that students not be denied access to a meal during the school day. Please remit this amount as soon as possible to the Food Service Department.

I urge you to take advantage of our prepayment plan option of MySchoolBucks, they will send you a notice when the account goes to a level that you pre-determine. Money put on account may be used at any time. You can certainly still send checks through your child's classroom as well.

As a reminder, Free and Reduced applications may be submitted at anytime during the school year. If you would like an application or if you have any questions please feel free to contact me, wilkins\_m@argylecsd.org or 518-638-8243 EXT 519

Sincerely,

*Meaghan*

Meaghan Wilkins  
Food Service Director

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf> (link is external) or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed

AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax:  
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email:  
program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

# ARGYLE'S STUDENT DEBT BEST PRACTICES

**TO HELP KEEP STUDENT DEBT  
DOWN, MEAGHAN AND HER  
TEAM KEEP AN EYE ON EACH  
ACCOUNT. THEY MAKE  
WEEKLY PHONE CALLS TO  
PARENTS/CARETAKERS,  
SEND HOME LETTERS AND  
EMAILS.**

**AS PART OF THEIR LOCAL  
POLICY, STUDENTS CANNOT  
PURCHASE SNACKS IF THEY  
HAVE A NEGATIVE ACCOUNT  
BALANCE.**



**PIRATE BOOTY IS  
USED HERE AS AN  
"EXTRA" TO HELP  
INCREASE  
PARTICIPATION!**



# KEEPING IT LOCAL....

SINCE THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR,  
ARGYLE CSD HAS ACHIEVED THE  
NYS 30% INITIATIVE.

MEAGHAN AND HER TEAM  
INCORPORATE AS MANY NYS FOODS  
AS POSSIBLE INCLUDING:

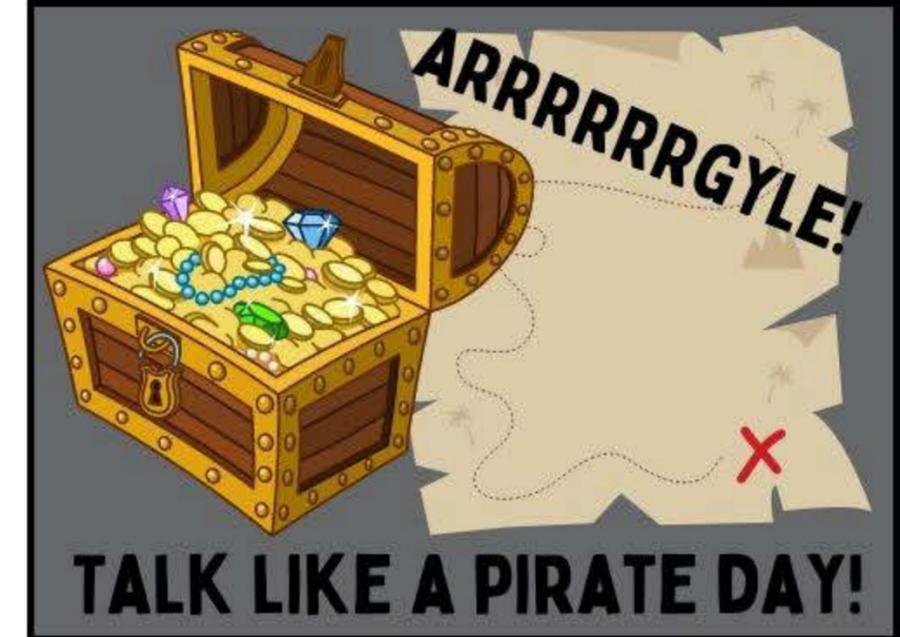
APPLES, APPLESAUCE, LETTUCE,  
YOGURT SMOOTHIES, YOGURT, MILK,  
HOT DOGS, HAMBURGERS AND MORE!



MEAGHAN IS  
USING SCA FUNDS  
TO PURCHASE LOCAL  
NYS MILK



**EAT LOCAL**



# ADVENTURES AT ARGYLE CSD



# SOMETHING IS ALWAYS HAPPENING IN ARGYLE CSD



**MAPLE SYRUP DEMONSTRATION**  
ON OCTOBER 19TH, 4TH, 5TH AND 6TH  
GRADERS WILL OBSERVE HOW MAPLE  
SYRUP IS MADE

## NATIONAL MILK DAY

JANUARY 11TH IS NATIONAL MILK DAY! ARGYLE  
CSD WILL BE CELEBRATING WITH A DAIRY  
AMBASSADOR FROM ACS AND WILL BE  
OFFERING A MILKSHAKE TASTING TREAT!



**NATIONAL SCHOOL  
LUNCH WEEK**

**OCTOBER 10TH-14TH**



## "HALLOWEENY"

HALLOWEEN THEMED MENU  
WITH "WITCH FINGERS" "GHOUL  
ROLLS" AND "BATTY BROCCOLI"



**MEAGHAN IS FILLED WITH DIFFERENT IDEAS TO MAKE SCHOOL MEALS FUN!  
SEE MORE GREAT IDEAS HERE** 

# ENGAGING ARGYLE'S STUDENTS & COMMUNITY

**MEAGHAN'S HARD WORK AND FUN IDEAS HAVE SHOWN TO BE SUCCESSFUL:**

**EVEN WITH STUDENTS PAYING FOR MEALS THIS SCHOOL YEAR, ARGYLE HAS OVER 50% PARTICIPATION IN LUNCH!**

**FOODS AROUND THE WORLD**



**CELEBRATING CUISINE FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES**

**GOLDEN TRAY AWARD**



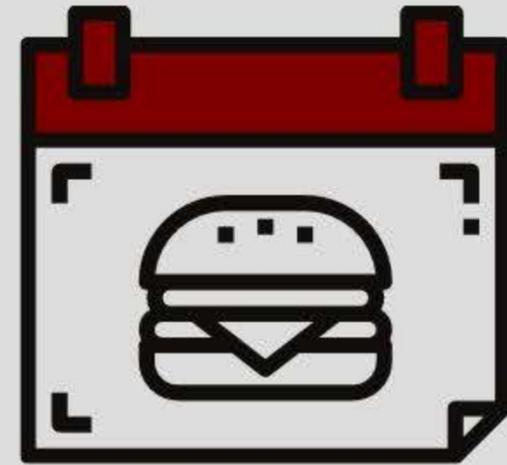
**REWARDING ROLE MODEL STUDENTS AT LUNCH**

**GUEST SERVERS**



**EMERGENCY PERSONNEL, TEACHERS, PARENTS**

**NATIONAL FOOD DAYS**



**HIGHLIGHTING LOCAL PARTNERS ON NATIONAL FOOD HOLIDAYS**

# Kipp Tech Valley Charter School



## Featuring Cindy Yonkers

Cindy uses her education, experience, and passion for her work to constantly find ways to enhance food service at Kipp Tech Valley Charter School.

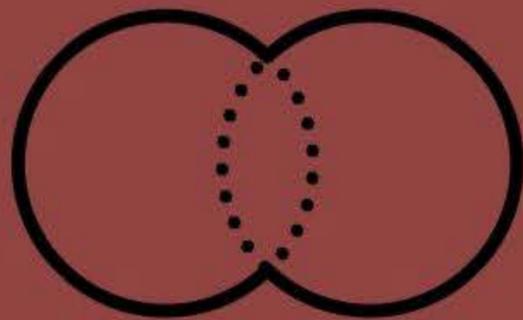
With a degree in culinary arts, and 24 years of experience in the field, Cindy joined the team at Kipp 11 years ago and works each day with her team to provide food and fun to students.

Cindy achieves success through her readiness to face changes and use of creative ideas to tackle challenges.

Check out some highlights of her work!

# Kipp Capital Region Public Schools

A recent partnership of Capital Region Charter Schools has expanded the food service from 2 to 6 locations with over 2,000 students!



Celebrate  
**Hispanic Heritage Month**

with KTV Food Service and Ms. Colon!

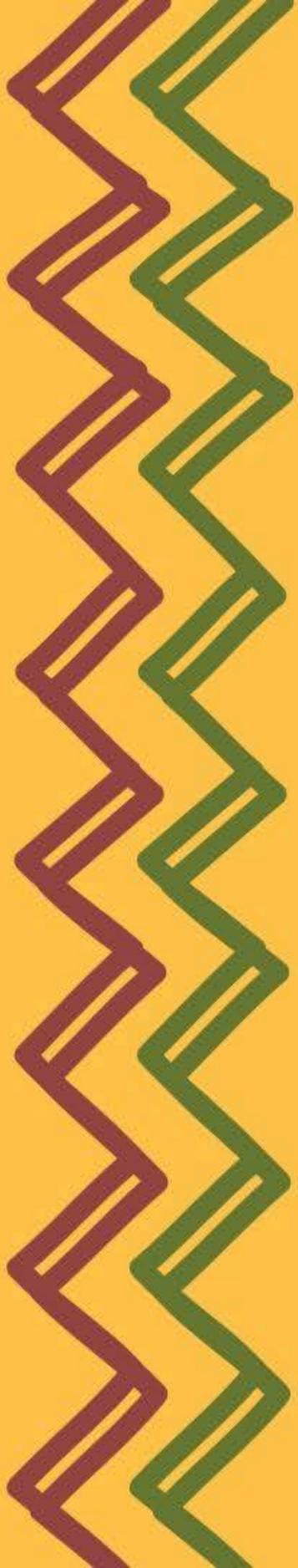
Ms. Colon is from Puerto Rico, a Caribbean Island. It was found that among hispanic people living in the U.S. most were of Mexican, then Puerto Rican descent. The official languages of the island include Spanish and English. Their food is traditionally influenced by African, Spanish, Latin and Caribbean cuisines and utilizes ingredients such as coconut, ground beef, plantains and avocados. Favorites of the island people include Tostones, Mofongo, Pasteles and Arroz con Gandules. Today, Ms. Colon has prepared Sofrito which we used to season our chicken in celebration of Hispanic heritage!



**SOFRITO:**

a traditional ingredient used in all Cuban, Dominican, Puerto Rican and Spanish foods. This aromatic blend of herbs, vegetables and spices varies geographically. Today's sofrito features garlic, cilantro, peppers and onions.

To celebrate Hispanic Heritage month a staff member, Ms. Colon, created a Sofrito spice blend to be used at all schools, sharing her recipe and culture from Puerto Rico with the students.



# Best Practices

Amazing staff!

To promote staff development, Cindy provides:

- Weekly/bi-weekly check-ins with each staff member.
- Training prior to the school year starting.
- Each staff member has a detailed list of job duties which keep the employees informed and on task.



# Supply Chain Issues and SCA Funds



- Supply chain issues have had an impact, but the use of SCA Funding has helped to offset increased food cost.
- SCA funding has been used to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Cindy incorporates seasonal items, such as fresh watermelon, nectarines, peaches, and plums in August. The fall months bring baked potatoes, seasonal roasted vegetables, squash, and pumpkin, which can be served on their own or incorporated into other fun dishes.

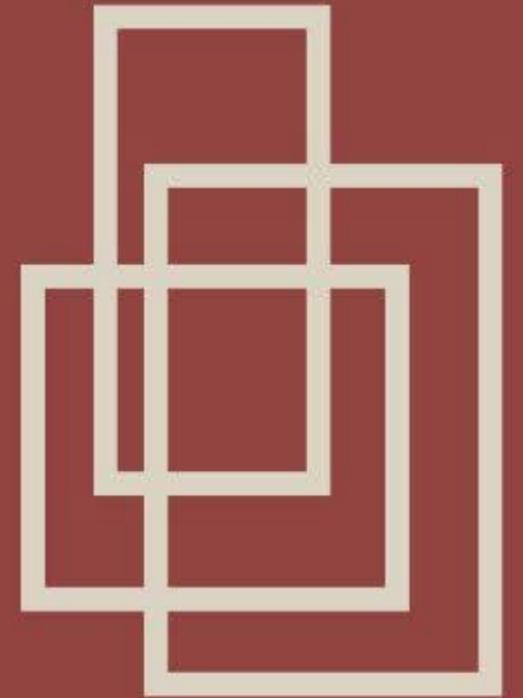
# SCA Funds Best Practices

Cindy introduces students to healthy new food items.



See some of her tips for success:

- Plan your menus a few months ahead to incorporate SCA items.
- When offering new food items: Introduce to students at least three times to get them familiar with the food and more likely to give it a try.



# Participation Highlights

*Tips to remember*

Consistency: prepare food using Standardized Recipes so the same great taste is in every school! Students are more likely to participate when they know what to expect.



Cindy's hard work is evident in the overall average participation rates of nearly 78% at lunch and 64% at breakfast.

Cindy makes breakfast available for grab and go as students enter the building in the morning - her breakfast participation shows this method's success!



# ONTEORA CSD

## FEATURING CHRISTINE DOWNS



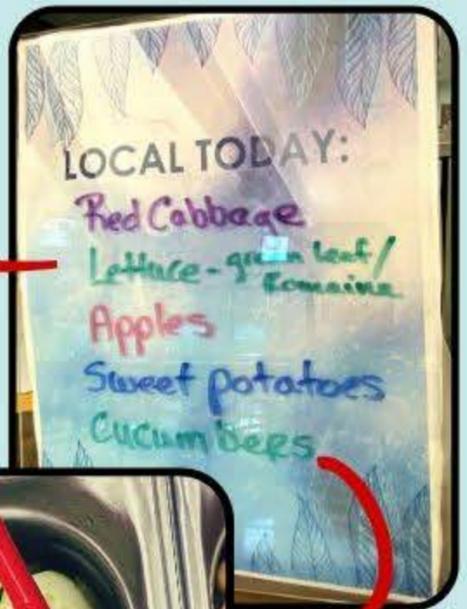
Christine started her career at Onteora CSD as a cook and after 2 1/2 years she was promoted to food service director, a position she has been in for 17 years now!

Christine earned a culinary arts degree from the Culinary Institute of America as well as a Bachelor's Degree in Food and Business from SUNY Oneonta.

Christine is passionate about providing healthy meals to students that they are excited to eat. She has taken advantage of DoD Fresh Program and Farm to School projects to add vibrant and fresh produce to Onteora CSD's School Meals.



# Farm to School!



**Onteora CSD regularly incorporates a variety of local NYS products in their meals- including local NYS milk!**

**Christine is working towards qualifying for the 30% NYS Initiative Program.**

**WOODSTOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HAS A BEAUTIFUL OUTSIDE GARDEN WHERE STUDENTS LEARN, PLANT AND GROW VEGETABLES! THE FOOD SERVICE TEAM USES THE HARVEST IN THEIR SCHOOL MEALS.**





**SWEET POTATO  
PEELING PARTY**



**SUPERINTENDENT,  
VICTORIA MCLAREN,  
SUPPORTS HER  
FOOD SERVICE  
TEAM!**

**FRIENDLY  
STAFF,  
FRIENDLY  
ENVIRONMENT**



**PATRICIA KNIGHT  
DEDICATED EMPLOYEE  
OF 58 YEARS!!  
AMAZING!**



# Best Practices!!

**1** Food presentation and clear helpful signage contribute to student participation and Program success!



## SWEET POTATO CHILI AND FRESH KALE SALAD



**2** When trying a new or different recipe, use spoons to offer a taste to students at the serving line.



**3** Promote the program! During open house at the High School, the cafeteria was open & offered food samples!



A fresh daily salad bar offers a variety of colorful vegetables, meat/meat alternates and grain components.

Middle School & High School students can take salad as an entree or as a vegetable side!



So many healthy choices!

# STUDENTS MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES!



Onteora CSD has an average lunch participation of 51% across their 3 Elementary Schools, Middle School & High School!

A pasta bar is available Monday-Thursday!  
On Friday, the pasta bar transforms into a make your own wrap bar!

To encourage participation, a variety of meal options are offered at the Middle School & High School each day.



Christine took advantage of the DoD Fresh program to receive fresh blueberries!

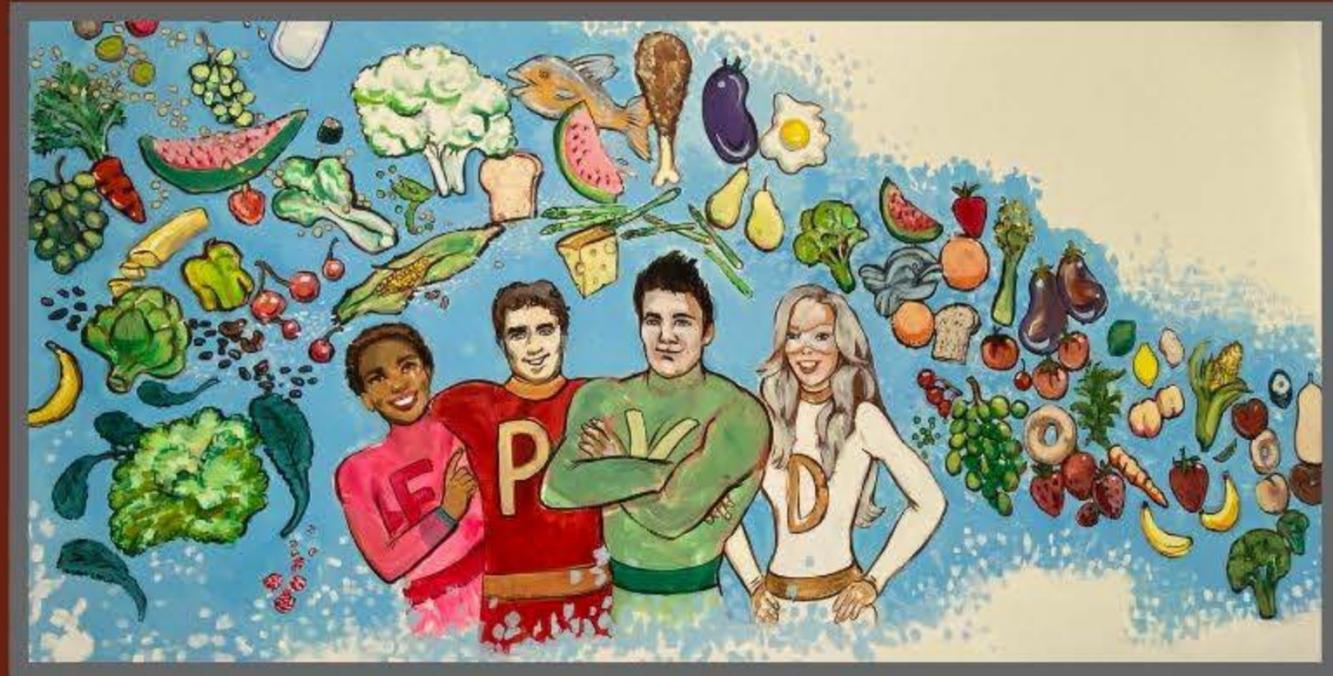
Her students love the blueberry parfait and can't get enough of them in individual servings!



Students were creative and painted the cafeteria & hallway walls!



Student Art in the Cafeteria



# Thank you for your hard work and dedication!

Meaghan Wilkins  
Argyle CSD



Cindy Yonkers  
Kipp Tech Valley  
Charter School



Christine Downs  
Onteora CSD



If you have pictures or best practices to highlight, please reach out to [cns spotlight@nysed.gov](mailto:cns spotlight@nysed.gov).