

VOLUME 6 • ISSUE 2 • WINTER 2023

CAFE CONNECTIONS

CHILD NUTRITION SERVICES QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

OUR HOLIDAY MEALS WERE A HIT!

Happy Thanksgiving



THANKSGIVING MEAL



RED & GREEN TAMALE DAY

CHILD NUTRITION HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS



LESD WELLNESS COMMITTEE

In November, our Wellness Committee met for the first time since 2020. This group is comprised of various school staff and community health professionals whose overarching goal is to promote wellness in the Laveen district. The next meeting will be held in January. For the agenda and meeting minutes, check out our website [here](#).

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM OUR CHILD NUTRITION FAMILY TO YOURS!



FOLLOW @LAVEENCHILDNUTRITION FOR CHILD NUTRITION UPDATES!



Check out @LaveenChildNutrition for updates on hiring opportunities, new menu items, upcoming events for the holiday season, and more!



NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK

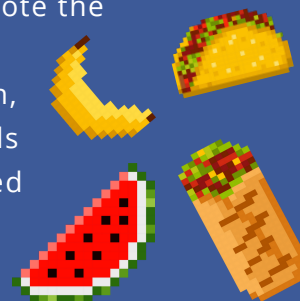


CHECK OUT ALL THE FUN WE HAD DURING
NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK!



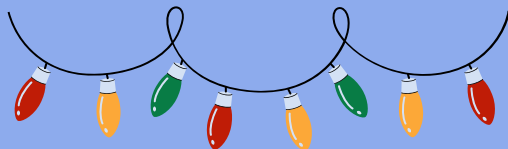
LEVEL UP WITH SCHOOL LUNCH!!

Each year we celebrate National School Lunch Week (NSLW), which recognizes and brings awareness to The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) serves nearly 30 million children every school day. President John F. Kennedy created National School Lunch Week (NSLW) in 1962 to promote the importance of a healthy school lunch in a child's life and the impact it has inside and outside of the classroom. The theme for NSLW this year was Level Up with School Lunch, which was intended to engage students and encourage them to eat healthy school meals by linking nutritious foods to video games that resonate with them. This year, we offered FREE lunch to all students all week long! In addition to the fun menu names that we had like Smash Bros Soft Beef Tacos, Mario's Mac and Cheese, and Pineapple Tetris Tidbits, our cafeteria managers decorated their cafeterias! This year we served 28,635 meals - WOW!



LAVEEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT WINTER FESTIVAL

Each year, the Laveen Elementary School District hosts a Winter Festival for the community. The 10th annual Laveen Winter Festival was a huge success this year on Friday, December 1st, 2023. This year's Winter Festival featured obstacle courses (for both big and little kids), games, activities, student performances, photo opportunities, holiday gift vendors, food, and much more! All of the funds raised went to the Laveen Education Foundation, which helps to provide former students with scholarships for college. Missed out on this year's festival? Stay tuned to our social media to see when the next festival is happening!



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

MEET LEXI, OUR ASU INTERN!



Meet Lexi Casas, an aspiring Registered Dietitian (RD) on a journey to make a positive impact on nutrition and well-being. Graduating from ASU with a Bachelor's in dietetics in 2021, she soon got accepted into the Master's dietetic internship program in the spring of 2022. Lexi enjoys working out, cooking, and spending quality time with family. Lexi began her internship rotations in September of 2023 and has had so many great experiences in a short amount of time! From long-term care facilities to outpatient services, an immune boosting presentation/cooking demo for ASU employees, and learning from professionals within the Arizona Department of Health Services, she has embraced every opportunity to learn and grow. Her current rotation is in food service management with Laveen School District! For Lexi, seeing smiles on the faces of kiddos in the kitchen is a daily reminder of the positive impact she can make in their lives through yummy and nutritious meals. Lexi loves being able to care for others in all different stages of life and is committed to promoting health and nutrition in the lives of those she serves.



EASY CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive or vegetable oil
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 8 medium green onions, sliced (1/2 cup)
- 2 medium carrots, chopped (1 cup)
- 2 cups cubed, cooked chicken
- 2 cups uncooked egg noodles (4 oz)
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley or 1 teaspoon parsley flakes
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 dried bay leaf
- 6 cups Progresso™ chicken broth (from two, 32-oz cartons)



INSTRUCTIONS



1. In 3-quart saucepan, heat oil over medium heat. Add garlic, onions and carrots; cook 4 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Stir in remaining ingredients. Heat to boiling; reduce heat. Cover; simmer about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until carrots and noodles are tender. Remove bay leaf, serve and enjoy!



Recipe adapted from Betty Crocker



FROM OUR DIRECTOR



In Good Health,
Jennifer

It's hard to believe we are wrapping up the first semester! So far, the 2023-2024 school year has been full of exciting endeavors. Our National School Lunch Week proved to be very successful (and fun), serving 28,635 free lunches to our students. We will be preparing for National School Breakfast Week, happening March 4-8. This year's theme will be Surf's Up with School Breakfast and we look forward to sharing more about this celebration soon. We've also been able to maintain our more robust menu choices this year, despite our continued staffing challenges. On that note, we are looking for energetic and kid-loving members to join our team. If you are looking for a rewarding, part-time job with family-friendly hours, please apply on our website. We are also looking forward to another visit from Chef Kent, who will be helping us prepare some Asian-inspired dishes for our students to try that could potentially make it onto our menu next year. I'm also grateful for our talented nutrition interns. We were so fortunate to have Lexi with us this Fall and look forward to welcoming two more interns later this school year. Our interns help with nutrition promotion and education, student taste tests and much more! Finally, we restarted our district school wellness committee and met for the first time in November and plan to meet again in January. This committee works on initiatives that help promote student wellness. As we head into Winter Break, I wish you all a restful break spent with loved ones.



@LaveenChildNutrition

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FREE LUNCHES SERVED DURING WINTER BREAK!

Laveen Elementary School District will be on Winter Break from Friday December 22nd through Friday January 5th. We will be serving FREE lunches to all kids 18 years and younger at Desert Meadows School *on select days* during the break from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm. Join us in the cafeteria to enjoy a delicious lunch for your children each day! Everyone is welcome, regardless of where you live or income. Adult meals will not be available.

Dates: Wednesday 12/27 to Friday 12/29
Wednesday 1/3 to Friday 1/5

Location: Desert Meadows School Cafeteria
6855 W Meadows Loop East
Laveen, AZ 85339

Time: 11:30 am to 12:30 pm

Days: Wednesday through Friday



CHECK OUT OUR MENU AT LAVEEN.NUTRISLICE.COM