



Creating Policy, Systems, Environmental Change: Chaparral High School Success Story and Lessons Learned

Vending a Variety: Chaparral High School ASB Student Store Honing in on Healthy Options

Intervention Summary

Like many school communities, the neighborhood surrounding Chaparral High School is dense with marketing of unhealthy drink and food items. This unhealthy environment extended to the campus' Associated Student Body (ASB) student store, which was allowed to sell only pre-packaged items. Members of the school's ASB club learned about the health risks of sugar sweetened beverages through engagement with the Rethink Your Drink curriculum. The ASB club surveyed all students at the school site to determine which drinks were most often purchased. Using this information, the ASB group launched a school-wide awareness campaign using Rethink Your Drink lessons and taste tests of healthy alternatives to sugary drinks for both students and staff during lunch periods. Supported by the principal and ASB instructor, members of the ASB club worked with district Nutrition Services to allow students to prepare items for sale in the student store, including smoothies and spa water. This change was adopted at the end of the previous school year and the club will focus on ensuring the store is compliant with nutritional standards and allowing for a widened variety of healthy beverage items.

Description of Barriers Encountered and Identified or Proposed Solutions

The barriers encountered with this project centered mainly on timing. Establishing a rapport with students and supporting staff members takes a great deal of energy and time. The ASB students themselves required time to be exposed repeatedly to the Rethink Your Drink lessons before fully supporting the idea to extend it to the larger student body. Repeated presence of the nutrition educator was imperative to maintaining momentum for this project throughout the year. Additionally, ASB clubs

notoriously have competing priorities, so the scheduling of this work was often times delayed due to alternate commitments.

The second challenge was the inability of the ASB to start selling the healthier drink options, such as smoothies or spa water, immediately, as approval from the district was required. Because change takes time some momentum for the healthy options offering waned and will thus be revisited this current school year as an ASB priority.

Future Directions/Sustainable Success

The first year goal for this intervention strategy is to assist this ASB club in ensuring their food and drink inventory is compliant with national nutrition standards. This work will yield an idea of what new or replacement snacks the store will sell. Stakeholder contribution will include the continued support of the school principal, ASB instructor and Nutrition Services, in addition to the Chaparral students themselves, as without their support of the healthier vending options, the store's financial success may diminish.

Continuing this work into year two will include identifying recipes for healthier drink options that both meet nutrition criteria and succeed in producing a profit for the student store. Marketing and promotion of these store changes will also ideally occur during the first year of the intervention. Long term goals for this intervention include publicizing throughout the district the healthy changes this ASB club will have created within their school community.

Contact information about this Narrative

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