

# Cafeteria Connection

Connecting you to your child's school lunchroom



## Reducing Food Waste at School

According to the USDA, up to 40% of the food supply in the United States is thrown away. **While K-12 schools like ours fall far below restaurants and grocery stores, 530,000 tons of food (excluding milk) ends up in the trash every year.** Beyond the environmental impact of wasted food, it affects our school budget and, ultimately, your child's dining experience at school.

We work to actively involve students in the decision-making process of our menu choices. We offer taste testing events and opportunities to vote on new menu items to tailor our offerings to their preferences, reducing the likelihood of discarded meals. Additionally, we aim to reduce food waste through Offer vs. Serve and share tables.

### OFFER VS. SERVE

This approach **empowers students to have choice in their meals, rather than being served all the items.** When students have a say in their food choices, they are less likely to throw away uneaten portions, fostering a sense of responsibility for the food they eat.

### SHARE TABLE

Another initiative we're proud to implement is the concept of a share table. This designated area **allows students to return certain uneaten food items, as long as it is in compliance with health and food safety codes.** The beauty of share tables lies not only in minimizing waste within our school and allowing students to take an extra serving of food at no cost, it also gives back to our community. Leftover items from our share table are donated to local non-profit organizations, contributing to a culture of social responsibility among our students.

We firmly believe that food is not nutrition unless it is eaten and we encourage students to feed their bodies, not our trash cans. **We believe in the power of collaboration, and with your support, we can continue to make strides in minimizing food waste in our cafeteria.**

Together, we can ensure that every meal served contributes to a **sustainable and enjoyable dining** experience for our students.



MARTINS FERRY CITY  
SCHOOL DISTRICT  
5001 Ayers Limestone Road  
Martins Ferry, OH 43935

R. Yoder, Food Service Supervisor  
740-633-1732 ext. 0