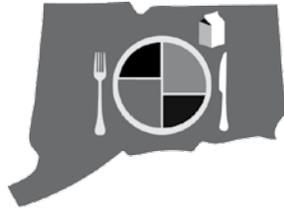


A Day at The Summit!



CONNECTICUT SCHOOL BREAKFAST SUMMIT

Every Child, Every Day

*By: Jim Crawford, School Breakfast Navigator
End Hunger CT!*

Perched high above the 50 yard line at Rentschler Field on April 26th, the Second Annual Connecticut School Breakfast Summit hosted over two hundred school personnel, students, presenters, and dignitaries. The game plan for the day was simple, continue the forward progress toward the goal line—a nutritious breakfast for “Every Child, Every Day”.

Sponsored by the CT No Kid Hungry Campaign and New England Dairy & Food Council, the gathering was a collaboration of many partners. Members of the Connecticut Breakfast Expansion Team including: SNACT, End Hunger CT!, New England Dairy & Food Council, CT State Departments of Education and Administrative Services, CT School Food Services Distributors, Connecticut Action for Healthy Kids, and Share Our Strength all oversaw the planning and preparations for the full day of celebration.

Exhibitors occupied locations flanking the picturesque view of the stadium below. Students from across the state had their handiwork depicting healthy breakfast items drawn on paper plates artistically displayed along the main concourse.

Renee DiNino of CT Clear Channel Radio emceed the formal program which began with a passionate call to arms by Katie Wilson, PhD, the Executive Director of the National Food Service Management Institute in Oxford, Mississippi. Her keynote emphasized the wasted potential learning opportunities so many children face due to poor nutrition and societal indifference. She cited numerous inspirational anecdotes from her experience and urged all present to stay committed to the cause.

Governor Dannel P. Malloy was on hand to honor the recipients of the School Breakfast Challenge he launched earlier in the academic year. Prizes were awarded to Sprague and North Canaan School Districts for their dramatic increase in student participation in the breakfast program. Schools in Naugatuck, Plainville, Windham,

and East Windsor were also recognized for their efforts to feed more children breakfast. The governor asserted that even with “more than \$100 million spent by the state on technology and school infrastructure, children who are not getting enough to eat cannot focus on learning.”



Governor Dannel Malloy

Commissioner of Education Stefan Pryor, Charlene Russell-Tucker, Chief Operating Officer of CSDE, Lucy Nolan, Executive Director of End Hunger CT!, and Sheila Cohen of Connecticut Education Association all lent their voices to the day’s theme; Children must come to school prepared to learn, and without fueling their bodies, they cannot fuel their minds.

The Department of Administrative Services Commissioner Donald DeFronzo announced Old Saybrook Food Service Department and New Milford Food and Nutrition Services as the first and second place winners of the USDA School Breakfast Innovation Challenge. Stephen Reviczsky, Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, expressed his agency’s commitment to the cause and the effort to increase local produce as a vital component of school meals for the children of our state. While James Arena-DeRosa, regional administrator for the USDA, and Allison Calhoun-White, HealthierUS School Challenge Project Director with CSDE, distributed cash prizes to thirty one school districts totaling \$90,500 through the HUSSC initiative. Arena-DeRosa also announced that Connecticut has the

distinction of having the largest number of HUSSC honored schools in New England.

Following the presentations, a panel representing school districts from throughout the state and composed of parents, Board of Education members, Food Service Directors, Finance Managers, teachers and administrators shared success stories about breakfast offerings in their respective towns and cities. The highlight of this session celebrated accomplishments achieved when determined individuals set out to address a significant societal failing. Their testimonies resonated for the remainder of the day.

Summit goers were treated to a sumptuous lunch buffet while being entertained by the Casimir Pulaski Wellness Wonders. These grade school dynamos from Meriden's "Fuel Up to Play 60" student team demonstrated many of the energetic activities incorporated into their student day. Their enthusiasm was infectious!



Casimir Pulaski School Healthy Dancers, Meriden

A series of six breakout sessions on a variety of related breakfast topics ranging from the nutritional importance of starting the day right to balancing your budget with breakfast and USDA foods were offered following lunch. School Breakfast experts from the Food Research and Action Council and National Education Association were among the presenters. Marketing strategies to increase participation, action plans for success, and meeting the NEW meal pattern requirements rounded out the discussions.

Katie Wilson again took the podium to provide the capstone for the event. As she donned humorous footwear, Dr. Wilson challenged all the participants to "Take Pride in your Stride" and champion the breakfast agenda in Connecticut. We are last in the nation in the percentage of National School Lunch Program schools that also offer breakfast. Connecticut has been last for eight consecutive years. A resolute pledge to eradicate this glaring indifference should be the goal of all Connecticut's citizens.

Members of the planning team have already been spotted huddling up in preparation for the 3rd Annual School Breakfast Summit. Watch for the kickoff announcement in 2014.

Please visit ctschoollunch.org to view the short video of highlights of the 2013 CT School Breakfast Summit



HUSSC Silver Winners Susan Maffe from Meriden and Barry Sbordy, Putnam with USDA Representatives



Panelist, Dianne Houlihan, Food Service Manager at Great Neck School in Waterford



SNACT Board Secretary Ernie Koschmeider giving an interview at the Summit



A question from SNACT member Madeleine Diker from Cheshire



CT School Breakfast Challenge Winners with Gov. Malloy



Dr. Katie Wilson, Exec. Director, National Food Service Management Institute



SNACT Members Dana Tice, Simsbury and Diane Edwards, Enfield