

Farmdale Elementary School

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F - Fortitude
A - Achievement
R - Reward
M - Motivation
D - Dedication
A - Attitude
L - Learning
E - Excellence

May 6, 2014

To whom it may concern:

Hello, my name is Deborah L Giannone and I am a TK Kindergarten teacher here at Farmdale Elementary in Merced. I would like to take a few moments of your time to tell you about the Fruit/Vegetable truck that visits our campus every Wednesday.

Kindergarten the entrance to a child's educational path is very important in many ways, cultivating and developing new ideas that will stay with a child all of their lives. Michelle Obama, President Obama's wife's new program to help bring good food choices to the table, fighting obesity in children is a focal point in my classroom. We discuss the importance of exercise in a child's life as well as making wise food choices.

Sometimes this is difficult as at this age most of our children's food choices are defined by our cultural background as well as what our parents know or have been taught. I have used the presence of this vehicle to develop new ideas with the parents and the children of my classroom.

I began by convincing my parents to send to my classroom 50 cents a week on Wednesdays to help me purchase healthy snacks for my classroom. I purposefully chose vegetables or fruits that are not commonly eaten in some of my family's homes. Having nuts and dried fruits in their stores allowed me to teach my children the value of proteins added to fruit or vegetable salads.

I partnered with my cafeteria and received at no cost low fat ranch dressing to try new veggies children were unfamiliar with. While doing this I created a taste and love for fruits and vegetables that were not being selected by my children in the cafeteria at lunch time. My children now regularly choose to fill their dishes with vegetables and fruits before sitting down to eat.

In the theme to fight obesity, I speak to my children of the importance of eating larger portions of fruit and vegetables rather than bread products that are high in carbs. In doing so, and practicing this theory each week my children no longer throw their fruits and veggies away, they are all eaten at lunch. What I do see thrown out are the bread portions. This has made the difference in the lives of 3 of my students who came to me overweight. Each child now making good choices, has thinned down considerably. To reinforce all of the above, on Wednesdays I always send an easy recipe home to families to help continue the teaching process.

It has been my great pleasure to include nutrition and healthy eating to my curriculum for my TK Kindergarten classroom. The individuals working delivering these choices to our school have been helpful and very kind with my students. I am sure that this will be an excellent experience for your classroom.

Sincerely,

Deborah L Giannone - TK Kindergarten