

VOLUME 5 • ISSUE 6 • FEBRUARY 2023

# CAFE CONNECTIONS

CHILD NUTRITION SERVICES MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## STUDENTS QUALIFYING FOR REDUCED-PRICED MEALS NOW EAT FOR FREE

Former Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction, Kathy Hoffman, announced in late December that the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) would allocate \$6.75 million in pandemic relief funds to waive breakfast and lunch fees for students qualifying for reduced-price school meals.

Beginning in January 2023, students qualifying for reduced-price meals will receive breakfast and lunch at no cost. These fees will be waived from now until the end of the 2023-24 school year.

We are so thankful to have the resources to provide student meals at no-cost to qualifying families. We know that every penny counts! As a reminder, families may apply or reapply for free or reduced-price meals at [www.EZMealApp.com](http://www.EZMealApp.com).



## FREE BREAKFAST FOR ALL STUDENTS!



Did you know that your student is able to eat a healthy, delicious, and nutritious breakfast every day at school for **no cost**? You heard that right! Breakfast always includes a whole-grain breakfast entrée, fruit or veggie, 100% fruit juice and milk for a balanced start to the day.

### BREAKFAST SCHEDULE

- LAVEN: 8:00 AM – 8:30 AM
- M.C. CASH\*: 7:30 AM – 7:45 AM
- VISTA DEL SUR: 7:30 AM – 8:00 AM
- CHEATHAM: 7:00 AM – 7:30 AM
- TRAILSIDE POINT: 7:00 AM – 7:30 AM
- DESERT MEADOWS\*: 8:00 AM – 8:15 AM
- ROGERS RANCH: 8:00 AM – 8:30 AM
- PASEO POINTE: 7:00 AM – 7:30 AM
- ESTRELLA FOOTHILLS\*: 8:00 AM – 8:15 AM



\*INDICATES BREAKFAST IS SERVED IN THE CLASSROOM

## WHAT WE ARE CELEBRATING THIS MONTH

### Black History Month

During National Black History Month, we celebrate the legacy of Black Americans whose power to lead, to overcome, and to expand the meaning and practice of American democracy has helped our Nation become a more fair and just society.



### Valentine's Day

Check out our February menu for some fun treats!

Valentine's Day is a great time to let those that you love know how much you care about them!



### Heart Health Month

This month is both a celebration and reminder of just how important a healthy heart is for a long, fulfilling life. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the US and 1 in 4 people will die of heart disease every year.



# HEART-SHAPED FRUIT PIZZA

## INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter *at room temperature*
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 8 oz cream cheese *at room temperature*
- 3 tbsp strawberry jam or jelly
- 1/4 cup powdered sugar
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 16 oz strawberries *washed & sliced into quarters*
- 6 oz raspberries *lightly washed*



Photo: Taylor, Greens and Chocolate

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Using an electric mixer, beat together butter and granulated sugar until creamy for about 1 minute.
2. Add egg vanilla extract and almond extract; beat to combine.
3. Add flour, baking powder and salt; beat until combined.
4. Refrigerate for 1 hour.
5. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
6. Place dough on a surface that is covered with flour.
7. Lightly sprinkle some flour on top of the dough, as well as on the rolling pin.
8. Roll out until 1/8" thick. It should be about 12-14" in diameter.
9. Use a knife or pizza cutter to cut into the shape of a heart. Feel free to use the remaining dough to make smaller heart shaped cookies.
10. Place the heart cookie dough on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
11. Bake for 12-14 minutes or until the edge is slightly golden. Let cool completely.
12. Place cream cheese and jam in a bowl; beat until well combined.
13. Add powdered sugar and salt; beat until combined.
14. Spread over cooled heart cookie and decorate with sliced fruit.



Enjoy

Recipe adapted from Greens and Chocolate: <https://greensnchocolate.com/heart-fruit-pizza-for-valentines-day/>

## JOIN US IN CELEBRATING NATIONAL SCHOOL BREAKFAST WEEK MARCH 6-10, 2023!

Every year we celebrate National School Breakfast Week to highlight the School Breakfast Program and the importance of eating breakfast everyday for success in school. We also like to recognize all that our staff do to provide healthy, nutritious breakfasts for our students each school day.

Join us this year for some fan favorite breakfast choices. Students who eat breakfast during the week will get a sticker for a free fruit slush with their lunch.

This year's theme is *Dig In To School Breakfast.*



## FROM OUR DIRECTOR



In Good (Heart) Health,  
Jennifer

I hope everyone has settled into the new year. Several of our staff and their families participated in the 22nd Annual Laveen Community Parade. It was a beautiful day to have some fun and represent our department. This month our menu planning committee is meeting regularly to plan next year's menu. We've already come up with some new menu concepts that we will be testing with our students this spring. Speaking of our menu, the USDA just announced some proposed rules for school meal standards, which includes setting limits on sugar content. Currently there are no sugar standards for school meals and I am happy to see some reasonable parameters put into place in this area. Proposed rules require the opportunity for public comment from stakeholders and this would be a great time for parents and community members to offer their thoughts on the proposed rules that govern our programs. Visit <https://www.regulations.gov/> to contribute your thoughts. Comments will be accepted from February 7th until April 10th. February is also Heart Health Month. As a mom of two, one my goals this year is to reduce stress as it can have such a negative impact on your cardiovascular health. The Live to the Beat Campaign has some great resources to help adults prevent heart disease and stroke. Visit <https://www.livetothebeat.org> to learn more.



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