

It appears those who responded would like to see a healthier, fresher menu. The participation has been higher at Deane-Porter and it is interesting to note that what they prefer at that level is different from what they choose here at Forrestdale. Deane-Porter students prefer the hot lunches, while in the upper grades sandwiches are more popular. In March we formed a focus group comprised of students, parents and staff members to gain perspective into what is working or not working in our current program. Their input has been invaluable and their assistance greatly appreciated. Specifications for the program were advertised and we had eight companies request them. Of these we are down to five who are interested in submitting a proposal. The committee went on site-visits to schools at which they are operating lunch programs. These visits were very helpful in guiding what we would like to have here. We do operate under many challenges: our kitchens and serving areas are quite undersized; we have a 22 minute time frame for students to arrive select their lunch, sit and eat; costs are driven by the products selected and the staffing required to prepare and serve the lunches. Additionally, the food service program must be self-sustaining. That means we need to at least break-even and hopefully have the funds to repair/improve the equipment. The first five years of the program we have operated in the black, while serving no fried foods and offering whole grains in the pasta, bread, chicken breading and pizza. We've made many adjustments along the way and will continue to be responsive to concerns and requests for change. The lunch price has remained steady and will not be raised in the year ahead. Proposals on the Food Service Management for next year will be received and reviewed at the end of May, with a contract being awarded in June.