

Case Study

Jackson County Schools



Overview

Jackson County Schools in North Carolina is still discovering the breadth of the Meals Plus system, while appreciating the depth of the Meals Plus support staff.

Their tech support is one of the greatest features of the Meals Plus system."

-Beckie Lowman
School Nutrition
Director

District Obstacles

For a long while, Jackson County worked with the another cafeteria software system. Having made the transition to Meals Plus, Jim Hill, the district's former child nutrition director, admits one of the many advantages is the "fingertip accuracy for day-to-day and overall operations reporting." He explains that he can literally determine individual schools' and the district's real-time performance with a single push of a button.

Finding the Answer

But no less valuable are the long term benefits of Meals Plus. That is: having good, reliable data from which to compare year over year, school to school, vendor to vendor, and so on. Jim finds such data is particularly valuable as it offers good insight for planning, budgeting and negotiating. "Beyond just knowing my meals-per-labor-hour, plate costs, product revenues and inventory control measures, I'm able to put these figures in context for planning and budgeting with the district, and to negotiate with food vendors," he says. "Such accurate data that's so easily accessible – it's a great combination."

Results

Among the modules Jackson County uses is that for inventory management. Given the ease of the system, each school cafeteria manager now enters his or her own orders, with the central office providing only an oversight role. In fact, individual schools cafeteria managers have the Meals Plus data accessible to them such that they can assess trends and make more cost efficient choices in menu planning and staffing. The occasional instances when calls to Meals Plus tech support must be made, Jim finds he's astonished at how much they know about school cafeteria issues. "Their tech support is one of the greatest features of the Meals Plus system," he offers. Given that regard and his satisfaction with the financial components of Meals Plus, Jackson County is now poised to begin using Meals Plus' menu planning and nutrition analysis software. Jim admits he's eager to put that level of support to work on the nutritional side of the business.