

Pennsylvania Farm to School Network Success Story:

# STATE COLLEGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Centre County, PA

Travis Folmar, School Nutrition Supervisor for the State College Area School District, does not just characterize school nutrition as simply feeding students. In addition to feeding the district's students nourishing school meals, he works to provide nutritional education in the hopes they will better understand where their food comes from and what is involved in the process of getting food to their trays.

One component of achieving this goal has been happening for some time thanks to the efforts of the district's Food Service Director, Megan Schaper. Megan incorporates healthy, local food in the cafeteria, writing local foods into menus and routinely purchasing local apples, bread and beef. Megan and Travis also often travel to a local produce auction to purchase fresh, local produce.



Travis' next goal was to develop a school garden. The State College Area School District had the infrastructure to create great garden spaces and provide educational opportunities - it just needed a team of people to make it happen.







Travis chose Park Forest Elementary to create a garden space because they already had a garden established, it just needed a bit of TLC. They received funding from a Student Opportunity Grant and from the school's Parent-Teacher-Organization (PTO). This funding allowed them to purchase materials to begin the process of revitalizing the school's garden.

Travis removed the overgrown foliage and built new garden beds, added landscaping stone and replaced the landscaping fabric. The school hosted a volunteer day, where volunteers filled the beds with dirt, wood chips and compost, all of which was donated by a parent. Their neighbors at the Penn State Student Farm donated plants, which students planted on Field Day at the end of the year.







The garden was able to thrive throughout the summer with the support of families who helped water, weed and harvest produce all summer long.

Now that the garden is established, Park Forest plans to involve students in the entire process. With a new grant, the school will start a Farm Club, where students will hear from speakers, participate in field trips and educational activities and of course, help manage the school garden.

“We are proud of the work we have done over the years to incorporate local foods and increase our nutrition education,” says Travis. “The importance of providing these valuable tools to students cannot be understated and I look forward to increasing our farm to school program in the future by revitalizing additional school gardens and educating students.”



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