

Case Study: Seven Hills Preparatory Academy

Grades: K-8



Turnkey Service from CKC Good Food Simplifies Complete Food Service Program

"It was a disaster," Monica Gihl, Food Service Director at Seven Hills Preparatory Academy, said of the food service company the charter school used when she was hired. "We were working with a start-up company that had just begun serving school meals. They didn't have very good customer service and we were short lunches quite often. They were just trying to figure out how to serve schools. We didn't work with that company very long."

The school's office manager at the time knew of CKC Good Food and its reputation and felt confident CKC would do better. That was more than 10 years ago.

"There is no comparison between CKC and the previous company," Gihl said. "CKC has been in business for a long time. They know what they're doing."

The National School Lunch Program at K-8 classical school has grown over the years, both through a net increase in lunch participation and by adding a new campus. The original location in Bloomington has more than doubled its average lunch participation, with rates as high as 75% when student favorites (mac and cheese, pizza, pancakes and waffles) are served. Since the Richfield campus opened in 2017, the total school population has doubled to 1,100 K-8 students.

In the 2021-2022 school year, Seven Hills also took advantage of USDA emergency waivers for COVID-19 to offer school breakfast for the first time. With school breakfast free to all students, Seven Hills has enjoyed a significant boost in revenues from federal reimbursements.

"It's really nice knowing that if we run into trouble, they're in our corner. Anytime I call, they're all so responsive and willing to help."

"CKC provides everything we need – supplies, food, employees for serving the food and great customer service. Our program is completely turnkey because of CKC."

"Breakfast has been a huge hit," Gihl said. Between the two campuses, 600 students regularly take school breakfast. Students often get on buses as early as 7:30 a.m. and many don't eat lunch until noon, which can affect their ability to concentrate on studies.

As with all it does, CKC has made school breakfast easy for Seven Hills. Gihl orders milk and submits a meal count for each day with CKC. CKC delivers the specified number of breakfast bags, each filled with components for a fully

(over)



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reimbursable School Breakfast Program meal, for each student. Students simply grab a bag and a milk on their way to their classrooms in the morning.

“CKC provides everything we need – supplies, food, employees for serving the food and great customer service,” Gihl said. “Our program is completely turnkey because of CKC.

“It’s really nice knowing that if we run into trouble, they’re in our corner,” she continued. “Anytime I call with questions or problems, they’re all so responsive and willing to help. Even if it’s my mistake, they never place blame. Even the servers at our schools are great.

“I love CKC,” Gihl said. “The idea of ever working with someone else scares me.”



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