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FOODSERVICE DIRECTOR®

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The Big Idea

It can start with something as small as a piece of fruit. We present our annual lineup of 10 innovative concepts that you can steal for your operation. p. 19

Plum Borough School District's after-school snack program for athletes found great success by selling items like fresh fruit.

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The Big Idea

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After-school Snack Program

The students in high school have such a long day and so many of them participate in after-school activities and a lot of them eat lunch starting at 10 a.m. You have to have fuel for athletes to perform at their best levels and they're high school kids, so they are probably not thinking about packing something in the morning when they are rolling out of bed. We really don't have any vending machines in the district. Our high school is situated such that they can't get into a car and get to a convenience store. So I had a captive audience and had a need to fill.

So I thought, "let's do something after school for them in a short period of time right after the last bell rings and make it all good, appropriate snacks for their age and their nutrition needs."

We have a separate roll-up window that we sell our à la carte out of. It already has a milk cooler, cash register and point-of-service

system. We open that when the bell rings at 2:20 p.m. and shut it down about 2:45 p.m.

I made some signage and got a list of all of the coaches for all the different sports in the fall and I sent them an email stating what we were doing. I gave them a date to introduce their students to the program for a free one-time visit. I got an article into the local paper. I made a logo that was a rocket ship and I put that up in the school and website; that's where the name After School Fuel came from. I did the same thing for the winter and spring sports, giving them a free day.

The kids love it. They are able to use



Samples of the snacks sold at After School Fuel.

their point-of-service account money that their parents put in for them. We are only doing healthy options. We do granola bars, yogurt, fruit, string cheese and a breakfast bar that is whole grain and very calorie dense. We have fruit as well, including apples and bananas. Everything there meets the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act guidelines. We have bottled water and a carbonated fruit juice. We sell 20-ounce sports drinks because they are athletes participating. At that point in the day if they are going out they need electrolytes and hydration. We also do some yogurt parfaits that we packaged. We sell chocolate milk because it is being promoted as rehydration after exercise.

This became another service opportunity for us to meet the kids and get some more revenue. It was probably equal amounts of girls and boys. It's primarily athletes, but there are always things going on after school so chorus and kids in the school play also participated.

We will continue next year. I expect next year's fall program to be better than it was this year. We were doing 75 to 100 transactions a day in a building of 1,400 students. The average transaction was at least \$1 or \$1.25. It provided nice revenue for the program. That was not my ultimate goal; it was to give kids something to eat after school. It took me an hour and 15 minutes of labor, which is nothing.



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