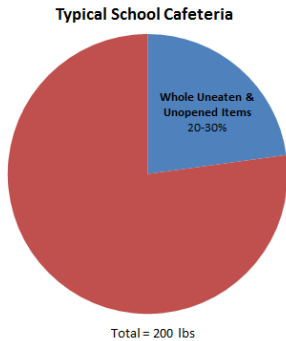


**CALLING ALL DC SCHOOLS: SIGN UP FOR THE D.C. REDUCE FIRST! CHALLENGE BY WEDNESDAY JANUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>**



The DC Department of General Services (DGS)'s DCPS Recycles! program invites all D.C. schools to participate in the D.C. Reduce First! Challenge-Lunch Edition in February 2016.

Did you know that **20 to 30 percent** of waste from a typical **DCPS school cafeteria** is actually **whole uneaten and unopened items**? The D.C. Reduce First Challenge is the **first-ever collaborative effort to reduce food waste (not just compost it) from school lunches in D.C.** During the challenge, schools will conduct simple surveys to count whole uneaten and unopened food items per student lunch, and then take actions to reduce wasted items.

Here's how it works...

- 1. Sign Up.** All DC schools can participate. [Sign up](http://goo.gl/forms/A73nL3UuUd) your school by **Wed, January 20<sup>th</sup>**: <http://goo.gl/forms/A73nL3UuUd>. **Mark your calendars** for a teacher training on the competition on **Tues, January 26<sup>th</sup>**.
- 2. Establish your Baseline.** For 3 days during the first week, collect and count the number of whole uneaten & unopened food items during lunch. The metric is the average number of whole uneaten & unopened food items *per student lunch*. You must select your sample size of student lunches to be part of your dataset. You can measure the waste of one lunch table, one class, one grade level, one lunch period, or even multiple lunch periods. It is up to you!
- 3. Take Action.** Take action to reduce food waste left over after lunch. The goal is for your number of whole uneaten & unopened items to go down throughout the competition. DCPS Recycles! will provide ideas and resources. Some strategies will be simple (i.e. sitting down with students to encourage them to eat), while others a bit more involved.
- 4. Submit Progress & Results to DGS.**  
 Week 1 – Submit your baseline by Friday, February 5th  
 Week 2 – Submit your strategies by Thursday, February 11th  
 Week 3 – Submit an update by Friday, February 19th  
 Week 4 – Submit your final results by Friday, February 26th  
 Make-Up Week – Submit missed deliverables by Friday, March 4th

***What is the metric for success?***

The metric is the average number of whole uneaten & unopened food items per student lunch. So, you must select your sample size of student lunches to be part of your dataset. You can measure the waste of one lunch table, one class, one grade level, one lunch period, or even multiple lunch periods. It is up to you!

***What leftover food should be counted?***

Only whole uneaten & unopened food items, such as:

- Whole fruits (apples, bananas, oranges...)
- Uneaten vegetable cups
- Unopened milk cartons
- Unopened yogurts
- Unopened items brought from home
- etc.



All schools that participate in all four weeks of the challenge will be recognized. Certificates will be awarded for **Best Performance** (percent reduction from the baseline number of wasted items per student lunch), **Most Replicable Solution** (a subjective category to award the most repeatable waste reduction solutions across other schools) and **Most Learning** (a subjective category to award the best example of school learning from the Challenge).

**Ready to Reduce First? [Sign Up](#) by January 22<sup>nd</sup>!**