Engaging Students in Change!

Looking for ways to engage students in the change process? Keep them interested every step of the way with these project ideas! Integrate these projects into math, language arts, consumer science, student leadership, fine arts, even technology!

Step 1: Know Your Venues

- Hold a scavenger hunt where students go around their school and identify all of the places on campus where competitive foods and beverages are being sold.
- Let students take the lead on researching who is responsible for each venue.

Step 2: Build Consensus

- Let students create invitations to an informational meeting on Smart Snacks to be sent to all groups responsible for each venue.
- Allow students to create the presentation for the meeting to remind everyone about Smart Snacks in School. They can highlight the important things to remember about the regulation, as well as create handouts or other take away materials to distribute to attendees. Students can even give the presentation!

Step 3: Know Your Products

- Let students inventory the competitive foods and beverages being sold on campus and collect ingredient statements and nutrition information for those products. They can then take that information, plug it into the Smart Snacks Product Calculator and determine if the products are compliant. This is a great way for them to learn about reading labels.
- Students can research healthier food and beverages and identify replacement products if needed. A great place to start their research? The Alliance’s Smart Food Planner!
- Encourage students to create surveys to determine which foods and beverages their classmates would like to see brought in.

Step 4: Engage the School or District Business Office

- Obtain the list of vendors from the school or district business office and allow students to research compliant foods and beverages offered by those vendors.

Step 5: Work with Vendors

- Students can use their writing skills to write a formal letter to vendors requesting a list of healthier products.
- Let them create a list of products that interest them or they think will interest their peers.
- Encourage them to write another communication to the vendors requesting samples for a taste testing event to decide which products to bring in.
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Step 6: Combine Your Efforts

- Students can create and send invitations to a collaboration meeting.
- Let students develop an ice breaker activity for the meeting.
- Allow students to help inventory shared vendors and write up a report to send back to the group.

Step 7: Communicate

- Let students help spread the word about the importance of healthy options and why changes are being made through student led activities or student leadership groups.
- Let students write the communication tools, such as memos, email blasts, announcements and social media messages about the exciting new foods and beverages they are seeing on campus.

Step 8: Promote!

- Allow students to create the promotional tools for implementation of Smart Snacks! They know what messages resonate with their peers – allow them to exercise their creativity.
- Allow students to choose the products that are highlighted and write an exciting ad or marketing piece for those foods and beverages.
- Let students come up with contests to promote the new foods and beverages and take responsibility for running the contests.
- Students can be responsible for keeping track of the results of various limited time offers and write up an analysis of which products did well and which did not. They can then make recommendations for items to add permanently based on those results.
- Let students create a marketing campaign, which may include social media, to help promote the benefits of healthier foods and beverages and highlight various products throughout their campaign. Allow them to highlight products they utilized in their surveys and taste testing.
- Conduct taste testing – allow students to take full responsibility for the taste testing activities, from choosing the products, to conducting the taste test, to analyzing and reporting on the results.
- Let students be responsible for surveys to find out what their peers would like to see on campus. Surveys are a great project for students! They can learn math skills, language arts skills, and consumer research skills all with one survey. They can develop the survey, distribute to their peers, analyze the results and write up the report. They can present those findings to decision makers who decide what products to purchase. They can then highlight the products chosen in their marketing campaign.