

School Nutrition

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Solutions & Strategies
for K-12 Foodservice

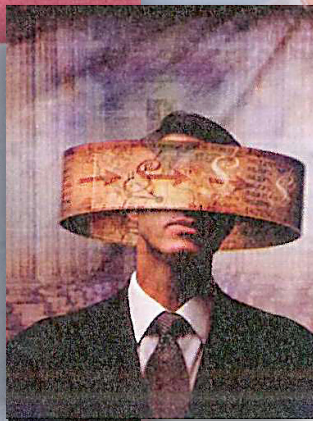
What's Inside Your Dream Kitchen?

Nearly 200 school nutrition professionals shared their priorities for ideal kitchen equipment in the YPulse, Inc., *Dream Kitchen Survey*™ earlier this year. Wish lists include new combi ovens, steamers, walk-in coolers/freezers, dishmachines, ovens and convection ovens. They also expressed interest in compost collectors, solar-powered equipment, undercounter refrigeration, blast chillers, air conditioning and drainage.

What's driving these dreams? Mostly, menu changes: Being able to prepare healthier and fresher foods is a top factor, followed by the greater demand for grab 'n' go foods. Ideally, the respondents said, new equipment also would be easy to operate (especially for those who don't speak English) and create a comfortable, energy-efficient, "green" working environment. However, they noted, dream equipment options would have to fit within tight budgets, as well as severe space constraints.

YPulse followed up its survey by convening a roundtable of 12 school nutrition directors at SNA's Annual National Conference in Philadelphia in July. This group reported longing for equipment that provides instant hot water; recycles waste water; power soaks the dirty dishes; conveys items along a track or belt; helps employees cart breakfasts to classrooms efficiently and without spills; measures temperatures from storage to serving line; enables floors to be machine cleaned; and lasts for years.

Equipment also should fit the capabilities of the school nutrition workforce, which is dominated by women, and many employees are not as tall as their counterparts working in commercial foodservice operations. And, as long as they're wishing, the directors want kitchens dedicated exclusively to training, catering contracts and testing batches—or mobile kitchens for service on the go!



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