



## The Back to School HUSTLE!

Hello! It is the back to school edition of the nutrition focused newsletter specifically for SLPS employees. This month is focused on the Back to School HUSTLE and how we can still feed ourselves well and nourished!

Back to school is a busy time of the year. Maybe you have been teaching for years or you are brand new to your role with your school, either way, each year you have to get back into the groove and find your new routine. During this time you might find it difficult to eat balanced meals. What can you do to help keep your meals balanced and exciting?

1. **Menu Planning.** Whether you are busy or not, menu planning is one the most important strategies people can employ to help keep their diet on track and save money at the store. Research shows that meal planning is central to saving money at the store and reducing your impulse to buy chips, cookies, or other foods not on your list.

2. **Meal Prep.** You might be saying, "I have tried meal prep and it just takes too long, or I don't want to give up hours on my weekend meal prepping for the week." Those are all good points. Meal prep can take a long time, but it does not have to. Consider prepping just one or two things for meals that week. If you are using broccoli in a meal, can you chop the broccoli up. If you are using ground meat in spaghetti and tacos that week, can you brown the meat all at once. A full meal prep, like what you might see on many popular food blogs is time consuming, but maybe you can just prep one or two ingredients ahead of time.

3. **Cook Once and Eat Twice (or more).** If you are making tacos for dinner, cook a double or even triple batch. You can freeze the leftovers into smaller portions, and pull those out of the freezer for lunches or dinners. Your freezer can be one of your best friends for helping you have meals on hand for those busy nights when cooking a meal is not possible.

4. **Use Semi-Homemade Foods.** The grocery store is full of semi-homemade ingredients that can be used in meals. Think about pre-cooked meatballs, sausages, seasoned boxed rice dishes, or even canned foods. Can these foods be higher in sodium? Sure. However, if we are using these pre-made or semi-homemade products as just one component of the meal, the sodium will likely balance out in the end. These types of products can really save you a lot of time in the kitchen.

## Fill your Freezer!



Casseroles, soups, and more are great options to go in your freezer. Check out some great Freezer Meal options below.

- [Turkey Chili](#)
- [Sloppy Joes](#)
- [Marinated Chicken 6 Ways](#)
- [Mini Egg Muffin Bites](#)
- [Barley Jambalaya](#)

Saint Louis Public Schools, in partnership with their health insurance provider, United Healthcare is working with MU Extension's Health and Human Sciences Extension to provide this bi-monthly (every other month) newsletter with the goal of sharing timely nutrition focused health information that you can use in your everyday life. If you have a specific topic you would like to see covered here in this newsletter, please email [Brittany Danescu](mailto:Brittany.Danescu@slpschools.org), the United Healthcare Health Engagement Coordinator.