



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Climate Action Week Awareness: Plant-Based Meals in Schools Significant Impact**

With over 7 BILLION individual school meals served per year across the United States, the Coalition for Healthy School Food (CHSF) recognizes Climate Action Week as a time to increase awareness about the incredible role that schools can play to address climate change. CHSF helps schools around the country, and their primary efforts are in partnership with New York City's Office of Food & Nutrition Services and individual schools in NYC.

According to Christopher Tricarico, Senior Executive Director, Office of Food and Nutrition (OFNS), NYC Department of Education, "The Coalition for Healthy School Food is a trusted partner, providing professional development to our staff as well as encouraging the addition of plant-based entrees for nearly 20 years now."

"We partnered with the Coalition for Healthy School Food to develop healthier options for our students when our school opened in 2008. In 2012, The Coalition for Healthy School Food suggested and supported the creation of the first vegetarian lunch menu for a public school in the country here at PS 244. We believe that these meals have supported higher academic achievement, improved attendance and supported a healthier and cleaner environment." said Robert Groff, principal of PS244 in Flushing, Queens, NY.

The CHSF is celebrating their 20th year of changing how schools feed kids, helping schools across the US. In NYC, CHSF has provided professional development to the Food Service staff at all levels, including presentations by Michelle McMacken, MD, Michael Greger, MD, Vesanto Melina, RD, to name a few. The next presentation in October will be by Kathy Pollard, MS, author of ***Eating Does It: Healing Ourselves and Our Planet With Food*** which will focus on the impact of our food choices on climate change and other environmental factors. CHSF, in partnership with the NYC OFNS, is the non-profit behind the introduction of the vegetarian menu which schools can opt into, hummus as an option in all schools, and Plant-Powered Fridays. In partnership with individual schools in NYC, CHSF teaches a year long curriculum called "Food UnEarthed: Uncovering the Truth About Food"; provides "Cool School Food in the Classroom" a recipe specific curriculum that promotes the plant-based menu choices; Visiting Vegan Chefs, a program for Culinary High Schools; Teacher Lunch & Learns; and Family Dinner Nights. Schools anywhere are welcome to reach out to us for our assistance.

*The Coalition for Healthy School Food (CHSF) is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit that promotes plant-based foods and nutrition education in schools, to teach the whole school community about the effect of our food choices on health, the environment, equity, and other social justice issues.*

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