

Episode 5: New High School Food Options

FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:10;05 - 00:00:48;12

M1: Hello and welcome to the fifth episode of the podcast. This is Frank Bellavia the communications coordinator. Today we're on the road out in Sterling Virginia at Cuisine Solutions and we're talking about a new initiative between Cuisine Solutions in Arlington Public Schools called Cafe Teria. It's a new fast casual cuisine and I'm here with Amy Klonsky the director of Food Services. Also Angel Makmende the farm to school coordinator Bill established the K12 manager for Cuisine Solutions and chef Carlos Amaya who worked on the program is also a graduate of Arlington Public Schools.

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M1: We're hear about this new option. Amy why don't you start off and tell us a little bit about it.

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F2: So the new option to be opening a new serving line and into the high schools that will feature international cuisine weekly and a new meaning fast casual restaurant serving model. It's going to feed your protein grains toppings. I'm part of our farm to school program on fresh fruits and vegetables all in an entree.

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M1: We've had several of your food services managers from high schools here to go over this. This new partnership. How did it come about with with Arlington Public Schools and Cuisine Solutions.

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F5: Well last year we were thinking about changing our style of service in the high schools and we had been exploring all different types of Menus and Recipes and ways we can incorporate fruit and vegetables into our entrees and also to try to get a little bit more excitement in Thai menus at around this time. I met Bill and they were actually exploring. A similar notion and we just decided to start working together in May to think about coming up with this new concept.

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M2: We'll talk a little bit about that about the solution that you guys came up with in this new fast casual approach. I know that we'll talk about this a little bit but the cafeterias are going to look a little different.

00:02:14;21 - 00:03:31;11

M1: The lunch lines are going to look a little different but we'll talk a little bit about the program some concept or reserve and any other food service directors have to try and find out what the kids wanted. And you know there were a lot of options out there for elementary and middle school but you know high schools were not. Participating as much. And really what we found. Is that a lot of kids enjoy the fast casual concepts. And the thing he said maybe kind of sat down we developed a fast casual concept and Amy wanted to put it in guys. So this concept is operates very similar to other fast concepts where you can give bees a wispy grain wrap or salad. Then you add your proteins the proteins that featuring a new book featuring the antibiotic free chicken ground beef or in your cheese crawl. And then you add on top of fresh vegetables from their farm food program. And then the students get to have their address.

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M2: So we've talked about you mentioned this is like a farm just farm to school type thing. What's what's the importance and the benefits of bringing in local produce from from surrounding areas.

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M1: Well it's you know this group home town has lost its fair share and that it also helps create a partnership with the community. It hopes local farmers as well. And we have some the local farmers that we currently work with so I'll be helping out some fruits and vegetables.

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F4: Will this continue the whole program.

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M1: Now this is the first ever program that you guys come together for high schools. So talk a little bit more about the different international flavors that the students will be seeing each week. So they're are going to be a lot of different flavor profiles to do like a Southwestern type flavor profile to be a tropical. Type profile Mediterranean there's Indian cuisine as well as an Asian cuisine really that's designed to do is reduce the work of us guys and.

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M4: They constantly preach no menu fatigue. So hopefully the kids can enjoy that option every day while we were sampling the food earlier.

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M1: We keep talking about the fact that kids we go to these fast casual restaurants you see them alive was that kind of a factor and in creating this type of cuisine for students I think it definitely was what we want to do is really take the fast casual atmosphere of the kids and break those walls and kind of transform that vast experience into this world. Jeff you you've been working on some of the concepts and the flavors and being a recent graduate from Yorktown High School. How do you think the students are going to react to some of the flavor profiles that you've been creating.

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M1: I think it will be definitely a great change and more options for them fresh options. So we're going to be offering good proteins which he. So very consistent perfectly good every time but it's natural and yours is something I'm convinced that they will love.

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M1: How excited are you that you actually get to participate this first ever program and school system that you graduated from.

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M5: Very excited of you contributing with this change when it comes to providing new fresh ingredients new for all your options when it comes to school lunches. You eat great here. I have those options but the time I was in high school you of the time I had to bring my own lunch. There's plenty of time and you can get over this and watch it all over and over and over again snow white trash. It's definitely a great change.

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M2: Go back to the to the farm to table farm to table something we've been doing for a while in Arlington public schools. When did the program start to bring in that fresh local stuff local ingredients.

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F7: Why. We've had some sort of farmers school for five or nine years now. I was hired three years ago as a full time from the school for here to really be able to bring into schools and expand the program so as part of the program we work with the local farmers in different school every week for tastings and take it personally a child that we haven't tried before.

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F4: So this will get to this high schools on a daily basis until they can try everything.

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M2: You mentioned that the Farm to School program has been around for about nine years so those kids are now when they first started the program are in high school. What are your hopes that they learned throughout their time in school about this. What were you trying to get to them with this farm to table program.

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F4: Brian hatchway so we're hoping that we actually already see them as they remember us from year to year that only this period of nine years they're seeing you know and even they're seeing comparisons in a new way. So I think that that kind of education that we get from the years about the fresh fruits and vegetables is going to be so many times so that when they walk in. Now if they see you know a time if they see you know different items they're going to say oh yeah I know what that is I know how it's going to take some time off.

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M2: So I think it's really going to pay off some of the things that you've done in the schools the farms have actually come into the cafeteria and sampled this food for the students. Absolutely every week during the school year some some years it's been five years it's been on my name every week myself and.

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F4: Our foreign partners are in the schools. We are thinking Mitsu which we can't even make and they let me call ours. We've made things that kids don't usually eat. Especially you know in the way that we are making it. And so we stopped it.

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M2: So I think that any problem with students accepting this concept I'm impressed with the kids eating the beat super I kind of looked around the reaction of some of the people that are on the table and I'm not a big fan of so it's pretty interesting and pretty cool to see the those things and enjoying them.

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F4: Yeah. It's really it's really fun.

00:10:07;30 - 00:10:39;01

M2: We're with McClosky Angel Makumbi handbill Stribling with K12 schools food services and chef Carlos Meyer from K12. And we're talking about this new initiative first ever initiative to pilot this fast casual approach to two cuisines in the schools. The lunch lines are going to look a little different. Students come the first day of school what's what's changing around what they're going to see in the cafeteria.

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F2: Well in the high schools the lines that this concept is offering aren't going to look different and they're separate from the other the other serving lines. So kids will have an opportunity to just go through and select this option and then we'll have a sandwich line and a regular cafeteria line as well.

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M1: So you'll still have the same type of stuff that they've used to. This is this is the new direction in price wise is this is going to cost until the amounts are going to be the same as their normal lunch options.

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F2: This is going to cost the same. It's a regular lunch option and I'm hoping that all the components that are at one time in an entree so that the kids can get through the line a little more quickly.

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M2: How do you hope the students react when they when they first come into the cafeteria on September 5th and Cetus.

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F2: Well we're hoping they're really excited. We're hoping that they can find one of the options that they like or every option will be cycling on every week. So we hope that we can really increase participation in making making choose different toppings every day so they can create their own balls and keep it exciting.

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M1: So we've got mentioned asian mexican or South Southwest Indian and Mediterranean. Are there plans to increase that to change those those flavor profiles around and bring something else in or is it that's going to stay throughout the year or is it based on the reaction of students. Absolutely.

00:12:13;00 - 00:13:00;18

M3: We're going to monitor what students likes and dislikes are students for comments and really try and make the concept better and actually grow the concept to have more profiles offer more options. This is where a new protein selections for the students where as I said for many teachers you know something hurts us guys. Council we really want to keep it fresh for the kids. Even though you know it's a customisable and they can change a little bit every day. You know they still you know could get tired of those cuisines. You know you want to continue to develop. And you know where I work with you on that.

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M1: OK. So one of you if you've got beef you've got chicken and then sort of the vegetarian option is this. There's this cheese type talk a little bit about that cheese and what it is and how how you guys determine that versus a vegetable or something either incorporating new cheese and cheese. So we are.

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M5: Brought in from Iran. It's going to be amazing. So they're all going to be players.

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M6: That's a great vegetarian option.

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M2: Part of this is that the sauces that have been developed and some of the foods there's no allergens in it. So there's there's no worry for students who have a peanut allergy or a dairy allergy or soy allergy. So this is all you guys have taken that really into account for students.

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M4: Well there have been year does that. There it is. But for the most part what we tried to do when we developed the recipes it's sort of you know reduce the potential allergens. Prime example we used a non peanut butter in one of our season buds so that it doesn't have a treat allergy you know. But there are areas of cheese where you know there could be allergy. But for the most part we try to do as much as possible in developing recipes to keep the allergy.

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M1: We were talking earlier while we were sampling about the method that's day used to cook the food called Suvi. Carlos do you want to kind of talk a little bit about what that method is.

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M5: Yes. Nice caramel under backing French. So he's looking cooking a pouch depending on the product is several hours and it's so easy to read and manipulate once this becomes unpasteurised as well. So used to be in a pouch. That's a really easy way to read them as well. And as I said to you really and just. Try to do something different. I apologize.

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M1: All right. My favorite and trying to it was the Asian and some of the Asian dressings do you guys do you guys have favorites after trying.

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F3: My favorite is the Caribbean.

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F4: I love dancing and I have some other sauces for really using a good way to incorporate that for you. Now how do you get the Caribbean and the built Chevy.

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M4: I love the groovy thing immensely and also has great flavor. So I think it's huge.

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M7: Jeff your favorite importante. I really love the military.

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M2: I know you we were talking about the pineapple salsa that goes with the rest of the crew. I really like it for the Asian the sesame ginger. That was a really good song so I'm jealous. I work next door to Washington leasehold. I'm going to be over there quite a bit for lunch. So I want to thank everybody for taking the time to just sit down and talk about this new initiative and this new program and I think it's it's an amazing amazing thing and the kids are going to really love it.

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F3: There are plans to maybe expand this in the future to different secondary schools possibly possibly into high schools if it does that the kids like it may expand. And one other thing I wanted to add Bill mentioned this. Is going to be surveying students to find out.

00:17:05;07 - 00:17:10;07

M1: What they like what they don't like correct. Yes. All right.

00:17:10;13 - 00:17:29;03

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