



FULL FUTURES

A School
Nutrition
Partnership



Our second program year of Full Futures has been all about partnership, collaboration and learning. There is so much to celebrate and build upon, and still much to learn. Full Futures is truly a collective of partners coming together to support each other and execute mutually reinforcing activities to achieve our common goal: to foster a school nutrition environment that ensures all students are well-nourished and ready to thrive at school and in life.

Full Futures has two program sites. The first is in Camden, N.J., officially launched during the 2021-2022 school year with the Camden City School District. The second project site, in Charlotte, N.C., began during the 2022-2023 school year in partnership with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

In Camden, we've continued to work closely with the Camden City School District's School Nutrition Team and six community partners to build on last year's efforts. We are committed to ensuring students have access to nourishing meals, opportunities to learn where their food comes from, and a voice in deciding what's on the menu.

In Charlotte, we've collaborated with the Career and Technical Education Department and two community partners to embed more nutrition and "farm to table" concepts into culinary and agriculture career pathways for older students. It is our hope that introducing these concepts to elementary and middle school students as well develops student interest and knowledge of nutrition from an early age.

We can't emphasize enough that this work would not be possible without all our dedicated partners who are committed to investing in and serving their communities. We are especially grateful to our district partners, who work tirelessly to uplift and support students every day.

Behind the scenes, Healthier Generation staff work across program sites to support and coordinate activities with partners and evaluate Full Futures' impact, while Campbell's leverages resources to sustain this important work. Together, we're documenting our learnings as we go, using them to inform our work and to develop a program roadmap that we hope will enable others to expand this work in their own communities.

We look forward to the upcoming year and are pleased to share this overview of our past year's highlights with you.

Kate Barrett
President
The Campbell's Foundation



Kathy Higgins
Chief Executive Officer





About Full Futures

Launched in 2021 alongside public, private and nonprofit partners, the goal of the Full Futures program is to foster a school nutrition environment that ensures all students are well nourished and ready to thrive at school and life. The five-year initiative centers on four pillars with specific and measurable goals within each pillar, with the intention of developing a program roadmap to share best practices and lessons learned.

Our strategy: four pillars



School Nutrition Mindset: Creating a school culture that prioritizes nutritious food for students.



Infrastructure: Enhancing the infrastructure of school food service and food education through equipment, resources and investments in training staff.



Nutrition Education: Expanding the reach and impact of nutrition and culinary education.



Procurement and Menu Change: Procuring nutritious, locally sourced ingredients and supporting menu changes centered around students.



Our methodology: collective impact

Collective impact brings organizations together in a structured way to achieve social change. Successful Collective Impact initiatives typically have five conditions that produce alignment and lead to powerful results:

1. A common agenda to which all partners are committed.
2. Shared measurement system that supports consistent data collection.
3. Mutually reinforcing activities where partners take on different but coordinated activities.
4. Continuous communication to build trust and collaboration.
5. A backbone organization to coordinate the initiative and support partners.

Common agenda

Together, we can foster a school nutrition environment that ensures all students are well nourished and ready to thrive at school and in life.

Full Futures Partners

Camden



Charlotte



Backbone and Evaluation Partner





Full Futures Camden

The first program site launched in Camden, N.J., with the Camden City School District in the 2021-2022 school year. In 2022-23, Year 2 programming and activities included:

- Local food procurement incentive pilot.
- Student tastings and input in menu design.
- Training and support for school nutrition team and cafeteria staff.
- Youth engagement through the Camden Youth Advisory Council.
- Nutrition education for students and families.

Over 7,000 students reached through Full Futures activities



This collaboration brings us valuable resources and support, thanks to the dedication of industry leaders and passionate individuals who are committed to supporting our school community. Growing initiatives and implementing positive changes can be challenging, but having supportive partners can make all the difference. We are fortunate to have partners who are willing to support and uplift initiatives. Together, we can make a significant impact and create a better future for our school community.

Arlethia Brown

Senior Director, Camden City School District School Nutrition

Pillar 1: School Nutrition Mindset

Camden Youth Advisory Council

The Food Bank of South Jersey coordinated biweekly meetings and activities for 11 middle and four high school students from five local schools participate in the Camden Youth Advisory Council (CYAC). CYAC is a youth-led group that provides a platform for students to learn about, advocate for and implement initiatives to create a healthier community.

CYAC students had the opportunity to learn about nutrition, as well as culinary and agricultural careers. They went on field trips to Campbell's headquarters, the Food Bank of South Jersey and two farms: Buster Petronglo & Son Farm and Geogreens. They also learned from members of the Camden City School District's School Nutrition Team and attended a Career Night and College Night to learn about different pathways after graduation. Two CYAC students have expressed interest in wanting to pursue a career in culinary arts.

CYAC activities this year:

- Students learned about the district Wellness Policy and rewrote it in their own words.
- The "All Around the World Food Tour" allowed students to try cuisines from different countries.
- Campbell's Chef Gerald Drummond hosted a "Golden Spatula Competition" where students made an Asian-inspired stir fry for their parents.
- Students supported Full Futures partners at the Sustainability Festival, distributed reusable water bottles and participated in the filming of a segment for PBS.
- Students participated in tastings and provided feedback to inform the school menu.



I wanted to be part of the advisory council to make actual changes to the school menu and help others learn about nutrition.

Camden Youth Advisory Council member



Family and community engagement

Full Futures partners coordinated collaborative activities among partners and school sites to engage families and community residents, including:

- **Language Access:** To improve the dissemination of important information to key audiences, efforts were made to create bilingual promotional materials such as newsletters, an updated food access map and more. This practice will continue in Year 3.
- **What's Cooking in Camden:** In September, the CCSD's School Nutrition Team debuted its "What's Cooking in Camden?" newsletter. Each month it highlights past and upcoming events; special menu items including local and seasonal produce; a unique program offered by the Nutrition department; a "School Food Hero" who supports the Department; and resources available to students and their families.

Expanding food access for families

- **Food Access Map:** Center For Family Services worked with partners to update a food access map, highlighting meals and food distribution sites around the city.
- **Produce box distribution:** Over the summer months, the district partnered with The Common Market to distribute 1,200 free produce boxes around the city. The boxes were filled with local fruits and vegetables, including



FOOD ACCESS MAP CAMDEN FULL FUTURES			
1 Cathedral Kitchen 1514 Federal St Camden 08104 Mon-Fri: 3:15pm-5pm Sat: 12pm-1pm Dinner Service, Food Items upon request 856-964-6771	2 Fountain of Life 403 Stevens St Camden 08103 3rd Wednesday 8am-12pm Groceries 856-397-7524	3 Heart of Camden 1840 Broadway Camden 08102 Every Tuesday 11am-4pm Groceries 856-966-8539	4 Sacred Heart Church 1729 Ferry Ave Camden 08104 4th Saturday 8am-12pm Groceries 856-966-6700
5 Anitoch Baptist Church 700 Ferry Ave Camden 08104 3rd Tuesday 9am-1pm Groceries & Clothes 856-966-1745	6 KCNA Mobile 525 Clinton St Camden 08103 3rd Wednesday 8am-11am Groceries 856-964-8055	7 God's Church of Refuge 793 Elm St Camden 08102 Every Tuesday 11am-4pm Groceries 856-333-8359	8 Mighty Writers 1801 Broadway Camden 08104 Monday-Tuesday 11:30am-1pm Groceries 409-316-9093
9 Little Rock Baptist Church 1210 Kenwood Ave Camden 08103 2nd & 4th Wednesday 8am-11am Groceries 856-757-0445	10 The Neighborhood Center 278 Kaighn Ave Camden 08103 Monday-Friday Lunch Served 12pm-1pm 856-385-5295	11 Puerto Rican Unity for Progress 818 Broadway Camden 08103 Mon 9am-12pm: Meals Wed 12:30pm-2pm Groceries 856-541-1418	12 Kroc Center 1945 Harrison Ave Camden 08105 Mon 9am-3:30pm Thurs 1pm-3:30pm Friday 9am-2:30pm Groceries 856-379-4871

blueberries, mushrooms, summer squash, asparagus, radishes, watermelon and dark leafy greens.

- **Local Foods & Sustainability Festival:** The CCSD's School Nutrition Team hosted a festival on Earth Day with support from Full Futures partners. A free farmers market was available for families to take home locally grown produce. Farmers markets will be a key strategy in Year 3 to support food access.



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We are developing a great model of menu enhancement, recipe training and sampling of new recipes that can now be scaled up.

Marion Williams, WITS National Program Director, Chef



New water filtration systems

American Water Charitable Foundation and New Jersey American Water funded cafeteria water filters and bottle filling stations throughout the district, replacing outdated water fountains in 18 Camden City schools. This investment significantly reduces the district’s spending on bottled water, provides easier fresh food preparation, and creates access to safe and reliable drinking water for students and staff. Over 5,500 reusable water bottles with educational flyers were also distributed to students and staff, encouraging them to use the new stations.



Pillar 2: Infrastructure

Professional development

Wellness in the Schools (WITS) led professional development and culinary training opportunities for 150 food service workers and District Food & Nutrition Services (FNS) staff, teaching them new skills, culturally relevant recipes and how to utilize local and seasonal items.

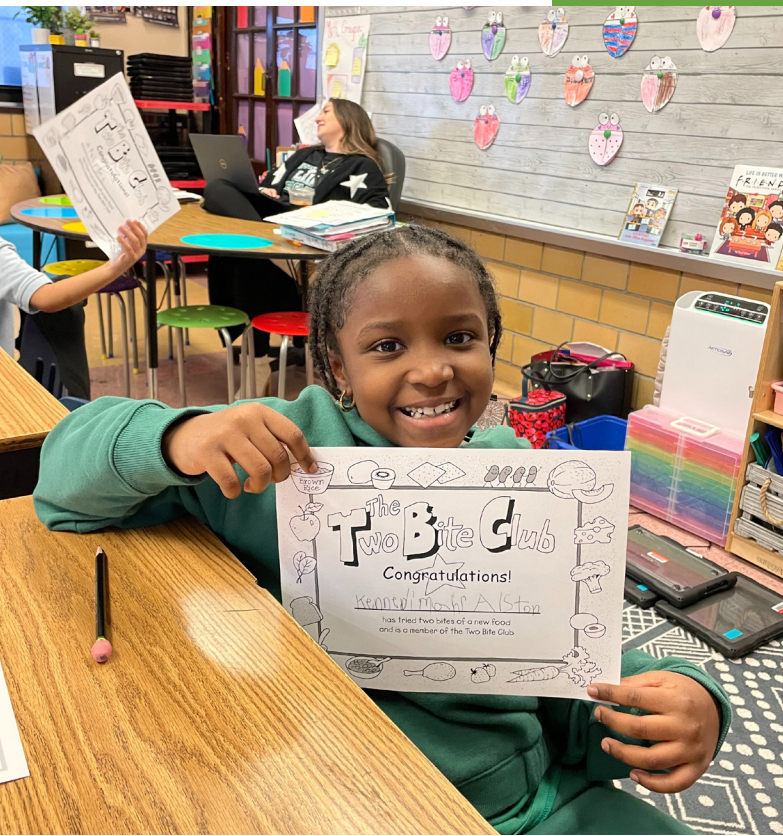
WITS chefs conducted needs assessments at new school locations before trainings and identified that kitchens needed immersion blenders, peelers, measuring cups and measuring spoons. Whitsons Culinary Group, the district’s food service management company, provided the necessary equipment and tools.

WITS chefs help prepare meals, snacks and new items for students and staff to try, including food for the Camden Youth Advisory Council. WITS chefs utilize tasting opportunities to infuse quick nutrition education lessons and provide recipe cards to take home.



Sustainability initiatives

The Camden City School District invested in both indoor and outdoor gardening systems at schools across the district. FoodCorps service members led nutrition and garden lessons in alignment with the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program in elementary schools, teaching students about where food comes from and what plants need to grow. FoodCorps service members also conducted waste audits and concluded that if “share tables,” composting and proper recycling are implemented, cafeteria waste could decrease up to 94%; there are plans to implement these practices in Year 3.



It helped me make better choices for my family in more ways than eating.

Cooking Matters Student Participant

Pillar 3: Nutrition Education

Nutrition education for students and families

The Food Bank of South Jersey hosted 58 Full Futures-associated nutrition education lessons this year in schools, virtually and throughout the community. Over 600 people were reached through these classes and activities.

- Cooking Matters is a series of interactive cooking lessons tailored for children, teens or families. Participants learn about dietary guidelines, prepare food in class and are given ingredients to replicate recipes at home.
- Two Bite Club introduces young children to new food items and encourages them to try new food items by taking “two bites.” The program is conducted in collaboration with the district’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP).
- Cooking demonstrations allow students to learn new cooking methods and sample healthy and delicious new recipes.

Participant takeaways

94%

are interested in choosing healthy foods and drinks.

86%

agreed that they have a better understanding of how to eat healthfully.

83%

prepared a Cooking Matters recipe at home.

77%

agree that in this program, “I feel like my voice matters.”

74%

tried a new food.



Building relationships with farmers

With support from The Common Market, the Camden City School District’s School Nutrition Team has built relationships with local farmers and growers. In particular, Desmond Hayes, owner and founder of GeoGreens, an indoor hydroponics farm located in Hamilton, N.J., has created multiple learning opportunities for students. Hayes taught classroom lessons with kindergarten students, invited the Camden Youth Advisory Council members to visit his farm, and volunteered his time at the Local Foods and Sustainability Festival. Nutrition department members visited other local farms this year as well, learning directly from the people who grow food for the school district.



Pillar 4: Procurement and Menu Change

Local procurement pilot

CCSD's School Nutrition Team partnered with The Common Market and its farm partners again this year to receive weekly deliveries of locally sourced product from New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. In addition to its school food operating budget, the district was provided \$90,000 as part of Full Futures as an incentive to purchase locally. The pilot supports farm-to-school efforts, catalyzes economic opportunities for farmers, and increases access to fresh, wholesome foods.

- 180k** dollars reinvested into local economies.
- 31** unique food items procured.
- 77** percent of incentive dollars spent in New Jersey.
- 23** local farms supported.
- 105k** pounds of local food delivered.
- 57** percent of farms supported were from New Jersey.

8 recipes added to the district menu

CCSD's School Nutrition Team and the district's food service management company, Whitsons Culinary Group, remain committed to feeding students and families nutritious and appetizing meals that feature local items and are culturally relevant for their students. To make that a reality, eight new recipes, developed in partnership with WITS, have been added to Whitsons' permanent dining menu. All new recipes are vegetarian or vegan and include opportunities to use local items.



Influencing statewide policy

The Common Market has spent the last two years advocating for statewide legislation that would codify and expand the efforts of the local procurement pilot. Bill A5459 was introduced and voted favorably out of the Assembly Agriculture and Food Security Committee in June.

If passed, the bill would require the New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture to establish a \$6.5 million grant program that would reimburse school districts for costs related to sourcing and procuring local food for students.

Additionally, prior to releasing the state's Local Food for Schools Funding, which provides dedicated funds to support the procurement of New Jersey-grown food for school meals programs, the State Department consulted with The Common Market to learn about best practices and lessons learned from the local procurement pilot in the previous year.



We would never have known that our students like mushrooms if we weren't able to bring mushrooms in through the procurement incentive because that's not something that we would have purchased in our regular school meals program.

Arlethia Brown, Senior Director, Camden City School Nutrition

New items served for the first time

In March, mushrooms were served for the first time. Additionally, CYAC students tried mushroom pasta for the first time and 72% would likely choose it again if served as their meal. Another group of students and staff tried sauteed mushrooms, 82% of whom reported loving or liking the recipe. Based on this feedback, mushrooms were included in produce boxes distributed to community members.

12 items procured locally for the first time, including:

- Basil
- Beef
- Beets
- Blackberries
- Cranberries
- Eggs
- Mushrooms
- Parsnips
- Pears
- Pumpkins
- Radishes
- Swiss Chard



Forward purchasing commitments

CCSD's School Nutrition Team was able to provide long-term purchasing commitments to both Free Haven Farms and GeoGreens, two producers of color in New Jersey. Forward commitments are agreements made in advance to purchase products from values-aligned growers over an extended period of time.

"Forward commitments reflect a major paradigm shift compared to the standard model of institutional food purchasing – placing orders on a weekly basis, which may vary significantly week to week, providing little to no sustainability to farmers," says Rachel Terry, national partnerships director for The Common Market. "By making forward commitments to black, indigenous or people of color (BIPOC) producers, the district engaged as mission-aligned investors in our regional economy and in our agricultural communities, truly embodying the potential of their role as an anchor buyer supporting both the health of their students and New Jersey family farmers."

Expanding Full Futures to Charlotte

The second Full Futures program site launched in Charlotte, NC in the 2022-2023 school year in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS). This was possible through collaboration with our district partner, Career and Technical Education (CTE), with a specific focus on embedding more nutrition and “farm to table” concepts into the culinary and agriculture pathways. Additionally, by working with partners 100 Gardens and The Bulb, the goal is for Full Futures Charlotte programming to expose students of all ages to fresh food and nutrition education at school.

The program launched in spring 2023 with a kickoff event at Garinger High School for community partners and district staff to learn about the purpose and goals of the initiative. 100 Gardens gave a tour of the school’s greenhouse, showing an aquaponics system in action. The Bulb showcased mobile farmers’ market, educating participants on the benefits of their services. The CMS CTE department provided refreshments prepared by students enrolled in culinary pathway programs, allowing students to showcase their skills and use ingredients grown in the school gardens.

Programming and activities in the first year included:

- Installation and curriculum support for aquaponics and hydroponics growing systems in classrooms and greenhouses.
- Addition of new nutrition and aquaponics content into the culinary and agriculture CTE pathways.

Over 1,600 students impacted through curriculum development and activities



Pillar 1: School Nutrition Mindset

Family Nutrition Night

In May, Full Futures partners hosted a Family Nutrition Night. Multiple interactive and educational stations were set up for families to participate in, and the first 100 families could take home a free produce box. Culinary students also prepared meat and vegetarian chili for attendees to sample alongside a cooking demonstration. In the 2023-24 school year, additional Family Nutrition Nights will take place.

Family Nutrition Night participant takeaways



have a better understanding of how to eat healthy.



indicated their family learned something new.



now know where they can access affordable food.

Pillar 2: Infrastructure

Four schools installed or expanded their use of aquaponics or hydroponics systems: Merry Oaks Elementary, Eastway Middle, Independence High School and Garinger High School. These are some of the most sustainable food-growing systems available. Hydroponics & Aquaponics systems allows growers to produce food anywhere in the world, at any time of the year.

- Aquaponics is a method of farming that raises edible freshwater fish and vegetables together in a symbiotic environment.
- Hydroponics is a method of growing plants without soil. Instead, plants are grown in a nutrient-rich water-based solution.

CMS Culinary students utilize some of the food grown via these systems. Other students in Agriculture and Business Marketing classes also utilize these systems as part of their classwork.

Pillar 3: Nutrition Education

Aquaponics education

Eight e-learning modules were developed to instruct teachers on the basics of using aquaponics systems and integrating them into their lesson plans.

In late July, 100 Gardens hosted its first Aquaponics Summer School for 23 teachers who spent five days gaining professional development. Teachers ended their weeklong training at Juneberry Ridge in Norwood, N.C. taking a tour of its greenhouses.

In Year 2 of Charlotte programming, 100 Gardens plans to launch an education portal for partner schools that will contain school standard-aligned lessons plans for K-12 science and math.

Thank you, Full Futures partners!



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