



Back
To
School



- Cardington-Lincoln
- Highland
- Mt. Gilead
- Northmor

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Wednesday, August 10, 2016

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*Both services located at same location, Morrow County Hospital, 651 West Marion Road, Mt. Gilead, Ohio



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Cardington-Lincoln releases free, reduced lunch policy

Cardington Lincoln Schools today announced its 2016-2017 program year policy for free and reduced-price meals for students unable to pay the full price of meals served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast, After School Care Snack. Each school office and the central office has a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by any interested party.

The Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines will be used for determining eligibility. Children from families whose annual income is at or below the Federal Guidelines are eligible for free and reduced price meals.

Application forms are being distributed to all homes in a letter to parents or guardians. To apply for free and reduced-price benefits, households should fill out the application and return it to the school. Additional copies are available

at the principal's office in each school. A complete application is required. Households which currently receive Special Nutrition Assistance Program Benefits (SNAP, formally known as food stamps) or Ohio Works First (OWF) funds for a child must provide the child's name, the SNAP or OWF case number and signature of an adult household member on the application. Households which do not receive SNAP or OWF funds must provide the names of all household members, the last four digits of the Social Security Number of the adult signing the application or state "none" if the adult does not have a Social Security Number, the amount and source of income received by each household member, (state the monthly income) and the signature of an adult household member. If any of



this information is missing, the school cannot process the application.

FREE HEALTH CARE: Families with children eligible for school meals may be eligible for FREE health care coverage through Medicaid and/or Ohio's Healthy Start & Healthy Families programs. These programs include coverage for doctor visits, immunizations, physicals, prescriptions, dental, vision, mental health, substance abuse and more. Please call 1-800-324-8680 for more information or to request an application. Information can also be found on the web at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/ohp/consumers/>

familychild.stm. Anyone who has an Ohio Medicaid card is already receiving these services. The

information provided on the application is confidential and will be used only for the purpose of determining eligibility and may be verified at any time during the school year by school or other program official. To discourage the possibility of misrepresentation, the application forms contain a statement above the space for signature certifying that all information furnished is true and correct. Applications are being made in connection with the receipt of federal funds. Schools or other officials may check the information on the application at any time during the school year. Deliberate misrepresentation of information

may subject the applicant to prosecution under applicable state and federal laws. Households will be notified of the approval or denial of benefits.

Foster children are categorically eligible for free meal benefits regardless of the household's income. If a family has foster children living with them and wishes to apply for such meals or milk for them, contact the school for more information.

Under the provision of the policy, Debbie Hart, SNS, Food Service Director will review applications and determine eligibility. If a parent or guardian disagrees with the decision on the application or the result of verification, the decision may be discussed with the determining official on an informal basis. If a formal appeal is desired, the household has the right to a fair hearing. A fair hearing can be requested either orally or in writing

from:

Brian Petrie,
Supt. 121 Nichols
St, Cardington,
OH 43315,
419.864.3691.

The policy contains an outline of the hearing procedure.

Households may apply for benefits any time during the school year. If a household is not currently eligible and if the household size increases or income decreases because of unemployment or other reasons, the family should contact the school to file a new application. Such changes may make the children of the family eligible for free or reduced-price benefits if the family income falls at or below the levels shown above.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions



Keeping your kids healthy this school year

Back-to-school season can be fun and exciting for kids and parents alike. With your kids coming home after being exposed to all the children at school and the added stress that the school year brings, it could mean more days stuck in bed for your whole family. Experts say that rather than being reactive, it's important to be proactive by taking steps to keep kids healthy.

"Building and maintaining a strong immune system is key to a long, healthy life," says Larry Robinson, PhD, and vice president of Scientific Affairs,

Embria Health Sciences, a manufacturer of science-based ingredients that support wellness.

For a strong and healthy school year ahead, Robinson and Embria are offering some useful health and wellness tips.

Great Habits

A healthy lifestyle means developing healthy habits. Perhaps most important is to enforce a consistent bedtime to promote adequate sleep, which is proven in studies to promote good health. Added bonus: kids will be more alert

in their classes after a full night's rest.

Proper nutrition is also key: three solid nutrient-filled meals a day and healthy, non-sugary snacks. Regular, moderate exercise also promotes good health, so encourage them to participate in physical activities like sports teams, dance classes and even just playing in the yard.

Smart Supplements

Even well balanced diets can use a few more benefits to promote better wellness and good health. The best immune

system supplements are well researched and do more than simply boost the immune system.

Consider supplements containing the breakthrough, fermentation ingredient EpiCor, shown to support the body's ability to initiate the proper immune response when needed. For example, NOW Healthy Immune contains EpiCor, Zinc, Selenium, and Vitamin D-3 and C for additional support for the body's immune system. Formulated into easy pouring packs, they are a convenient

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way for busy families to stay healthy on-the-go.

To help strengthen the immune system another way, think about your gut, which is where 70 percent of your immune system resides. Probiotics can keep your gut and you healthier. Consider a supplement such as Hyperbiotics Immune, which contains EpiCor, targeted probiotic strains, zinc, vitamin C and echinacea.

While these statements have not been evaluated by the Food & Drug Administration and these products are not intended

to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent disease, many experts believe they can help you maintain a strong immune system.

Reduce Stress

Too much stress can compromise the immune system. Help kids reduce the stress in their lives by not over-scheduling them. Ensure that with schoolwork, chores and after school activities, kids still have time to relax, see friends and just be a kid.

For happy, healthy kids, practice wellness habits that promote a strong immune system.

Cardington-Lincoln

From page 1

participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally,

program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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Highland announces free, reduced lunch policy for 2016-2017

Highland Local Schools today announced its 2016-2017 program year policy for free and reduced-price meals for students unable to pay the full price of meals served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast, After School Care Snack. Each school office and the central office has a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by any interested party.

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FREE HEALTH CARE: Families with children eligible for school meals may be eligible for FREE health care coverage through Medicaid and/or Ohio's Healthy Start & Healthy Families programs. These programs include coverage for doctor visits, immunizations, physicals, prescriptions, dental, vision, mental health, substance abuse and more. Please call 1-800-324-8680 for more information or to request an application. Information can also be found on the web at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/ohp/consumers/familychild.stm>. Anyone who has an Ohio Medicaid card

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misrepresentation of information may subject the applicant to prosecution under applicable state and federal laws.

Households will be notified of the approval or denial of benefits.

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Under the provision of the policy, Debbie Hart, SNS, Food Service Director will review applications and determine eligibility. If a parent or guardian disagrees with the decision on the application or the result of verification, the decision may be discussed with the determining official on an informal basis. If a formal appeal is desired, the household has the right to a fair hearing. A fair hearing can be

requested either orally or in writing from:

William Dodds,
Supt. 6506 St.
Rt. 229, Marengo,
OH 43334,
419.768.2206.

The policy contains an outline of the hearing procedure.

Households may apply for benefits any time during the school year. If a household is not currently eligible and if the household size increases or income decreases because of unemployment or other reasons, the family should contact the school to file a new application. Such changes may make the children of the family eligible for free or reduced-price benefits if the family income falls at or below the levels shown above.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating



in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

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To file a program complaint of discrimination,

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or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form.

To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture

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(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

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Highland improving facilities for upcoming school year

By Gena Wiley
Crawford-Morrow Community Guide

To further interest in the student athletics, Highland will be undertaking a massive renovation effort of its sport facilities.

The district is set to install a turf surface for the football field, as well as replace the current track surface.

Kicking off May 9, the project is set to be completed by Aug. 5 in time for fall sporting events.

Following the renovation effort, Highland will become the lone school in Morrow County with an artificial turf surface on its football field.

The renovation project will be completed by Vasco Sports Group and the MOTZ Group.

The district has been setting aside funding

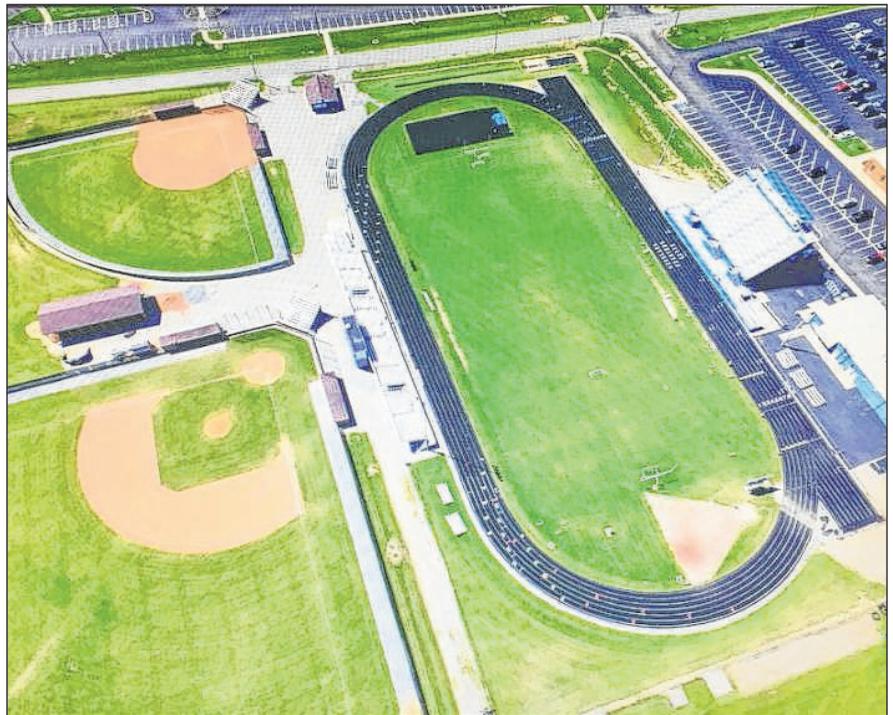
for the new track for a number of year.

And with a donation of \$250,000 from Jack Fishburn; the Fishburn Family Field at Covrett Stadium will be home to new generations of Highland Scots.

Aug. 19 will be the premier Scots' soccer match, with Highland girls beginning at 5 p.m. and Boys Soccer at 7 p.m. In addition, Scots Madness will be held on the same evening with an introduction to all Highland student athletes.

When asked what has changed for Highland High School athletics, Mike Delaney, new Athletic Director for Highland, quickly responded, "Updates to the facilities, growth of the Booster Club and of course, soccer."

Coming from Big Walnut School District, Delaney knows about



Courtesy photo

Highland will begin its athletic facility renovation project next month. The district hopes to have the work completed by the start of the fall sports season.

the growing pains of a small town school with an increasing population.

A former head basketball and football coach, Delaney has

seen how a changing community effects trends in high school sports. For example, under Mr. Delaney, Highland has welcomed soccer into their

athletic program, expecting other sports to become more popular and part of Highland Athletics in the future.

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the more ways we allow kids to express themselves athletically, the better it is for students," said the AD.

Since the formation of Highland H.S. Varsity Soccer,

Highland Scots Soccer Club participant numbers have jumped from 96 kids to 143.

According to the athletic director board report, Highland has 182 students, (grades

7-12), participating in spring sports. The MOAC has recognized 127 Highland athletes, (grades 9-12), who have maintained a GPA of 3.2 or higher through the first six weeks of school,

giving credence that students who are athletes can excel in both sports and academics at Highland.

Reach us at mcsnews@civitasmedia.com or at 419-946-3010



HIGHLAND DISTRICT CALENDAR FOR 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR

Highland Local School District has released its district calendar of events for the 2016 - 2017 school year.

August

- 10 - Work day for teachers
- 10 - Open house for all school buildings
- 11 - Waiver day
- 12 - No school
- 15 - Waiver day
- 16 - First day of school for students
- 29 - Morrow County Fair; no school

September

- 1 - Morrow County Fair; no school
- 5 - Labor Day; no school
- 6 - Classes resume

October

- 20 - Student early release day; parent teacher conferences
- 21 - No school

November

- 23 - Thanksgiving break begins
- 29 - Classes resume

December

- 21 - Winter break begins

January

- 3 - Classes resume
- 16 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day; no school

February

- 16 - Early dismissal for conferences
- 17 - No school
- 20 - No school

March

- 17 - No school

April

- 13 - Spring break begins
- 18 - Classes resume

May

- 21 - Graduation day
- 23 - Last day of school
- 24 - Teacher work day



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FREE ESTIMATES



Mount Gilead outlines free, reduced lunch policy

Mount Gilead Exempted Village Schools today announced its 2016-2017 program year policy for free and reduced-price meals for students unable to pay the full price of meals served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast, After School Care Snack. Each school office and the central office has a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by any interested party.

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Brian Petrie, Supt. 121 Nichols St, Cardington, OH 43315, 419.864.3691.

The policy contains an outline of the hearing procedure.

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ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

MGHS freshman, new student orientation slated for August

Orientation for incoming freshmen, new students and interested parents at Mount Gilead High School will take place on Aug. 11, from 5 - 5:30 p.m. during the school's open house.

The event will be held in the high school gymnasium.

At orientation, administration and guidance personnel will meet with students and their parents to help facilitate the transition to the high school.

It is very important that fees are paid and schedules are obtained prior.

Information contained on student schedules such as courses, classroom locations, locker locations and combinations, etc., will all be explained during the introduction session.

Following orientation, students will be able to visit their classrooms and find their lockers – making sure that combinations function properly.

Fees for the upcoming school year will be \$35 plus \$10 class dues.

The school is asking that fees be paid upon schedule

pick-up. If for some reason this is not possible, parents should contact the office to arrange a payment schedule or fee waiver in advance.

Payment should be in the form of check or money order made payable to Mount Gilead High School for the exact fee amount.

Schedules will be available to students with fee payment on Aug. 9 - 10, between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m., and on the Aug. 11, between the hours of 1 - 6 p.m.

Please contact the high school office at 419-947-6065 with any questions.



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Save on everything for back-to-school with these smart tips and tricks

Whether your kids are school playground-bound or college-bound, the back-to-school season can be an expensive time of year. Families with

children in grades K-12 plan to spend an average \$673.57 while college students and families with children in college plan to spend an average of \$888.71,

according to a National Retail Federation 2016 annual survey.

Where are their dollars going? The top five back-to-school supplies searched for

are Crayola ColorStudio iMarker, BIC Pencil Xtra, TI 84 graphing calculator, Brita filtration water bottle and Crayola Washable Erase, according

to Qmee, an online shopping companion.

So how can you save on these popular items and more when shopping?

“Whether it’s a

MOUNT GILEAD SCHOOL DISTRICT 2016 - 2017 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The calendar for the Mount Gilead Exempted School District for the 2016 - 2017 school year:

August

- 9 - High school schedule pick-up and fee payment
- 10 - High school schedule pick-up and fee payment
- 11 - Teacher work day
- 11 - Middle school open house
- 11 - High school open house; freshman and new student orientation
- 12 - Teacher in-service day
- 15 - Opening day for students
- 26 - Fall sports parents' night
- 29 - Morrow County Fair no classes
- 30 - Morrow County Fair no classes
- 31 - Morrow County Fair no classes

September

- 1 - Morrow County Fair no classes
- 2 - Morrow County Fair no classes
- 5 - Morrow County Fair no classes
- 6 - Teacher in-service day no classes
- 7 - Classes resume for students
- 8 - High school picture day
- 10 - Final payment due for Washington D.C. trip
- 21 - Midterm report day
- 22 - P/T student-led conferences
- 26 - P/T Student-led Conferences
- 28 - Community homecoming events

October

- 5 - Two-hour delay for staff development
- 13 - High school picture retake day
- 14 - FFA fruit sale begins
- 19 - PSAT / PLAN testing
- 19 - National FFA Convention
- 20 - National FFA Convention
- 21 - End of first quarter
- 22 - ACT test at MGHS
- 24 - OGT testing week begins
- 28 - Grade card distribution

November

- 1 - Two-hour delay for staff development
- 22 - Midterm report day
- 23 - P/T comp day
- 24 - Thanksgiving vacation
- 25 - Thanksgiving vacation

December

- 5 - AIR testing begins
- 21 - Final exams begin
- 22 - End of the semester
- 23 - Teacher work day
- 24 - Holiday vacation begins

January

- 3 - Classes resume
- 6 - Grade card distribution
- 16 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 25 - Two-hour delay for staff development

February

- 8 - Midterm report day
- 9 - P/T student-led conferences
- 13 - P/T student-led conferences
- 18 - FFA Invitational
- 20 - P/T comp. day
- 25 - FFA Pancake day at the fairgrounds
- 27 - FFA week begins

March

- 1 - Two-hour delay for staff development
- 10 - End of the third grading period
- 13 - AIR ELA testing begins
- 13 - OGT testing begins
- 17 - Grade grade distribution
- 21 - Junior accommodated ACT testing

April

- 8 - FFA banquet
- 8 - ACT test at MGHS
- 19 - Midterm report day
- 19 - Junior ACT testing
- 22 - Prom activities

May

- 3 - Junior ACT make-up date
- 4 - State FFA convention
- 5 - State FFA convention
- 8 - AIR testing begins
- 23 - Final exams begin
- 24 - Last student day
- 25 - Teacher work day
- 26 - Senior breakfast and graduation practice
- 27 - Graduation



calculator, backpack or dorm furniture, before making a purchase, it's important to do your research. Educated shoppers always get the best deals," says Jonathan Knight, Co-Founder and CEO, Qmee.

Shopping online is the best way to save time and be sure you're getting a good deal, says Knight, who recommends a few strategies for how parents can get more

bang from their back-to-school buck:

• **Price check:** Price comparison tools can help you know for sure whether you're getting the best deal on any given item. These tools automatically research what you're searching for to show you the best prices available.

• **Use coupons.** These days you don't need to spend hours scanning the paper with scissors. Online coupons and discount codes can

help you save big at checkout. Before clicking "Purchase," always verify whether any such deals are available.

• **Connect:** Brands are looking to connect with their consumers online. In some cases, you can earn cash for your everyday searches by clicking on relevant ads. Likewise, by sharing your valued consumer opinion through surveys, many brands will reward you with cash.

• **Use shopping**

tools: Download a free browser app which will automatically allow you to earn cash for your everyday searches, and also find the best coupon codes while you shop online. For example, online search and save companion Qmee unobtrusively becomes part of your browser to work with search engines and commerce sites such as Google, Bing, Amazon and Walmart, to help you search for what you want, compare

prices, secure discounts and offer opinions while earning cash. It's a good tool to help college kids stick to a budget while shopping for everything from books to dorm supplies. For more information or to download, visit Qmee.com.

Back-to-school shopping for students of any age can be expensive, but with the right knowledge, there are plenty of ways to save time and money.

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NORTHMOR SCHOOL DISTRICT 2016 - 2017 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The calendar for the Northmor Local School District for the 2016 - 2017 school year:



August

- 8 - High school offices open from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- 15 - High school offices open from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- 16 - Board of Education meeting
- 22 - High school offices open from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- 24 - Seventh grade orientation
- 24 - High school orientation for freshman, new students
- 24 - Teacher in-service
- 28 - High school offices open from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

September

- 5 - Labor Day; no class
- 6 - Elementary school open house
- 7 - First day of school
- 20 - Board of education meeting

October

- 7 - Mid-quarter reports sent home
- 18 - Board of Education meeting

November

- 4 - No school for elementary building only
- 4 - One-hour early dismissal for grades 7-12
- 15 - Board of Education meeting
- 17 - Two-hour early dismissal for conferences
- 22 - Two-hour early dismissal for conferences
- 23 - Thanksgiving break begins; no school

December

- 9 - Mid-quarter reports sent home
- 20 - One-hour early dismissal
- 20 - Board of Education meeting
- 21 - Winter break begins

January

- 2 - Classes resume
- 16 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 17 - Board of Education meeting
- 19 - One-hour early dismissal
- 20 - One-hour early dismissal

February

- 20 - Presidents' Day; no school
- 21 - Board of Education meeting
- 24 - Mid-quarter reports go home

March

- 2 - Two-hour early dismissal for conferences
- 21 - Board of Education meeting
- 24 - One-hour early dismissal

April

- 3 - Kindergarten registration for 2017-2018
- 3 - No school
- 13 - Spring break begins
- 17 - Classes resume
- 18 - Board of Education meeting
- 28 - Mid-quarter reports go home

May

- 1 - Kindergarten registration for 2017-2018
- 16 - Board of Education meeting
- 29 - Memorial Day; no school

June

- 2 - Last day of school; Kindergarten
- 4 - Graduation
- 5 - One-hour early dismissal

Reducing sugar in school lunches

At a time when even yogurt has come under scrutiny for its sugar content, it's hard to know what constitutes a healthful lunch anymore.

Any way you slice it, too much sugar can be harmful for your health. The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends no more than 16 grams of sugar daily for toddlers and a maximum of 32 grams of sugar per day for teens. Many

children as young as 1-3-years old already surpass daily recommendations — typically consuming around 48 grams of sugar daily, according to an AHA study. Older kids consume even more. Pediatric health experts recommend reducing sugar in children's diets.

Some foods that you may not consider "sweet" have more sugar than you may think. A yogurt cup and a granola bar

contain about 25 grams of sugar. That's an entire day's worth of sugar in one seemingly nutritious snack. Add a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and a juice box, and your child may have consumed more than 50 grams of sugar before afternoon snack.

What's a parent to do? You don't need to replace your child's favorite food. You don't even need to say goodbye to

any individual lunch item. However, you can moderate the total amount of sugar that's being consumed on a daily basis by replacing just one sugary food with a savory one.

With this goal in mind, here are some great ideas for savory swaps.

- Replace yogurt with hummus and carrots.
- Swap out a peanut butter and jelly sandwich for a cheese and mustard sandwich.



Tips for boosting students math success

For many students, math is one of the most challenging school subjects to conquer. However, it doesn't have to be. There are many ways parents can take an active role in their children's math success.

"Often students experience a crisis of confidence when it comes to math. If this persists, they may struggle with mastery of the core

principles required to progress and grow," says Dr. Shawn Mahoney, chief academic officer of McGraw-Hill Education. "Many parents see the value in educational technology and how it can help to both make math fun for kids, as well as play an important role in helping them master the basic building blocks needed for continued suc-

cess." Mahoney offers parents the following tips to boost students' math skills:

Assess Your Student

Inquire about your child's strengths and weaknesses as well as their unique needs and preferences. Not all children learn best using the same methods, and what works for

your child's peers may not necessarily work for your young scholar.

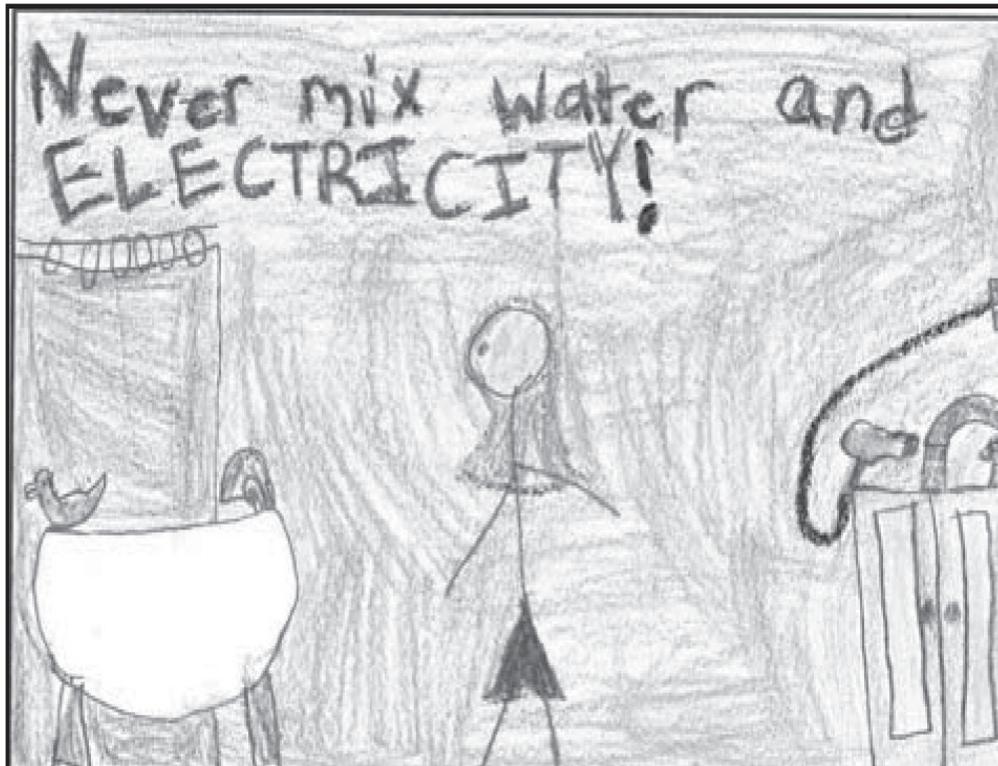
Talking to your child's teacher can help give a complete picture of his or her progress to determine if any additional help is needed.

Leverage New Technologies

Investigate new technologies and digital products that are designed to help children

learn and build confidence in their math abilities. For example, McGraw-Hill Education's tablet-friendly program ALEKS provides a personalized and adaptive learning experience for students based on their strengths and weaknesses. This groundbreaking technology is based on a deep understanding of how students learn and master new

concepts. The program uses research-based adaptive learning technology to determine precisely what each student knows, doesn't know and is most ready to learn in a given course. ALEKS interacts with students like a personal tutor, helping them study more effectively and efficiently by delivering the exact
See TIPS | 16



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Tips

From page 15

instruction they need when they need it.

Programs like ALEKS are augmenting classroom learning and improving student success rates and test scores by providing the advantages of one-on-one instruction from virtually any web-based device. To learn more, visit aleks.com.

com.

Make Math Come Alive

Make the subject more interesting by introducing your child to mathematical concepts outside the context of a traditional classroom environment. Whether it's a day spent at a children's museum in the math-oriented exhibits or playing digital math games, there are plenty of opportunities to expand the

notion of what math is for your child.

Education is a passport to a brighter tomorrow. In the world of today and tomorrow, the importance of numeracy — the ability to understand, work with, and communicate effectively with numbers — is essential. It's never too early or too late to take an active role in getting your child on the path to math success.

Reducing

From page 14

- Like the convenience of fruit cups? Replace them with Pearls Olives to Go! in a cup, which are gluten-free, sugar-free black ripe olives that are convenient because they have no messy liquid.

- Replace a juice box with water and a twist of lemon.

- Instead of a granola bar, add a serving of almonds or walnuts.

- Other savory items to try: hard boiled eggs, cubed cheese, cheese sticks, different varieties of olives, peanut butter and celery, sliced pickles and air-popped popcorn.

- For fun and flavor: Pack

a put-together mini pizza kit: small pita, shredded cheese, a tablespoon of sauce and a Pearls Olives to Go! cup of sliced or whole black olives.

- For dessert, swap out cookies for some blueberries or strawberries. Sugars in whole fruit enter the bloodstream slowly, and don't cause the same spikes in blood sugar as does junk food.

For more ideas, visit olives.com.

Ask your children for their input, too. This is an opportunity to talk to kids about making good food choices. If the foods you're trying aren't working, keep experimenting. Most importantly, don't try to change too much at once. Being a parent is hard enough without making lunchtime a battle.

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