

Expanding UF ATB BIC in Worcester Public Schools

As a result of the work of many partners involved in Hunger-Free & Healthy Worcester, Worcester Public Schools (WPS) began operating UF ATB BIC programs in school year 2006-2007. Under the leadership of Donna Lombardi, Director of Nutrition for WPS, the district piloted the program in five schools; these schools counted the highest FARM eligible student populations. Five additional high FARM eligible schools implemented the program in the each of the following two years. By the end of school year 2008-2009, a total of 15 WPS operated UF ATB BIC. All of these schools counted 80% or higher FARM eligible student populations and with the UF ATB BIC program, they were consistently reaching 80%+ average daily participation rates.

Over the following four years, WPS refined the program and amidst inevitable school building administrative changes, ensured its sustainability at these schools. During this time, fiscally conservative WPS knew that an 80% FARM eligibility rate coupled with 80% ADP resulted in a net surplus vis-à-vis the UF ATB BIC program. Given the effort involved in expanding the program as well as staff time limitations, the district did not crunch the numbers to identify the next tier of FARM eligible schools that would result in at least a break-even scenario for the UF ATB BIC program.

The opportunity to tap into Eos Foundation NKI funding, first made available for SY2013-2014, led WPS to run the financial scenarios that yielded break-even or better results for UF ATB BIC at schools with 60% or greater FARM eligible student populations, provided those schools reached and maintained 80% breakfast participation rates. WPS expanded the program into seven schools in SY2013-2014, and now serves UF ATB BIC in a total of 22 schools serving grades PK-6; over 400 classrooms enjoy the program every school day.

WPS reports that federal school reimbursements increased from \$1.8 million prior to implementing UF ATB BIC programming to \$3.7 million as a result of increased school breakfast participation via UF ATB BIC in the 22 of the district's PK-6 schools.