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Montana Office of Public Instruction
2016 Team Nutrition Training Grant Proposal
Project Summary

This proposal addresses Team Nutrition Training Grant Objective 1 by assisting students with meeting the recommendations of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans by providing appealing and nutritious meals, nutrition education and creating healthier school environments. The proposal supports two statewide initiatives: Montana Harvest of the Month Program and Creating Smarter Lunchrooms. In conjunction, they help build school environments that are conducive to healthy eating through enhanced training and collaborative efforts by child nutrition professionals, educators, students and parents. The Montana Harvest of the Month Program Resource Kit provides schools with a new, engaging tool to promote student consumption of ten healthful Montana-grown agricultural products through foods served in the cafeteria, introduced through classroom nutrition education and reinforced with parent engagement. The Montana Team Nutrition Program will explore the impact of the Montana Harvest of the Month Program on student involvement in recipe development and taste testing activities to improve their knowledge, attitudes and behavior toward Montana foods. It will also determine if the Montana Harvest of the Month Program increases the use of Team Nutrition education resources by Montana teachers. Smarter Lunchrooms can be created by implementing low cost/no cost behavioral economic strategies to nudge students to make nutritious choices, decrease food waste and improve meal participation. The impact of using behavioral economic cues in school cafeterias will be studied to determine the effect on fruit and vegetable availability and selection of fruits and vegetables by students during both breakfast and lunch. Additional research will focus on these questions: Do behavioral economic strategies increase the level of collaboration between key school stakeholders for school meal program promotion? Do behavior economic strategies positively impact student participation in breakfast and lunch programs?