



Highbush Blueberry Farm to School Playbook

K-12 SCHOOL CASE STUDIES

Is your school *positively bluetiful*? A little change like adding fresh or frozen highbush blueberries to school menus can have an impact on teaching kids that healthy foods can also taste great. Check out how these schools are celebrating fresh and frozen highbush blueberries and discover how you can bring buckets of blueberry fun to your school all year long!



Carrollton City School District, Georgia

THE BLUEBERRY BONANZA TAKEOVER

School Demographic

K-12 district serving 4,978 students in four schools

1%	Asian
5%	Multiracial
20%	Hispanic
33%	Black
40%	White

Carrollton Serves:

- 2,150 breakfasts a day
- 3,600 lunches a day
- 500 after school snacks a day

58%

of students qualify for free and reduced-price meals

PROMOTION:

Kicking off National Farm to School Month in October, Carrollton City Schools hosted a “Blueberry Bonanza Week” with the help of the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council’s (USHBC) Highbush Blueberry Farm to School Playbook. The week was filled with buckets of blueberry fun, in which students learned how little blue dynamos not only taste great but have wonderful health benefits too!

Blueberry Food Truck

From breakfast to lunch, elementary to senior high, Carrollton City students were served delicious blueberry menu items all week from the school’s blueberry-themed food truck.



Blueberry Nutrition Education in the Classroom

With help from the Playbook’s Virtual Farm Tour, Carrollton City held a nutrition education session with a first-grade class to teach them about the health benefits of blueberries and how they are grown. From a taste test to the virtual farm tour, the students were fascinated to learn all about these little blue dynamos. The students’ most shocking finding? Blueberries are actually green on the inside, not blue!

Blueberry Cooking Class

U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council’s K-12 Chef Partner Sharon Schaefer explored the versatility of blueberries with Carrollton City’s Culinary Club. Middle school students were taught how to make the Council’s 3-Ingredient Saucy Blueberries recipe, then explored how to use it as the base to create several yummy applications: blueberry parfait, blueberry smoothie and blueberry vinaigrette.



Results

Carrollton City School's Blueberry Bonanza Week was a great success, with record breaking lunch participation across their elementary, middle and high schools. Top results of the week were:

- 11% increase in lunch participation at junior high school.
- 5% average increase in breakfast participation across elementary, middle and high school.
- 4,978 K-12 students reached throughout the week.
- Carrollton City Schools is very likely to host another blueberry event in the future.
- The students' positive response led Carrollton City Schools to add the BBQ Highbush Blueberry Wings as a permanent item on their schools' menus, in addition to considering other menu items such as blueberry salads, blueberry vinaigrettes – even blueberry mayo for sandwiches!

Advice for Other Districts

"Partner with related groups to support your event. A partnership can expand the impact and provide additional support."

"Meet with all of the groups involved in the event to 'walk through' potential challenges associated with your event. Make sure everyone has discussed these potentially challenging variables so that your event is set up for success."

Linette Dodson,
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Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District, North Carolina

POSITIVELY BLUETIFUL STUDENT TASTE TEST

School Demographic

K-12 district serving 148,229 students in 175 schools

0.1%	Pacific Islander
0.4%	American Indian
2.5%	Multiracial
6.6%	Asian
24.1%	Hispanic
28%	White
38.1%	African-American

142,000 meals and after school snacks per day on average

- 40,000 breakfasts a day
- 94,000 lunches a day

47.5%

of students qualify for free and reduced-price meals

PROMOTION:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools hosted a “Highbush Blueberry Day” in December to educate their students on all things blueberry. From blueberry education in the classroom to a taste test in the cafeteria, the day was packed with “positively bluetiful” activities!

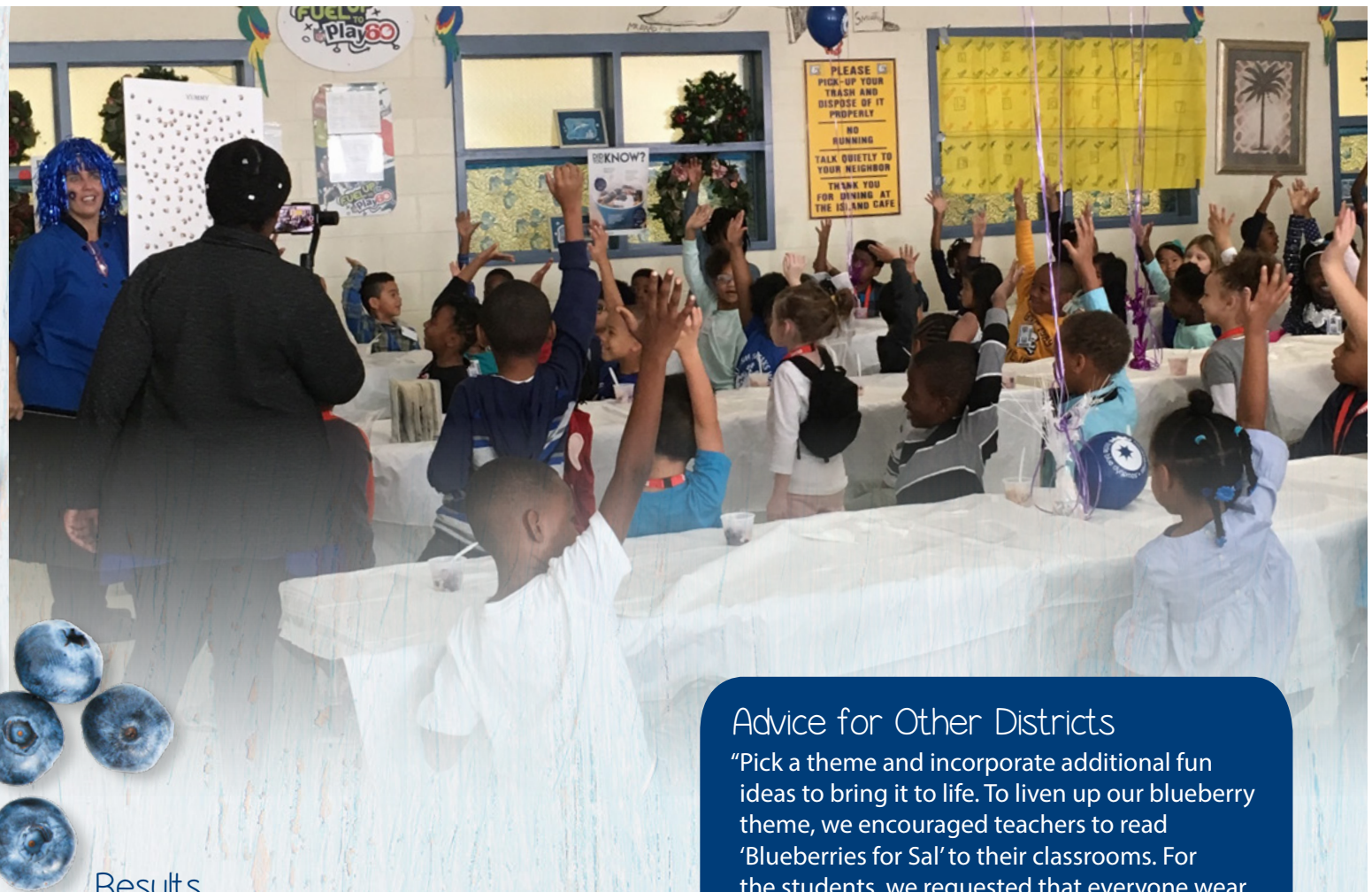
Education in the Classroom

To kick off the day, all students from kindergarten to second grade were taught about the health benefits of little blue dynamos. Leveraging the Council’s Highbush Blueberry Farm to School Playbook, teachers distributed the Virtual Farm Tour resource to show students how highbush blueberries are grown and harvested.

Student Taste Test

In the afternoon, students were asked to taste test a potential new menu item – the Council’s school-friendly Blueberry Breakfast Bark. Engaging the students in the decision-making process of their school menu turned out to be a big success. Check out the Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s behind-the-scenes video to see how many students gave this positively bluetiful breakfast a big thumbs up!





Results

With students and staff loving each blueberry activity, the Highbush Blueberry Day was a great success. Top results of the event were:

- 85% of students voted that the blueberry recipe was “yummy!”
- Approximately +200 K-2 students were reached through classroom and cafeteria promotions.
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg is very likely to host another blueberry event.
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg is highly likely to purchase highbush blueberries through the USDA commodity purchase program.
- The students’ positive response to the recipe encouraged Charlotte-Mecklenburg to add blueberries to their school menus during “Berry Week” in February 2019.

Advice for Other Districts

“Pick a theme and incorporate additional fun ideas to bring it to life. To liven up our blueberry theme, we encouraged teachers to read ‘Blueberries for Sal’ to their classrooms. For the students, we requested that everyone wear blue in celebration of little blue dynamos.

“Make sure your teachers are on board and excited about the promotion.

“Kids can be tough critics. Remember that we eat with our eyes, so make sure your new menu item not only tastes great but looks appealing too!

“Gather students’ feedback in a fun way. We chose happy and sad stickers to determine student response to the blueberry taste test. The students enjoyed feeling like their input mattered.”

Cathy Beam

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Sebree Elementary School, Kentucky

THE BLUEBERRY BLAST ALL WEEK LONG

School Demographic
K-12 district serving 2,250
students at eight schools

Webster County:
78.5% White
21.5% Non-White

Sebree Elementary:
49% White
51% Non-White

**Sebree Elementary
Serves:**

- 335 breakfasts a day
- 339 lunches a day

57%
of students
qualify for free and
reduced-price meals

PROMOTION:

In October 2018, the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC) partnered with the National Farm to School Network to celebrate National Farm to School Month, with the Council's Highbush Blueberry Farm to School Playbook. The grand prize winner of the month-long sweepstakes was Webster County Schools. The district was awarded a "Build-Your-Own Highbush Blueberry Day." The foodservice director chose to extend the day to a full week of fun-filled blueberry activities in January hosted at its Sebree Elementary School. From an art contest to a taste test, students and teachers alike learned everything there was to know about these little blue dynamos!

Student Taste Test

Throughout the week, students from first through sixth grade were invited to taste test two recipes, a Blueberry Smoothie and a Blueberry Salad with Blueberry Vinaigrette. The Blueberry Smoothie won with 91percent of students voting that it was "yummy!" In addition to the taste test, the recipes were featured on Sebree's breakfast and lunch menus throughout the week, along with 4-ounce cups of fresh blueberries.



Nutrition Education Student Assembly

Sebree's dietetic intern held a blueberry nutrition education session teaching students how blueberries are grown, harvested and journey from farm to plate.

Art Contest

Sebree Elementary students were invited to challenge their creativity in a "Highbush Blueberry Art Contest" in which the winning student received an art kit courtesy of USHBC.



Results

Sebree Elementary School's Highbush Blueberry Week was a major success with staff and students alike loving each blueberry festivity. Top results of the week were:

- 12% increase in breakfast participation.
- 600 K-6 students reached throughout the week.
- Sebree Elementary School is very likely to host another blueberry event in the future.
- Sebree Elementary is highly likely to purchase highbush blueberries through the USDA commodity purchase program.
- The students' positive response to the taste test led to Sebree adding the Blueberry Smoothie to their school's breakfast menu.

Advice for Other Districts

"Start with buy-in from your school's administration. Our superintendent and school principal were both very supportive of our participation.

"Raise awareness and get the news out as soon as possible to build interest with students prior to the events. We decorated the cafeteria ahead of time to get them excited about coming events.

"Encourage your teachers to get involved. We gave an incentive to the teacher whom the principal deemed the 'most involved.'

"Lastly and most importantly, have fun!"

Valerie Knight

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The background of the entire page is a light blue, vertically-grained wooden surface. Scattered blueberries are visible in the top right, bottom left, and bottom center areas. A dark blue rounded rectangle is positioned in the upper middle section, containing white text.

DOES YOUR SCHOOL WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

If your school is interested in celebrating highbush blueberries, be sure to explore the [Highbush Blueberry Farm to School Playbook!](#) Packed with resources to excite your students, inspire your staff and celebrate with your community, our Playbook can help transform your school nutrition program from good to *positively bluetiful!*

BlueberriesInSchools.com

