



Aramark Welcomes Students with Safety and Wellness in Mind

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PHILADELPHIA--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Aug. 16, 2021-- Many K-12 students will transition back to full-time, in-person instruction this fall, following the 16-month pandemic period. Aramark (NYSE: ARMK) is making sure students and families welcome the return to school dining not only confident in the safety and care they will receive but also with excitement for new menu items, breakfast options, and grab and go features.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20210816005020/en/>



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"Aramark is more than a food-service provider," said Barbara Flanagan, president and CEO of Aramark K-12 Education. "It starts with providing good-tasting, well-prepared food. But it goes beyond that—commitment to health and wellness is in our DNA. As a true partner, we help schools achieve their core mission: to provide a welcoming school environment

and support each child's social, emotional, and academic growth and well-being."

One response to this commitment was the expansion of Aramark's collaboration with the American Heart Association (AHA) to develop a robust platform of at-home recipes, nutritional education, and engagement for its K-12 community.

Another response is a renewed focus on breakfast. Research has always shown a strong correlation between healthy behaviors like a robust, nutritious breakfast and academic achievement and graduation rates. Aramark's culinary team are developing new breakfast recipes and finding new products to match with student food and beverage desires. Additionally, Breakfast in the Classroom, Mobile Cart Grab and Go and Mobile Cart Pick "Your Own," Breakfast After the Bell, and morning and afternoon pickup options are all initiatives launching this year to ensure that students have opportunity to start their days with a healthy and delicious meal.

"When students are healthy and well-nourished, they're ready to learn," says Christine Meinhardt, K-12 Director for Menu and Product Development. "Foods that are kid-friendly and nutrient-rich aren't mutually exclusive."

Additionally, Aramark surveys students annually to gain insight to food preferences and satisfaction. Students say they want quick, fresh, high-quality food and authentic global flavor profiles. They also prioritize grab-and-go options that allow for variety, efficiency, and convenience.

Highlights for the 2021-2022 School Year

- **Menu Enhancement:** Aramark chefs and dietitians developed 75 new handcrafted menu items, including all-in-one meal bowls featuring global flavors.
- **Beyond the Bites:** This elementary school program supports students' emotional wellness and complements the established nutrition education platform, featuring Healthy Bites and the ACE Mascot program.
- **[Provisions on Demand \(POD\) Markets:](#)** Named a best concept in convenience retailing by Food Management Magazine, POD Markets were adapted from higher education for high schools to great success. POD food is compliant with USDA nutrition regulations, accessible, equitable, and features popular items like fresh sandwiches and salads and bento boxes.
- **[Rally Cafes:](#)** Rally is centered around the strength of school spirit in high schools. Each school can customize graphics with school specific images such as mascots, school colors, building/school names, and images relevant to the school. The popular innovation features a test kitchen, weekly rotating station, mobile carts, and customizable menu items. It was launched at Midlothian Independent School District in Texas and approximately 50 schools nationwide will have their own cafes this fall.

Aramark Supports USDA Extension

It's important to know, says Flanagan, that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) extended universal free-meal waivers through the entire 2021-2022 school year and summer. This program positions students, their families, and schools for recovery and will help handle ongoing challenges caused by the pandemic. Aramark's unwavering commitment to this program will continue.

Last year, Aramark's K-12 food service teams made it their top priority to ensure students had access to nutritious food choices and remained well fed while school operations were upended by the pandemic. From March 2020-July 2021 along, Aramark provided 265 million meals to K-12 students and families through curbside pickup, home delivery, and in-school meals and multi-day packs.

Aramark partners with more than 500 school districts nationally for both food and facility service. It serves 273 million meals to 2.5 million students annually.

About Aramark

Aramark (NYSE: ARMK) proudly serves the world's leading educational institutions, Fortune 500 companies, world champion sports teams, prominent healthcare providers, iconic destinations and cultural attractions, and numerous municipalities in 19 countries around the world with food, facilities, and uniform services. Because our culture is rooted in service, our employees strive to do great things for each other, our partners, our communities, and our planet. Aramark has been named to DiversityInc's "Top 50 Companies for Diversity" list, the Forbes list of "America's Best Employers for Diversity," the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's "Best Place to Work for LGBTQ Equality" and scored 100% on the Disability Equality Index. Learn more at www.aramark.com and connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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