

EDUCATION

FRESHENING UP THE CAFETERIA

School food workers learn healthy cooking from Willowsford Farm chef

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Loudoun County Public School cafeteria workers are learning to prepare more “real” foods for students in an effort to phase out some processed foods.

This summer 48 LCPS food workers are getting training from Bonnie Moore, professional chef and culinary director at Willowsford Farm in Ashburn.

The ongoing program will offer different phases of training for the school system’s cafeteria workers. The training is one component of LCPS Real Food for Kids initiative.

“School lunch lady is a job that gets such a bum rap,” said Moore in between cooking classes. “These people are so dedicated to what they’re doing. They are so excited about getting rid of packaged food, and it’s so inspiring for me to teach them.”

This week the food staff learned to make salt-free spice blends and healthy

salad dressings from scratch. They also learned how to efficiently batch cook the dressings and spices to save time.

“I wanted to show them it’s reasonable to produce these foods in the cafeteria,” said Moore. “It’s furthering the vision of getting rid of additives.”

The whole goal of the program is to teach LCPS food staff how to incorporate more locally-sourced natural foods on the school cafeteria menus, said Moore.

Cutting out pre-made foods like spices and salad dressings makes meals healthier, she added.

Moore says the program will continue to expand, teaching different skills throughout the year. The next training session will start in August.

“It is so cool this community has such a huge positive influence,” said Moore of Willowsford. “It’s huge to go into the school system and make an impact changing menus in 90 schools.”



Courtesy photo/Willowsford

Loudoun County Public Schools cafeteria workers make their own fresh, healthy salad dressing in a training session hosted by Willowsford Farm in Ashburn.

State names new chief academic officer

Veteran educator, instructional leader takes helm Aug. 15

A veteran educator will take the helm this fall as the new Virginia Department of Education’s chief academic officer and assistant superintendent for instruction.

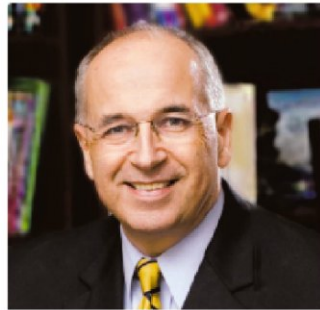
Steven M. Constantino, who has served as superintendent of Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools since 2011, will start his new role Aug. 15, according to state Superintendent of Public Instruction Steven R. Staples.

“Steven is an innovative instructional leader with a national reputation for improving outcomes for students and engaging families and communities,” Staples said. “His experience and energy will be invaluable as the department guides Virginia’s 132 school divisions into an era when all schools — from the highest-performing to the most challenged — will be expected to focus on continuous improvement.”

In 2015, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents selected Constantino as the Region 2 (Peninsula, Hampton Roads and Eastern Shore) Superintendent of the Year.

Under his leadership, student achievement in the division improved in all content areas and for all student subgroups. Last year, Williamsburg-James City County was one of only five divisions to receive a state high school redesign grant.

Constantino served as deputy superintendent in Cobb County — Georgia’s second largest school district — from 2008-2011. While there, he co-led a federally funded project to prepare teachers to



Steven M. Constantino

be successful in urban settings and expanded the access of minority students to advanced and college-level courses.

He began his career as an educator in 1980 in upstate New York, where he served in several school districts as a music teacher, band director, district director of fine arts and finally, as a high school assistant principal. In 1992, he moved to Virginia as assistant principal of Gar-Field High in Prince William County.

Constantino was named principal of Stonewall Jackson High in 1995. In 2000, Newsweek Magazine recognized Stonewall Jackson as one of the top 100 most challenging high schools in the country. Constantino was also named Prince William County Principal of the Year for 2000 and received the 2000 Distinguished Educational Leadership Award from The Washington Post.

The following year, Time Magazine se-

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**STEVEN R. STAPLES,
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

lected Stonewall Jackson as its high school of the year and highlighted Constantino’s success in engaging parents in the life of the school and the education of their children.

He is the author of four books on family engagement and has served as an assistant and adjunct professor of educational leadership and policy at George Mason University and as an adjunct instructor at the College of William & Mary.

Constantino earned a doctorate in educational leadership and policy from Virginia Tech in 2002 and a certificate of advanced study in educational administration from the University of New York at Cortland in 1989. He earned master’s and bachelor’s degrees in music education from the State University of New York at Potsdam, in 1985 and 1980, respectively.

Loudoun Public Schools launch mobile app

Loudoun County Public Schools will start the next school year with a new way to communicate with families and the community: a mobile app.

The LCPS App is now available for a free download from both the Apple Store and the Google Play Store.

The app will allow access to anyone looking for information about LCPS, including parents, staff, students and members of the general public.

Once the app is downloaded, users can customize their access according to the specific schools they wish to follow.

The app is an aggregator that pulls together the district’s most frequently used web tools in one location.

It includes school menus, the lunch account software system, the student information management system, the online learning platform, sports information, calendars and social media feeds.

All users automatically have access to district-wide messaging and push notifications.

This will allow LCPS to send emergency messages to the phones of subscribers without incurring charges associated with texting.

For more information, visit lps.org.