

2025-2026

The Coalition for Healthy
Food in Newark Schools

EVALUATION PLAN

Prepared By:

Alexandra Bolin, Research and Evaluation
Specialist

Action for Healthy Kids

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Evaluation Plan

Coalition for Healthy Foods in Newark Schools, 2025

Introduction

At *Action for Healthy Kids* (AFHK), our mission is to foster learning environments that support optimal child health and well-being. AFHK adheres to the [CDC Six Step Evaluation Framework](#) and incorporates best practices from the field.^{1,2,3} We prioritize engaging stakeholders, systematically collecting data, and disseminating our findings accessibly. As evaluators, we view our role as bridge builders, storytellers, and partners in dialogue, committed to evaluations that respect the complexity of the environments we work within. Our comprehensive approach aims to ensure effective evaluations that contribute to sustainable improvements in child health.

Evaluation Goal

The Coalition for Healthy Foods in Newark Schools (CHFiNS) works to ensure students have consistent access to fresh, nutritious meals by mobilizing a network of community partners to drive nutrition education, advocacy, and systemic change within schools.

CHFiNS centers students, families, and educators in decision-making, while fostering collaboration across food system sectors and grassroots organizations. With a commitment to sustainability and systemic change, the coalition advocates for policies that promote food sovereignty and empowers individuals and communities to shape their own food environments.

AFHK will assess the coalition's impact on providing fresh, nutritious meals to Newark students and key stakeholders' perceptions of their work. The findings will guide strategies to strengthen community presence, support long-term sustainability, and advocate for Newark students and their families.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1999). Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr4811.pdf>

² American Evaluation Association. (2018). Guiding Principles for Evaluators. Available from: https://www.eval.org/Portals/0/Docs/AEA_289398-18_GuidingPrinciples_Brochure_2.pdf

³ BetterEvaluation. (2014). Rainbow Framework. Available from: <https://www.betterevaluation.org/generate/framework/53/pdf>

Evaluation Team

- Alexandra Bolin (Research and Evaluation Specialist)
- Maureen Bailey (Associate Director, Research and Evaluation)

Table 1. Roles and Responsibilities of the Evaluation Team Members

Name	Title or Role	Responsible
Alexandra Bolin	Research and Evaluation Specialist	Creation of data collection tools Data collection Data analysis Reporting Facilitation of stakeholder meetings
Maureen Bailey	Associate Director of Research and Evaluation	Project oversight

Stakeholder Assessment

Stakeholders of CHFINS include coalition members, Newark students, families, school staff, food providers (suppliers of school meals), and community members. For this evaluation, families, students, and food providers will be heavily involved as feedback and insights are collected. Stakeholder insights will help assess the coalition's impact and guide its long-term sustainability. Stakeholders will be engaged through summative assessments and focus groups.

Table 2. Stakeholder Assessment and Engagement Plan

Stakeholder Category	Interest/Perspective	Role in the Evaluation	How and When to Engage
Newark Schools Students	Participation in nutrition education and school meal consumption	Focus group 2023 CHFINS Community Survey insight	Focus group recruitment and facilitation (1 group in Spring 2026)
Newark Schools Parents and Caregivers	Nutrition education workshop participants; received farm to family produce boxes; families of students consuming school meals	Focus Group 2023 CHFINS Community Survey insight	Focus group recruitment and facilitation (1 group in Spring 2026)

Newark School Nutrition Professionals	Interaction with food systems; received training and resources; understanding of nutrition curriculum	Focus group and survey 2023 CHFINS Community Survey insight	Survey dissemination (1 in fall 2025) Focus group recruitment and facilitation (1 group in Spring 2026)
Newark School Administrators/Nutrition Education Staff	Interaction with food systems; knowledge of nutrition curriculum	Focus group and survey 2023 CHFINS Community Survey insight	Survey dissemination (1x in fall 2025)
Philanthropic groups/funders	Knowledge on effective strategies in sustainability and increasing visibility among key stakeholders	Survey	Survey dissemination (1x in fall 2025)
Coalition members	Local organizations and programs with a shared interest in child nutrition, food production, and relevant legislation.	Provide knowledge and insight on community needs and appropriate measures	Monthly stakeholder meetings

Program and Logic Model

Need

Children deserve consistent access to fresh, nutritious food and quality nutrition education to support their physical, cognitive, and emotional development. However, children's ability to develop healthy eating habits and sustain long-term well-being is hindered by limited access to fresh, locally sourced foods and a lack of community-centered nutrition education, training, and resources.^{4,5,6,7}

⁴ Food Research & Action Center. (2019). *School meals are essential for student health and learning*. https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/School-Meals-are-Essential-Health-and-Learning_FNL.pdf

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024, July 23). *School meals*. <https://www.cdc.gov/school-nutrition/school-meals/index.html>

⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024). *Nutrition education in schools*. <https://www.cdc.gov/school-nutrition/education/index.html>

⁷ Rida, Z., & Basu, S. (2023). School-based nutrition interventions in the United States: A review of evidence and recommendations for future research. *Nutrients*, 15(4708). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10674981/>

CHFiNS strives to ensure that students have fresh, healthy foods by partnering with local farms to provide meals that are healthy, supportive of the local agricultural economy, and reflect Newark students. To ensure long-term sustainability, CHiFNS equips students and families with nutrition education that encourages informed choices and promotes lifelong healthy eating habits. Additionally, CHFiNS works to provide school nutrition professionals with the training and resources necessary to prepare healthy, appealing meals that are embraced by the students and recognized by the community. CHFiNS places a strong emphasis on community engagement by actively involving students, families, educators and local stakeholders to guide its initiatives.

Context

CHFiNS is funded by Novo Nordisk and Newman's Own Foundation and is based in Newark, New Jersey. The coalition supports positive health outcomes for students in Newark public schools through a comprehensive approach that includes local food procurement, training and resources for school nutrition professionals, nutrition education for students and families, ongoing support for the Student-Led Nutrition Advisory Councils (SNACs), and the expansion of food and community gardens.

Target Population

- Students
- Parents, families, and caregivers
- Educators and administrators
- School nutrition professionals
- Community members
- Local farms

Objectives

- By September 2026 CHFiNS will draft a Memorandum of Understanding with the Newark Board of Education in an effort to strengthen institutional partnerships, as well as establish a commitment to support for the Student-led Nutritional Advisory Councils.
- CHFiNS will initiate and facilitate at least six strategy meetings annually with core stakeholders.
- CHFiNS will launch a stakeholder-reviewed interactive website by September 2026, showcasing the collaborative efforts of CHFiNS and its partners.
- By September 2026 CHFiNS will partner and present to NPS food service staff as part of the district's staff development.

Activities

To transform school food systems, CHFiNS engages in the following collaborative efforts:

- Partner with organizations to follow the Six Pillars of Food Security: Availability, Access, Utilization, Stability, Agency, and Sustainability.
- Establish strong relationships with local food vendors and ensure consistent access to fresh ingredients for Newark schools.
- Maintain partnerships with trusted organizations and educators to deliver engaging nutrition education programs to students and families.
- Coordinate workshops, trainings and resources for school nutrition professionals
- Continued support to activate and sustain Student-led Nutrition Advisory Councils (SNACs) through tools, facilitator training, and financial support.
- Develop and expand community gardens in Newark schools.

Outcomes

With the support of CHFiNS, progress is not just possible- it's sustainable.

- School nutrition professionals and educators have the knowledge, skills and confidence to lead nutrition and wellness initiatives.
- Student-led Nutrition Advisory Councils (SNACs) are equipped with the resources and skills necessary to sustain themselves over time.
- Newark schools have increased access to fresh, healthy foods.
- Community-wide engagement in food systems improvement is fostered through strong, collaborative partnerships.
- Newark Board of Education wellness policies are shaped by student and community input.
- Nutrition education leads to long-term positive outcomes for students and families, such as reduced risk of chronic disease, better food literacy, and sustainable habits.

Logic Model

Logic Model



ISSUE STATEMENT

Children deserve consistent access to fresh, nutritious food and quality nutrition education to support their physical, cognitive, and emotional development. However, limited access to fresh, locally sourced foods and a lack of community-centered nutrition education, training, and resources hinder the ability for school nutrition professionals from providing fresh, appealing, community-recognized meals and integrating meaningful nutrition education into school environments. These barriers reduce children's ability to develop healthy eating habits and sustain long-term well-being.

That's where we come in.

The Coalition for Healthy Foods in Newark Schools (CHFINS) collaborates with local organizations to transform school environments by securing access to healthy meals, empowering students and families through nutrition education, and advocating for wellness policies that reflect the needs of students and ensure positive, long-term health outcomes.

We collaborate with Newark schools and community partners by:

- Procuring fresh, healthy foods from local farms
- Developing school and community fruit and vegetable gardens
- Building knowledge and capacity among school nutrition professionals
- Engaging students and families in shared learning around nutrition and wellness

INPUTS

Here is what we bring to the table:

- Powerful partnerships that bring expertise, resources, and heart that fuel our efforts.
- Skilled professionals and community members dedicated to making healthy school meals.
- Existing knowledge and frameworks that ensures healthy eating is accessible, locally sourced, and reflects the values, preferences and lived experiences of the community.

OUTPUTS

Activities

To transform school food systems, we engage in the following collaborative efforts:

- Partner with organizations to follow the Six Pillars of Food Security: Availability, Access, Utilization, Stability, Agency, and Sustainability.
- Establish strong relationships with local food vendors and ensure consistent access to fresh ingredients for Newark schools.
- Maintain partnerships with trusted organizations and educators to deliver engaging nutrition education programs to student and families
- Coordinate workshops, trainings and resources for school nutrition professionals
- Continued support to activate and sustain Student-Led Nutrition Advisory Councils (SNACs) through tools, facilitator training, and financial support
- Develop and expand community gardens in Newark schools.

Participation

We support Newark:

- Students
- Parents, families, and caregivers
- Educators and school administrators
- School nutrition professionals
- Community members
- Local farms

OUTCOMES

With our support, progress is not just possible- it's sustainable.

- School nutrition professionals and educators have the knowledge, skills and confidence to lead nutrition and wellness initiatives.
- Student-led Nutrition Advisory Councils (SNACs) are equipped with the resources and skills necessary to sustain themselves over time.
- Newark schools have increased access to fresh, healthy foods.
- Community-wide engagement in food systems improvement is fostered through strong, collaborative partnerships.
- Newark Board of Education wellness policies are shaped by student and community input.
- Nutrition education leads to long-term positive outcomes for students and families, such as reduced risk of chronic disease, better food literacy, and sustainable habits.

ASSUMPTIONS

What Empowers Change in Our Community:

- Access to essential resources and strong community partnerships fuels continued growth and impact
- Community members demonstrate interest in advancing local food systems
- Students and their families are willing and able to engage in nutrition and wellness initiatives
- Change-makers display a commitment to collaborative policy enhancements.

EXTERNAL FACTORS

What Shapes the Environment

- Changes in government or school policies
- Shifts in the economic landscape

Focus of the Evaluation

Stakeholder Needs

Evaluation findings will be used by the Coalition for Healthy Foods in Newark Schools to strengthen the coalition's visibility and engagement within the community, equip coalition members with the knowledge needed to serve as a voice within the community, and inform effective strategies for long-term sustainability.

Evaluation Questions

For this evaluation plan, AFHK will assess the CHFiNS's influence on key stakeholders, identify ways to meet the needs of the school community, and guide efforts to ensure long-term sustainability. This evaluation will be shaped by three essential questions:

- How has the coalition influenced nutrition-related outcomes for students, families, and school nutrition professionals through its combined efforts in education, healthy food procurement, and provision of supports?
- What strategies can the coalition implement to engage change-makers and increase its visibility among key community organizations to ensure long-term sustainability?
- How can the coalition strategically engage partners to meet the identified needs of students, families and school staff to improve nutrition outcomes?

Through this evaluation, we aim to ultimately inform future decision-making and enhance the coalition's ability to meet the evolving needs of the community.

Evaluation Design

AFHK will utilize a mixed methods strategy to obtain participant feedback and experiences through surveys and focus groups.

Resource Considerations

Currently, AFHK has valuable infrastructure to support evaluation efforts, including tools for survey creation/dissemination through SurveyMonkey, and resources for transcribing and coding qualitative data from focus groups.

AFHK has conducted an extensive data audit of surveys, resources and information provided by CHFiNS to assess the reach and alignment with community needs. Specifically, information gathered through the 2023 Community Survey and Capstone project provides direction for evaluating CHFiNS's impact.

These data audit findings include key insights from the community survey disseminated from CHFINS in 2023- which received over 100 responses. Conducted both in-person and virtually, this survey captures valuable perspectives on the community's interest in engagement of the coalition's work, as well perceptions of school food in Newark- highlighting both strengths and areas for improvement. These findings will be used to inform:

1. Recommendations to CHFINS as a result of the evaluation, ensuring that recommendations reflect community preferences and experiences,
2. Community engagement strategies, including highlighting ways to inform the broader community that CHFINS is listening *and* responding to community concerns,
3. How the coalition has addressed community concerns, including key areas of improvement identified by community members identified in the 2023 survey and strategies CHFINS has implemented to incorporate this insight into their work, and
4. Coalition priorities, including the use of feedback to tailor current offerings or expand.

Additionally, recruitment efforts outlined in the Capstone Project will be revisited and refined during the development of both summative assessments and each focus group. While the initial survey yielded limited responses, these findings offer valuable lessons for improving outreach. To increase participation rates, previously used methods will be considered alongside new, targeted approaches informed by current CHFINS relationships and school participation.

Evaluation Standards

AFHK will address the following standards for effective evaluation:

- A. **Utility Standards.** The utility standards are designed so that stakeholders are engaged in the evaluation processes and the data collected and dissemination of information are value adds for stakeholders.
 - o **Evaluator Credibility.** AFHK evaluators all have formal education in data and evaluation methods.
 - o **Negotiated Purposes.** The purpose of this evaluation plan is to learn the impact of CHFINS on supporting positive nutrition-related outcomes on key stakeholders and to identify emerging school community needs and effective strategies for sustainability.
 - o **Attention to Stakeholders.** AFHK will engage stakeholders in evaluation processes and key findings, including the facilitation of monthly stakeholder meetings, input on evaluation tools, and recruitment processes for focus groups and surveys.
 - o **Meaningful Processes and Products.** A final comprehensive report will be created to disseminate to relevant stakeholders and document

- evaluation findings. Additionally, the AFHK evaluator will collaborate with CHFINS to communicate key findings and refine the final report as needed.
- **Relevant Information.** The data collected and final reporting produced align with the goals outlined in the Scope of Work.
 - **Timely and Appropriate Communicating and Reporting.** AFHK will submit a final report to the client. Additionally, monthly stakeholder meetings with the client will be facilitated by AFHK in order to provide updates on evaluation plan implementation, analysis findings, and the final report.
 - **Concern for Consequences and Influence.** AFHK will implement best practices of evaluation standards, ensuring they meet stakeholders' needs and proper use of evaluation.
 - **Feasibility:**
 - **Project Management.** The AFHK evaluator will regularly monitor data collection timelines and progress made towards each activity outlined in Table 3.
 - **Practical Procedures.** AFHK will ensure that all methods are within the capacity of participants (i.e. school administrators, community members, parents and caregivers, students, etc). Students, families, and relevant school staff will be asked to participate in focus groups. Philanthropic groups, school administrators, and school nutrition professionals will be asked to complete surveys.
 - **Resource Use.** The AFHK evaluator will use qualitative and quantitative analysis software in addition to SurveyMonkey to conduct evaluations.
 - **Propriety:**
 - **Clarity and Fairness.** AFHK will provide evaluations that are accessible to all audiences.
 - **Transparency and Disclosure.** AFHK will provide comprehensive evaluations that describe findings, note the limitations of the evaluation, and provide (if applicable) recommendations for improvement to stakeholders.
 - **Conflicts of Interest.** If there is a perceived or actual conflict of interest, AFHK will ensure it is explicitly named in the evaluation.
 - **Accuracy:**
 - **Justified Conclusions and Decisions.** Evaluations will provide accurate descriptions of findings towards the goals of CHFINS as outlined in the Scope of Work and identify key strategies and recommendations to support long-term sustainability of the coalition.

- **Valid Information.** AFHK ensures that the surveys and focus groups used to identify the CHFiNS's impact on key stakeholders, emerging needs of the school community, and funder perception of the coalition have content validity.
- **Reliable Information.** Data will be cleaned prior to analysis (removing duplicates, standardizing formats, handling missing values, etc.). AFHK will ensure that the measurement tools and evaluations provided are consistent and yield accurate results.
- **Information Management.** All data collected will be securely stored using private SharePoint and SurveyMonkey tools.
- **Sound Designs and Analysis.** AFHK will conduct surveys (2) and focus groups (3) as outlined in the Scope of Work.
- **Explicit Evaluation Reasoning.** Reporting will include a detailed summary of survey and focus group results, CHFiNS community survey insights, and detailed recruitment strategies for summative assessment and focus group participation informed by data audit findings. Reporting will also provide recommendations based on feedback from participants.
- **Communication and Reporting.** A final report will be provided to CHFiNS that includes findings from focus groups, surveys and previously collected data. During the implementation process, AFHK will facilitate 8 virtual meetings.

Gathering Credible Evidence: Data Collection

Indicators

AFHK will utilize surveys and focus groups to measure the impact and reach of the coalition (see Table 3 for more details). These methods include:

- Facilitation of 3 focus groups among 1) students, 2) parents and caregivers, and 3) school nutrition professionals and school administrators
- Dissemination of 2 surveys among 1) school nutrition professionals and school administrators 2) relevant funders and philanthropic groups

Measurable elements that enable AFHK to determine the impact and reach of the coalition include:

- Positive perception (attitudes, beliefs, opinions) among key stakeholders regarding the coalition's effectiveness and relevance.
- Key stakeholders' overall awareness of the coalition's activities, mission and goals.

- Students report an increased access to fresh, nutritious foods as a result of CHFINS' procurement of foods through local farms.
- Families report an increase in fresh, nutritious foods as a result of CHFINS distribution of farm to family produce boxes.
- Students report healthier eating habits.
- Students report high satisfaction in the quality of their school meals and connection to the foods served.
- Students and families report creating healthier foods at home as a result of nutrition education programs.
- School nutrition professionals report expanding their knowledge and skills as a result of the trainings and resources coordinated by CHFINS.

Data Collection

Current methods AFHK will use to collect data include:

- Focus groups (3)
 - Students
 - Parents and caregivers of elementary students
 - School administrators, school nutrition professionals, and school nutrition educators
- Surveys (2)
 - School administrators, school nutrition professionals, and school nutrition educators
 - Community funders/philanthropic groups

Data will be located in

- SurveyMonkey
- SharePoint

Data will be collected in the fall of 2025 (surveys) and spring of 2026 (focus groups). The evaluator (Alexandra Bolin) will be responsible for the collection, management, and storing of all data.

Plan Timeline

Table 3. Data Collection

Objective 1:				
Evaluation Question: "How has the coalition influenced nutrition-related outcomes for students, families, and school nutrition professionals through its combined efforts in education, healthy food procurement, and provision of supports?"				
Indicator	Evaluation Tools and Data Sources	Program Benchmark Reporting	Who	When/Timeline

Obj. 1, Activity 1: Food procurement				
Increased access to fresh, nutritious foods in Newark schools through local farms.	Focus groups (2)	8-10 middle/high school participants 8-10 parents/caregivers of elementary school students Final report	Program evaluator	Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Increased access to fresh, nutritious foods through distribution of farm to family produce boxes	Focus groups (2) CHFINS Community Survey input	Survey Responses among CHFINS 2023 Community Survey respondents 8-10 middle/high school participants 8-10 parents/caregivers of elementary school students Final report	Program evaluator	Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Students are becoming more open to nutritious foods through access to new food options	Focus groups (2)	8-10 middle/high school participants 8-10 parents/caregivers of elementary school students Final report	Program evaluator	Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Student satisfaction in school meals served	Focus groups (2)	8-10 middle/high school participants 8-10 parents/caregivers of elementary school students Final report	Program evaluator	Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Students have a stronger connection to the foods served in their schools through incorporation of local foods and community-recognized dishes	Focus groups (2) CHFINS Community Survey input	8-10 middle/high school participants 8-10 parents/caregivers of elementary school students Survey responses among CHFINS 2023 Community Survey respondents	Program evaluator	Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026 Final reporting delivered in September 2026

		Final report		
Students, caregivers and school admin and school nutrition professionals report an increase in scratch-cooked meals served	Survey (1) Focus group (3) CHFINS Community Survey input	Survey responses among CHFINS 2023 Community Survey respondents 8-10 middle/high school participants 8-10 parents/caregivers of elementary school students 8-10 facilitators (school nutrition professionals, food and nutrition educators, school admin) Final report	Program evaluator	Survey disseminated in Fall 2025 Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Obj 1., Activity 2: Coalition Convenings and Sub-Committees				
School nutrition professionals have expanded their knowledge and skills as a result of the trainings and resources coordinated by CHFINS.	Survey (1) Focus group (1)	Survey responses among identified school nutrition professionals 8-10 facilitators (school nutrition professionals, food and nutrition educators, school admin) Final report	Program evaluator	Survey disseminated in Fall 2025 Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Newark schools have an increased connection with community programs and organizations	Survey (1) Focus group (1)	Survey responses among identified school nutrition professionals 8-10 facilitators (school nutrition professionals, food and nutrition educators, school admin) Final report	Program evaluator	Survey disseminated in Fall 2025 Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Obj. 1, Activity 3: Nutrition education				
Students are developing healthier eating habits	Focus groups (2)	8-10 middle/high school participants	Program evaluator	Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026

through access to nutrition education		8-10 parents/caregivers of elementary school students Final report		Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Obj. 1, Activity 4: Public Outreach				
School community members (e.g. administrators, students, families, and school nutrition professionals) are informed of healthy eating and food systems through social media efforts	Survey (1) Focus group (1)	8-10 facilitators (school nutrition professionals, food and nutrition educators, school admin) Final report	Program evaluator	Survey disseminated in Fall 2025 Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Objective 2:				
Evaluation Question: "What strategies can the coalition implement to engage change-makers and increase its visibility among key community organizations to ensure long-term sustainability?"				
Indicator	Evaluation Tools and Data Sources	Program Benchmark Reporting	Who	When/Timeline
Obj. 2, Activity 1: Relationships with philanthropic groups				
Perception of the coalition among philanthropic groups	Survey (1)	Survey responses among identified philanthropic leaders Final report	Program evaluator	Survey disseminated in Fall 2025 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Philanthropic group/funder insight on ways to best demonstrate long-term value of the coalition	Survey (1)	Survey responses among identified philanthropic leaders Final report	Program evaluator	Survey disseminated in Fall 2025 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Philanthropic group/funder perceived role in supporting the coalition's long-term success	Survey (1)	Survey responses among identified philanthropic leaders Final report	Program evaluator	Survey disseminated in Fall 2025 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Obj. 2, Activity 2: Nutrition education				
Student and family familiarity and perception of the coalition and its community presence	Focus groups (2) CHFINS 2023 Community Survey input	8-10 middle/high school participants 8-10 parents/caregivers of	Program evaluator	Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026

		<p>elementary school students</p> <p>2023 community survey student/family respondents</p> <p>Final report</p>		<p>Final reporting delivered in September 2026</p>
Obj. 2, Activity 3: Public Outreach				
<p>Perception of the coalition among key facilitators (Food & Nutrition Educators, School admins, Principal, Food Service Director, School Nutrition Professionals & supervising program analyst) through member communications and social media engagement</p>	<p>Survey (1)</p> <p>Focus group (1)</p> <p>CHFINS 2023 Community Survey input</p>	<p>Survey responses among identified facilitators and 2023 community survey school staff respondents</p> <p>8-10 facilitators (school nutrition professionals, food and nutrition educators, school admin)</p> <p>Final report</p>	<p>Program evaluator</p>	<p>Survey disseminated in Fall 2025</p> <p>Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026</p> <p>Final reporting delivered in September 2026</p>
Objective 3:				
Evaluation Question: "How can the coalition strategically engage partners to meet the identified needs of students, families and school staff to improve nutrition outcomes?"				
Indicator	Evaluation Tools and Data Sources	Program Benchmark Reporting	Who	When/Timeline
Obj. 3, Activity 1: Food procurement				
<p>Student experience with school meals (including length of time, processes, and food options).</p>	<p>Focus groups (2)</p> <p>CHFINS Community Survey insight</p>	<p>8-10 middle/high school participants</p> <p>8-10 parents/caregivers of elementary school students</p> <p>Survey responses among CHFINS 2023 Community Survey respondents</p> <p>Final report</p>	<p>Program evaluator</p>	<p>Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026</p> <p>Final reporting delivered in September 2026</p>
<p>School nutrition professionals and admin experience procuring local foods</p>	<p>Survey (1)</p> <p>Focus group (1)</p>	<p>Survey responses among identified school staff</p> <p>8-10 facilitators (school nutrition professionals, food and nutrition</p>	<p>Program evaluator</p>	<p>Survey disseminated in Fall 2025</p> <p>Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026</p>

		educators, school admin) Final report		Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Obj. 3, Activity 2: Coalition Convenings and Sub-Committees				
School community members that report to what extent coalition-led initiatives and partnerships effectively address their nutrition-related needs.	Focus groups (3) Survey (1) CHFINS Community Survey insight	8-10 middle/high school participants 8-10 parents/caregivers of elementary school students 8-10 facilitators (school nutrition professionals, food and nutrition educators, school admin) Survey responses among CHFINS 2023 Community Survey respondents Final report	Program evaluator	Survey disseminated in Fall 2025 Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Obj. 3, Activity 3: Nutrition education				
Student and family experience creating healthy recipes at home	Focus groups (2)	8-10 middle/high school participants 8-10 parents/caregivers of elementary school students Final report	Program evaluator	Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
School nutrition professionals' and admin perspective of nutrition curriculum	Survey (1) Focus group (1)	Survey responses among identified school staff 8-10 facilitators (school nutrition professionals, food and nutrition educators, school admin) Final report	Program evaluator	Survey disseminated in Fall 2025 Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
Obj. 3, Activity 4: Public Outreach				
School community members (students, families, administrators)	Focus groups (3) Survey (1)	8-10 middle/high school participants	Program evaluator	Survey disseminated in Fall 2025

and school nutrition professionals) overall awareness of and engagement with CHFINS's nutrition initiatives through social media platforms.		8-10 parents/caregivers of elementary school students 8-10 facilitators (school nutrition professionals, food and nutrition educators, school admin) Final report		Focus Groups facilitated in Spring 2026 Final reporting delivered in September 2026
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Justifying Conclusions: Analysis and Interpretation

Analysis

This evaluation plan will use a mix of both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods (i.e. thematic analysis for focus groups).

Table 4. Analysis Plan

Data Analysis Technique	Responsible Person
Survey disseminated in Fall 2025 to school nutrition professionals and administrators	Alexandra Bolin
Survey disseminated in Fall 2025 to philanthropic groups	Alexandra Bolin
Student focus group	Alexandra Bolin
Parent/Caregiver focus group	Alexandra Bolin
School nutrition professional focus group	Alexandra Bolin
Data Audit (2023 Community Input Survey)	Alexandra Bolin

Interpretation

For this evaluation plan, the evaluator will consult with the Associate Director of Research and Evaluation in drawing, interpreting, and justifying conclusions through team meetings as necessary. The evaluator will consult with CHFINS to discuss the results of the evaluation.

Ensuring Use and Sharing Lessons Learned: Report & Dissemination

Dissemination

The audience for this evaluation includes the CHFiNS, and key stakeholders as outlined in this evaluation plan. This is inclusive of CHFiNS' funders (Novo Nordisk and Newman's Own Foundation).

Findings for this evaluation plan will be disseminated as follows (Table 5):

Table 5. Dissemination Plan

Dissemination Medium	Responsible Person
Final Report	Project evaluator (Alexandra) (creation) CHFiNS- Point of Contact (Chesha) (dissemination)

Use

The evaluator will utilize findings to provide data-driven recommendations relevant to the goals and activities of the coalition, which will be shared with the coalition members for implementation and dissemination.

Appendices

A. Newark School Community Survey

1. Which of the following best describes your role within the Newark school district?
 - a) School administrator
 - b) Superintendent/Principal/Vice Principal
 - c) School Nutrition Professional (e.g. nutrition educator, food service staff)
 - d) Teacher
 - e) Support staff (e.g. nurse, counselor)
 - f) Other:
 1. Comment box
2. Please select the school level you are currently employed:
 - a) Elementary School
 - b) Middle School
 - c) High School
3. How familiar are you with the Coalition for Healthy Food in Newark Schools (CHFINS) and its work?
 - a) Very familiar
 - b) Somewhat familiar
 - c) Heard of it, but not very familiar

Please describe what aspects of CHFINS's work have stood out to you the most, and why:

Comment Box

4. To what extent have the workshops, trainings and resources coordinated by the Coalition for Healthy Food in Newark Schools (CHFINS) enhanced your nutrition-related knowledge and practical skills?
 - a) Significantly enhanced – I have gained substantial new knowledge and practical skills that I actively apply.
 - b) Moderately enhanced – I have learned useful information and skills, some of which I apply.
 - c) Slightly enhanced – I have gained a small amount of new knowledge or skills.
 - d) Not at all enhanced – I have not noticed any improvement in my nutrition-related knowledge or skills.
 - e) Not applicable – I have not participated in any CHFINS workshops, trainings, or used their resources.

Please describe which trainings, workshops, or resources you have utilized that increased your knowledge and skills:

Comment Box

5. What additional resources would be most helpful to support your school's efforts in implementing healthy food practices?

Comment Box

6. To what extent has your school's collaboration with community organizations and programs increased as a result of CHFiNS's initiatives?
- a) Significantly increased - Our school has experienced a great increase in the number of community organizations and programs that we collaborate with on a regular basis (e.g. daily or weekly)
 - b) Moderately increased - We collaborate with more community organizations and programs that we meet with fairly often (e.g. monthly or quarterly)
 - c) Slightly increased - We collaborate with a few more community organizations and programs that we meet with once in a while (e.g. a few times per year)
 - d) No increase - Our school has not increased the number of community organizations or programs that we collaborate with

Please describe any new or strengthened partnerships between your school and community organizations that have emerged through these initiatives:

Comment Box

7. How often do you engage with the Coalition for Healthy Food in Newark Schools (CHFiNS) nutrition initiatives shared through social media platforms? (e.g. "Harvest of the Month", nutrition-related policy information, community event promotions, etc.)
- a) Very often (weekly or more)
 - b) Frequently (a few times a month)
 - c) Occasionally (once a month or every few months)
 - d) Rarely (once or twice a year)
 - e) I am aware but have never engaged with it
 - f) I am not aware of CHFiNS's social media content

What aspects of CHFiNS's communications or social media have been most helpful or informative for you?

Comment Box

8. To what extent has the content shared by CHFiNS on social media helped you learn more about healthy eating and food systems?
- a) Significantly helped - I have learned a great deal and feel much more about healthy eating and food systems
 - b) Moderately helped - I have learned a fair amount about healthy eating and food systems, and feel somewhat more informed

- c) Slightly helped - I have learned a little about healthy eating and food systems but could use more information
- d) Not at all - I have not learned anything new from the content shared
- e) Not applicable - I have not seen any social media posts by CHFiNS

Can you share any specific examples of information or ideas you've gained from CHFiNS social media content?

Comment Box

9. How effective do you believe CHFiNS has been in promoting healthy food practices and nutrition education in schools?
- a) Very effective - CHFiNS has significantly improved healthy food practices and nutrition education
 - b) Somewhat effective - CHFiNS has made noticeable progress, but there is room for more improvement
 - c) Neutral - I have not observed a significant impact, either positive or negative
 - d) Somewhat ineffective - CHFiNS has had limited success in achieving its goals.
 - e) Very ineffective – CHFiNS has not contributed meaningfully to promoting healthy food practices or nutrition education.
 - f) Not sure / Not familiar with CHFiNS – I do not have enough information to assess its effectiveness.

Can you share any specific examples or experiences that have shaped your view of CHFiNS's effectiveness? (e.g. social media posts, partner communications, newsletters, direct supports, etc.)

Comment Box

10. To what extent do you feel that CHFiNS-led initiatives and partnerships have effectively addressed the nutrition-related needs of your school community? (e.g. nutrition education, training and resources, community garden expansion, Student-Led Nutrition Advisory Council supports, etc.)
- a) Extremely well – The initiatives have fully met the nutrition-related needs of our school community.
 - b) Very well – Most needs have been addressed effectively, with strong impact.
 - c) Moderately well – Some needs have been met, but there are still noticeable gaps.
 - d) Slightly well – A few needs have been addressed, but the overall impact has been limited.
 - e) Not at all – The initiatives have not addressed the nutrition-related needs of our school community.

- f) Not sure / Not familiar with the initiatives – I do not have enough information to assess.

Please share any specific ways CHFiNS initiatives could better support your school's nutrition-related goals:

Comment Box

11. How well do you feel the nutrition curriculum coordinated by CHFiNS meets the needs of your school community?

- a) Extremely well - The nutrition education curriculum coordinated by CHFiNS completely met the needs of our school community
- b) Very well - Most needs have been addressed effectively through the nutrition education curriculum coordinated by CHFiNS
- c) Moderately well - Some needs have been met, but there are still gaps
- d) Slightly well - A few needs have been addressed, but the overall impact is limited
- e) Not at all - The nutrition education coordinated by CHFiNS has not addressed the needs of our school community
- f) Not sure / Not familiar with the nutrition curriculum - I am not familiar with the CHFiNS-coordinated nutrition curriculum

Please describe:

Comment Box

12. How would you rate the CHFiNS's support in helping your school or district procure local foods?

- a) Excellent - CHFiNS has provided strong, consistent support that has significantly helped our local procurement efforts
- b) Good - CHFiNS has provided helpful support that has moderately improved our ability to procure local foods
- c) Fair - CHFiNS has provided some support, but its impact on local food procurement is limited
- d) Poor - CHFiNS has provided little to no support in helping our school procure local foods
- e) Not Applicable (N/A) – I have not received or needed support from CHFiNS in this area.

Are there any specific challenges or successes you've experienced in sourcing local foods with CHFiNS's support?

Comment Box

13. To what extent has the number of scratch-cooked meals served in your school increased following recent trainings and efforts to procure fresh, local foods?

- a) Significantly increased
- b) Somewhat increased
- c) No change
- d) Decreased

What changes have you noticed in meal preparation or student response since increasing the number of scratch-cooked meals?

Comment Box

14. What resources would be most helpful to support your school's efforts in implementing healthy food practices?

Comment Box

15. Are there specific individuals, groups, or organizations you believe CHFiNS should collaborate with to better meet the needs of students, families, and school staff?

Comment Box

16. What barriers have you faced in implementing nutrition-related practices, and how could CHFiNS or its partners help address them?

Comment Box

17. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experience, needs, or ideas related to CHFiNS's work?

Comment Box