

# EISENHOWER

# HEALTHY PANTHER

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## Lunchtime has a makeover

Thursday lunches will have an entirely new look this spring at Eisenhower Science and Technology Leadership Academy.

Students will sit at round tables set with real plates and silverware. Each table will have a student captain who comes to the lunchroom 15 minutes early to set the table.

After students arrive, the captains will bring the food to the table. Students will eat family

style and have different dining options, including a meat and a meat alternative.

The new lunch look has been developed by the Vetri Foundation. The foundation calls its program Eatiquette.

Eatiquette changes the traditional cafeteria school into a dining experience, according to the Vetri Foundation's website. By sitting at round tables, students

interact more and learn communication skills.

The foundation says the program encourages students to work as groups, try new foods, and develop their manners.

"This program is going to be absolutely fabulous and we hope that the kids will like it very much," said Mrs. Riccioli, Eisenhower cafeteria manager.

*(Please see **Students** on Page 3)*

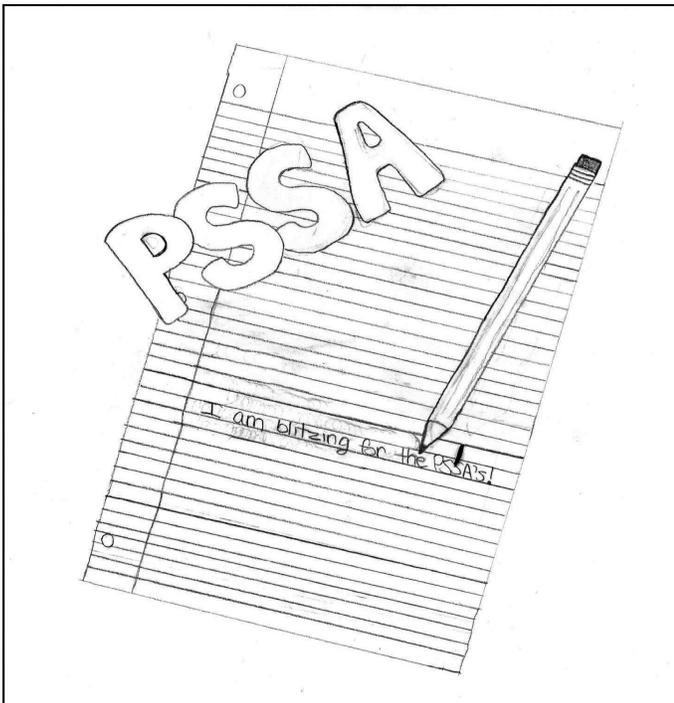


Illustration by Amaya Bankowski

**Blitzing** started in early January to help prepare ESTLA students for the state PSSA tests. Blitzing focuses on developing critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, according to Mr. Ryan, math instructional support teacher. The goal is not only to help students do well on the PSSA tests, but also to do well later in life. —By Eleazar Hill and Kyle White

## Your heart needs care and attention

Heart disease is not only something for adults to think about.

Some children are born with heart disease. Other children make choices that could lead to heart problems later in life.

Mrs. Lees, Eisenhower school nurse, said children should learn about the heart so they can take care of it. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Kids need to learn how to live a healthy lifestyle," Mrs. Lees said.

She said a healthy lifestyle means to eat nutritiously and exercise regularly. A nutritious diet includes consuming a lot of fruits and vegetables and keeping salt and fats in check, she said.

Children can help prevent heart disease by not smoking. Smoking damages the structure of the heart

*(Please see **Children** Page 2)*

**Special report  
on heart health**

# Games can make learning fun

*Editor's note: You can find plenty of games on the web that will entertain you while also educating you about health issues. A couple of websites to check out are: KidsHealth.org and Bam.gov*

Several *Healthy Panther* reporters checked out "Mission Nutrition" on KidsHealth.org.

The way the game operates is you click on the refrigerator in the kitchen and a question will pop up. For instance, you will be asked to identify a drink that has a lot of sugar in it. (The answer is non-diet soda.) You will get a tip for a healthy snack. Each time you finish answering a question, you will be asked another question.

"In my opinion, this game is not the most interesting one on the website," wrote James in his review. He believes other games on the website would be more educational and exciting.

He would not recommend Mission Nutrition. Despite his unenthusiastic review, he said the game "does teach about health."

Brianna, however, wrote in her review that she "really enjoyed" the game. The game teaches you what foods are healthy and unhealthy, she said.

"I think this game is a good game because it is important to talk about healthy foods and to identify foods that are high in sugar," she said. "Students should play this game. They would enjoy it."

Eleazar also suggested that students play Mission Nutrition.

"This game teaches about nutrition and health by identifying what is good and not good for you," he wrote. "My opinion about the game is that kids should play the game because it teaches you something you didn't know. I would recommend kids to play this game to learn about nutrition."

—By *Eleazar Hill, James Vela, and Brianna Bowie*

**Web  
game  
review**

## Children should make heart health a priority

*(Continued from Page 1)*

and blood vessels, according to the National Institutes of Health.

Another risk factor for heart disease is being overweight, Mrs. Lees said. Carrying too much weight can also lead to other health problems such as diabetes, joint issues, and breathing problems.

By taking care of their hearts, children can increase their chances of living a long and healthy life, Mrs. Lees said.

Heart disease is also known as cardiovascular disease, according to the American Heart Association. It can lead to strokes, heart attacks, and other cardiovascular problems.

A stroke happens when blood flow is cut off from the brain. A heart attack occurs "when a blood clot or other blockage cuts blood flow to a part of the heart," says KidsHealth.org.

While people can take steps to keep their hearts healthy, some children have problems they are born with. If you have a family history of heart disease, you are at higher risk for developing a heart problem, Mrs. Lees said.

—By *Ivan Li and James Vela*

### *Eisenhower Healthy Panther*

A publication of Eisenhower Science and Technology Leadership Academy in the Norristown Area School District in Norristown, Pa. Student staff members Amaya Bankowski, Brianna Bowie, Emma Browne, La'Dirah Ferguson, Eleazar Hill, Ivan Li, Miguel Morales, Rebecca Morris, James Vela, and Kyle White. The students are eighth graders at Eisenhower. The faculty advisors are Mr. Smoyer and Mrs. Shallow.

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## Websites offer heart information

- \* **Fatsmack.org:** Explains how drinking sugary drinks can be harmful to your health.
- \* **Girlshealth.gov:** Offers tips for healthy eating at fast food restaurants and fun ways to exercise.
- \* **Franklin Institute: The Human Heart**  
www.fi.edu/learn/heart/healthy/diet.html  
Get facts about how your heart works. Listen to heartbeats.

## Answers to Brain Workout!

1. Cholesterol
2. Endorphins
3. Exercise
4. Unsaturated
5. Smoking
6. Balanced
7. Trans fats
8. Heart
9. Blood
10. Saturated

# Students get a taste of dining at lunchtime

*(Continued from Page 1)*

“Everything is going to be fresh . . . even the salad dressing. Nothing will be processed.”

She said Eatiquette will provide the school with chefs for three months. They will teach the cafeteria workers to prepare the food. Eatiquette involves more prep and cooking time.

Mrs. Riccioli said the program will enable students to eat more fresh-cooked food and to sample

new recipes. It’s a great opportunity for students to have a dining experience.

A sample menu includes chicken curry stew, couscous, peas

and chives, tossed salad with shaved carrots, fresh tomato vinaigrette, fresh oranges, and low-fat milk. All recipes “will be made fresh from scratch,” Mrs. Riccioli said.

She said she would like to see the program expanded from once a week to every day.

Every month, a new student captain will be assigned to serve the food at each table. The captain also will wear a white chef’s jacket.

“I think the kids will enjoy the experience,” said School Principal Ms. Taylor. “The benefits for the children with this program are trying different kinds of food and learning the etiquette of fine dining.”

—By Brianna Bowie, Rebecca Morris, and La’Dirah Ferguson

**"This program will be absolutely fabulous."  
—Mrs. Riccioli,  
cafeteria manager**



Illustration by Amaya Bankowski

Picture that appeared in 2013 Leading Healthy Change book

## Student interviews Mr. Vetri

Yazzmin Hernandez, a fifth grader, interviewed Mr. Marc Vetri this winter as part of a Norristown middle school team. The team’s work will appear this spring in the book "Leading Healthy Change In Our Communities 2014."

Because of his work with Eatiquette, Mr. Vetri has been chosen as one of 12 leaders in the Philadelphia area to be featured in the book. The book focuses on leaders who are making the lives of children and families healthier. The book is written and illustrated by students in the Healthy NewsWorks program.

Current staffers of the *Healthy Panther* interviewed Mr. Juan Guerra, the executive director of ACLAMO, for the 2014 book. ACLAMO has a mission to help immigrants who are struggling.

# Exercising can calm you down

Rick Groce is a three-sport athlete. He plays basketball, football, and baseball.

To stay in good shape, he works out at least two hours every day.

“I feel good after practice most of the time because there is no more stress on my shoulders,” said Rick, who is in eighth grade.

Often after a good workout, people feel more relaxed because exercise releases a chemical in the brain, said Mrs. Lees, Eisenhower school nurse. These chemicals are called endorphins. They help you feel better and relieve stress, she said.

Endorphins are “the natural ‘feel-good’ chemicals in the body which leave you with a naturally happy

feeling,” according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Maria Hernandez, an eighth grader, participates in basketball, field hockey, and softball. Exercise calms her down. “All I feel like doing after sports is to just lie in bed and relax,” Maria said.

KidsHealth.org says that some people are more able to get a good night’s sleep after exercise.

“It can also help some people who have mild depression and low self-esteem,” the website says. “Plus, exercise can give people a real sense of accomplishment and pride at having achieved a certain goal.”

—By Emma Browne

# Work out your brain!

Here is a challenge. Can you unscramble the following words connected to heart health? (Answers on Page 2.)

- |                         |       |   |
|-------------------------|-------|---|
| 1) hlseocoetrl          | _____ | A fat-like substance that can clog blood vessels        |
| 2) hndnisoepr           | _____ | Your body releases these "happy" chemicals              |
| 3) eeesxirc             | _____ | Activity that makes your heart beat faster              |
| 4) tuuaatsnder          | _____ | Healthy fat that is found in nuts, plant oils           |
| 5) mkngios              | _____ | Bad habit that is harmful for the heart                 |
| 6) laancbde             | _____ | You should eat a _____ diet                             |
| 7) sratn tfsa (2 words) | _____ | Unhealthy fat found in a lot of junk food               |
| 8) thrae                | _____ | Muscle that pumps blood                                 |
| 9) doobl                | _____ | Liquid that moves nutrients and oxygen through the body |
| 10) dtaursaet           | _____ | Limit this fat found in meat                            |

## Be sure to eat balanced meals

Eating a healthy diet is a balancing act: Not too much. Not too little. Just the right amount.

That's particularly true for fats.

Miss Rachel Sakofs, a registered dietitian at Einstein Healthcare Network, said you should pay attention to the kinds and quantity of fats in your diet.

"Fats are important," said Miss Sakofs, who visits schools to teach children about leading a healthy lifestyle. "Too much fat isn't healthy."

Like a cushion, fats help protect organs in the body, she said. They also help digest vitamins. However, consuming a lot of fat can lead to clogged arteries, she said.

In a recent press conference with the *Healthy Panther*, she said you need to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy fats. She listed three major categories:

1. Unsaturated fat comes from plants. Examples are olive oil and nuts.
2. Saturated fat comes from animals. Examples are meat and cheese.
3. Trans fat is manufactured by turning liquid fats into solids. It is found in a lot of junk food.

Miss Sakofs said unsaturated fats are healthier for you than saturated and trans fats. Children can lower the amount of saturated and trans fat in their diet by eating less junk food and choosing baked food instead of fried food.

Miss Sakofs said children should eat about 60 grams of fat a day. A medium order of french fries is about 21 grams, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. So you need to be careful about how much fat you consume.

Miss Sakofs said low-fat diets are better for the heart because too much fat can build up plaque and clog arteries. Clogged arteries means that the heart has to work harder to pump blood.

To keep your heart healthy, Miss Sakofs suggested exercising regularly and eating plenty of fiber. Go for lean sources of protein such as fish, chicken (without the skin), beans, and tofu.

Miss Sakofs said it's important to read the nutrition facts on foods. For instance, a label might say something is trans fat-free, but it could be high in sodium, another fat, or sugar.

According to Miss Sakofs, a healthy diet is a balance of proteins, grains, fruits, vegetables, and dairy. It also includes plenty of water.

Eating a healthy diet will help you have good heart health, she said.

—By Healthy Panther staff

The *Healthy Panther* is looking for writers. We would love to hear from Eisenhower students, faculty, and families. Please write us a letter or send us an article. We may publish it in our spring issue.