



## PRESS RELEASE

**Date:** October 29, 2010  
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### Cypress School Kitchen Celebrates Grand Opening

REDDING – Cypress School parents, students, and staff celebrate the opening of the school’s new kitchen on Friday, November 5<sup>th</sup> from 11:30am to 1:00pm. Parents are invited to dine with their child on this day. Other Redding School District administrators, school board members, and members of the Healthy Shasta Partner Leadership Team will be enjoying lunch with the students, too. Whole Wheat French Bread Pizza (made in the new kitchen) and corn-on-the-cob will be served along with the daily salad bar and milk.

The kitchen was funded through the Healthy Students Initiative (HSI), a seven-year Healthy Shasta project designed to develop strategies to address childhood obesity in Shasta County. Cypress students previously received meals prepared at Sequoia Middle School.

As part of the HSI, Cypress will be modifying their menu to include more made-from-scratch cooking along with more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. The kitchen was an essential piece to helping improve the menu.

“The menu will evolve throughout the school year to allow students’ palates to adapt to foods that may be new to them,” said Redding School District Food Services Director Erin Johnson. “Students will also receive education on why the school menu items are changing and how these new foods contribute to good health.” The entire school is also participating in Harvest of the Month, a campaign where students are introduced to and sample a new fruit or vegetable each month.

In addition, the Cypress School garden will provide fresh-picked produce for the school meals. Research shows students who grow vegetables are more likely to try them and consume them more often. Many schools have found that students are proud to share their harvest with the entire school as part of school meals.

Principal Cindy Bishop expressed, “students are excited about using the plastic trays and silverware for their meals.” Previously, students ate on foam trays with plastic sporks. The students have been eating food from the new kitchen for about one month.

The Healthy Students Initiative (HSI) is a seven-year Healthy Shasta project to develop and implement solutions to address childhood obesity in Shasta County school communities. The Healthy Students Initiative is funded by The McConnell Foundation, Shasta Family YMCA, and Shasta County Public Health in partnership with Bella Vista, Cypress, and Lassen View schools.

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