

the power of ten

These noncommercial-foodservice leaders bring out-of-the-ordinary ideas, passion and energy to the industry's continuing evolution.

By **Kristina Buchthal**, SENIOR EDITOR, **Scott Hume**, EXECUTIVE MANAGING EDITOR, and **Erin J. Shea**, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

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Even though he's responsible for 860,000 meals a day (that's about 355,000 more than Tavern on the Green serves all year), David Berkowitz makes it part of his mission to bring creative flair to school foodservice.

The executive director of SchoolFood Restaurants for the New York City Department of Education installed an executive chef to create recipes and fine-tune flavors in school lunches.

"I want parents and students to think of our dining rooms as restaurants, not cafeterias," Berkowitz says.

A former vice president for Aramark's healthcare division in the Northeast, he borrows private-sector innovations for the school system.

Under Berkowitz's leadership, SchoolFood has hired a regional chef for each New York City borough to

WHO: David Berkowitz
WHAT: Executive director
WHERE: New York City
**Department of Education,
Office of School Food Services**
WHY: Creating innovative
approaches at the nation's
largest district-run school
foodservice operation.

oversee food production and train cafeteria workers. It issued uniforms to all 9,000 foodservice employees, and is swapping older decorations and rectangular foam trays for new signage, salad bars and creative meal packaging.

SchoolFood hires a folk band to stage concerts at schools, where they sing about nutrition and healthy eating. Berkowitz says the music "creates a lot of buzz."

In high schools, which generally have lower foodservice participation rates, SchoolFood has seen a 15% increase in sales due to new menu items, salad bars and promotions such as an iPod giveaway.

"We tell parents who send a brown bag with their kids that they would get a more nutritious meal from SchoolFood that is more affordable."

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—David Berkowitz, New York City Department of Education

