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| **INSERT**  **LOGO** | **TIPS for Successful**  **Meals in the Classroom (MIC)** |
| **Routine** | * Develop a clear, structured routine for Meals in the Classroom (MIC). * Implement the MIC routine from day one. * Instruct students on the routine and reinforce it regularly. * See Meal Schedule template for timing. |
| **Clear Expectations** | * Develop clear expectations with student input on defining acceptable behavior during MIC. * Communicate expectations through student-created classroom posters, art and announcements. * Share expectations with families. |
| **Patience** | * Be patient during program implementation as students learn new routines. * The routine will become easier as students gain familiarity, comfort and independence. |
| **Clean Up** | * Encourage students to take pride and ownership in keeping their space clean. * Establish routines for cleaning their space and their hands before and after meals. * Prepare students to respond calmly to the occasional, and inevitable, spills during MIC. * Have a clean-up caddy accessible and allow students to clean up their own messes. |
| **Time Cues** | * Provide students with gentle time cues during MIC: “*We have about 10 more minutes left for lunch. Has everyone tried a fruit or vegetable?” “We have 1 more minute to finish our meal before we clean up. Do you want another drink of milk?*” |
| **Learning as Part of MIC Routine** | * Include classroom activities and instructional time as part of MIC, when appropriate. Possible activities for students and teachers include:   + Take attendance during the morning meal   + Outline plans for morning or afternoon lessons   + Review homework and tests   + Read aloud or silent reading   + Present demonstrations or offer instructions for a lesson   + Solve puzzles, riddles or quiz questions   + Discuss “color of the day” or “word of the day”   + Connect an activity to a cafeteria-directed promotion, including both traditional and unconventional holidays and observances, such as National School Lunch Week, National Farm to School Month or Thanksgiving. |
| **Food, Culinary and Nutrition Education** | * Incorporate appropriate grade-level STEM education and discussions about food, cooking and nutrition into MIC whenever possible.   + *Let’s talk about today’s fruits and vegetables. What colors are they? Why are different produce items different colors?*   + *How do these fruits and vegetable grow?*   + *How are they cooked when you eat them at home?* |
| **Conversation** | * Help students learn the skills of positive mealtime conversations by reviewing appropriate topics, voice level, listening and not talking while chewing. * Utilize conversation cards like Iowa Extension cards for mealtimes (free for download at https://bit.ly/30VHxex). Or direct students to make their own conversation cards based on current class topic areas. |
| **Sound and Lighting** | * Use music and lighting to set a calm and comfortable mood for MIC. * If possible, turn lighting down during mealtimes. Play music that is related to a lesson. Allow students to make music selections when appropriate. |