

Pilot Light's Food Education Standards in the Classroom

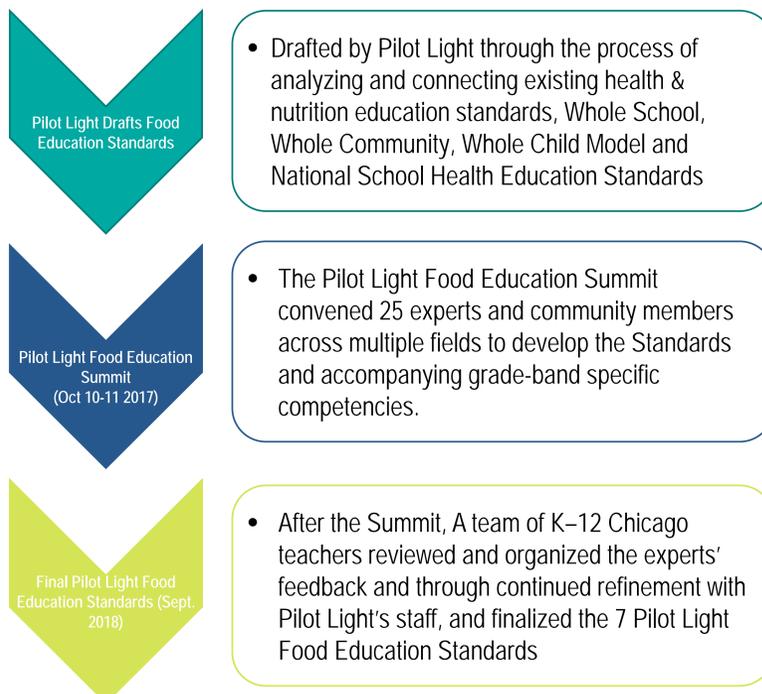
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Overview

- The majority of today's youth do not have knowledge of procurement and preparation of food, making it difficult to become health literate adults.
- Research shows that teaching students about food is an effective strategy towards improving their health.
- Schools present an ideal venue to provide food education to students to develop their critical thinking skills that leads to healthy choices in everyday life, while also teaching the role that food plays in our culture, relationships, history, and environment.
- To promote integration of holistic food education into schools, Pilot Light, a Chicago-based non-profit, developed comprehensive, K-12 Food Education Standards, to guide curricular development, instruction, and assessment of food education in classrooms.



Development Process



Pilot Light Food Education Standards



Students who demonstrate understanding can: identify, describe, and explain the way food is grown, harvested, and used around the world.



Students who demonstrate understanding can define seasonality, explain its relation to food and distinguish how natural and built environments can affect the seasonality of foods.

Students who demonstrate understanding can identify both external and internal factors and determine which factors are most influential in the food behaviors they make.



Students who demonstrate understanding can use food labels to communicate the relationship between nutrition and health.

Students who demonstrate understanding can prepare a nutrient-dense meal or recipe and explain their choices for each ingredient.



Students who demonstrate understanding can implement an action plan for bringing awareness of food equity and choices to surrounding communities. Advocate for personal, community, or political change that impacts issues of equity, environment, and health.

Pilot Light Standards in Action

Exemplar: Food Education Standard Seven

"We can advocate for food choices and changes that impact ourselves, our communities, and our world."

GRADE-SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

Kindergarten – 2nd Grade

1. Use MyPlate to make food swaps, explaining the reason for the exchange.
2. Make informed food choices when presented with options by designing a meal for their family.
3. Explain food in equitable terms (e.g. all people need food access, clean water is necessary, grocery stores are important to communities and their health).

3rd – 5th Grade

1. Develop a school advocacy project about nutritional information of school-provided lunches using resources such as the school cafeteria manager, the USDA and FDA websites, and federal nutrition programs.
2. Find, adapt, or create recipes and prepare them in class to share with peers.
3. Produce informational posters, flyer or pamphlets sharing information about food with the larger school community.

6th – 8th Grade

1. Prepare a grocery list for the family that supports positive food behaviors.
2. Create a meal from local foods to share with the community outside of school.
3. Develop an advocacy project to bring awareness about food deserts within the surrounding communities.

9th – 12th Grade

1. Compare and contrast nutritional information in a variety of foods to bring awareness to and promote positive eating options for yourself, family, and others.
2. Develop awareness of global food systems and advocate for change.
3. Develop a campaign to promote the participation of youth in volunteering and/or donating to food banks.
4. Develop awareness campaign around diseases associated with poor nutrition.

Discussion & Implications

- The Pilot Light Food Education Standards encompass evidence-based recommendations and provide clear, accessible guidance for educators interested in incorporating holistic food education in the classroom.
- Within the framework of the Food Education Standards, Pilot Light provides professional development to support delivery of food education in a way that aligns with everyday subjects (English, math, and social studies), standards, and local communities.
- Ultimately, through alignment with the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model, the Pilot Light Food Education Standards can be used as a guide to develop lessons and integrate food education into K-12 curricula with the potential to increase not only health but also enthusiasm for learning