



Speed Lines

Retail Concepts For Schools

Foreword

The aim of the “**Speed Line**” component of the **ServeSmart Program** is providing retail concepts to schools. By making meals more accessible and convenient for students to acquire, the participation in your reimbursable meal program will increase. Fundamentally, we are providing convenient points of sale. “Consumers”(students) are catered to in all retail establishments from convenience stores to malls. This is the retail environment they are most exposed to. By adding aesthetically pleasing, convenient points of sale, the “consumers”(students) will respond.

Key pointers to success

Location of Speed Lines

With the understanding that “Speed Lines” are “retail points of sale”, it is critical to place your “Speed Lines” in the traffic flow or where the students congregate. Unfortunately, all campuses are unique. **ServeSmart** recognizes this critical issue by providing site assessments on each campus to determine the Speed Line locations with the highest potential for reimbursable meals and a la carte sales.

Management

Food Service Directors will have to educate their staff that the “Speed Lines” are utilized for **incremental increases in redemption/ a la carte sales**. They will have to anticipate higher inventories of products. Communication to staff should be:

- Prepare to serve more students in a shorter period of time
- More inventory space will now be available at fixed points around the campus
- There will be less transportation of equipment

Background

The concept of multiple fixed points of sale on K-12 campuses came from Sheri Martineau(Food Service Director/San Jacinto Unified School District). She indicated to us that the challenges in her traditional food service operations were long lines, the stigma associated with the “Free Lunch Program”, injuries associated with her staff transporting equipment around her campuses and inadequate inventory of product where it was needed. She believed that fixed points of sale in high traffic areas would address these issues and increase her revenue. By implementing her concept, meals sales/redemption increased 22% year over year.

Marketing

As with any business endeavor, the consumer (students) must be adequately informed. The “Speed Lines” are designed to be promotional platforms with the included options for promotional materials. Included with the “Speed Lines” are merchandising options to communicate to the students what is available within the “Speed Line”. This decreases the “shopping” by the students which slows the transaction times at the point of sale. Food court style graphics with themes is one example of this concept.

Student involvement/labor

Speed Lines offer a unique opportunity to utilize student labor. Consider these locations stand alone businesses with inventory and pricing controls. Students offer reduced labor costs and quick, efficient delivery of products. Some Food Service Directors are instituting profit sharing programs with the student organizations for a la carte sales. Students are also your best source for advertising partnerships. Involve the students in new product launches and upcoming specials. Make sure communication materials are available throughout the campus.

Product mix & price

We hear it all the time but the K.I.S.S. method (keep it simple stupid) applies here. Ultimately, speed is our greatest ally. With a fixed period of time to serve the students, limited selections work best. Students in this environment will trade less of a selection for a shorter line. It is critical to limit transaction times as well. Keep cash transactions to simple price structures. If a product creates a change issue and slows service, eliminate that item.

Style and packaging

The key here is grab-n-go. If the items being served are not packaged conveniently, the lines will slow. Try to include condiments with the meals. Offer simple combination kits with 1\$, \$2, \$3 prices to speed transaction times.

Commitment

ServeSmart provides the tools and the support to dramatically improve school food service operations. It is the responsibility of the Food Service Director and Managers to implement the program. Retail organizations have known for years that consumers require attention. Students must be treated as consumers.