

On-Campus 'Restaurants' Are Big School Business

School lunches are big business. Non-profit, but big business nevertheless.

Preliminary estimates for the school lunch program for Torrance this coming year show that \$850,000 will find its way out of students' pockets and into the lunchroom till.

Torrance students ate more than a million lunches in school cafeterias this past year. As a matter of fact they topped the million mark a year ago in June.

THE MAN responsible for seeing to it that the school budget breaks even and the children are properly fed is John F. Blandy, food services manager.

Blandy does everything from supervising menu-planning to arranging for repairs of freezers. The biggest part of his job is the ordering of food and equipment. He shops around for everything from saucapans to pastry tubes and from cloves to marshmallows.

At the moment—despite the fact that Torrance's 30,000 schoolchildren won't be eating at school until mid-September—he is up to his neck in making sure the pantry shelves will be stocked when they return.

RECENTLY he opened bids for bread, ice-cream, laundry supplies and pest control services. (By providing preventative pest-control measures, the schools avoid waste and maintain health standards, he explained.)

Assisting Blandy, who got his training in purchasing "food by the bushel" while serving Uncle Sam, are a handful of office clerks and 38 cafeteria managers. Their salaries are paid out of school lunch receipts.

Duties of the cafeteria managers include receiving deliveries, preparing food, cleaning up, and keeping up with the paperwork that goes along with feeding the children in a school.

IN THE smaller schools a cafeteria manager may get by with just one three-hour-a-day helper to assist her serve and clean up; but in the larger elementary schools the staff is larger. In the high schools, which serve several hundred lunches a day, there may be as many as 16 cafeteria ladies. Some specialize as range cooks, some as pastry cooks, and some as salad makers.

When Torrance school board trustees raised the price of a plate lunch from 30 to 35 cents two years ago, school lunches became self-sustaining. Actually the lunches cost about a nickel more than that; but because the district is part of the National School Lunch Program, federal monies make up the difference.

School Suspend 1,530 Students

A total of 1,530 students were suspended from school during the 1963-64 school year, the Board of Education was told this week. Suspensions increased by 197 over the previous year.

During the last four weeks of school, 123 students were suspended. The board was told the rate of suspensions for the year is about 5.03 per 100 students.

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The National School Lunch Program, which was set up by the Department of Agriculture to insure children balanced meals as well as serve as an outlet for surplus food, sets national standards which are administered by the state of California.

TO COMPLY with program requirements, the schools must serve meals which include one third to one half the daily minimum nutritional requirements. Although Blandy's office plans menus for the entire district, each cafeteria manager is responsible for ordering the correct amount of food to meet her school's needs.

Is there a problem with leftovers?—None whatsoever, stated Blandy. "Not only are our managers good cooks, but they make wonderful crystal ball gazers. Their guesstimates always prove true."

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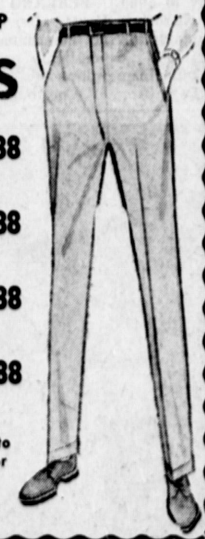
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