Dear Teacher,

Thank you for your support and for helping us to make our school a “green” school with the student-run Cafeteria Ranger program! Your class will be assigned as the ***Cafeteria Rangers*** for one month during this school year. Below is an overview of the program with helpful tips.

**1) Program Description**

The Cafeteria Ranger Program is an opportunity to work towards achieving a “zero-waste’ cafeteria by empowering students with leadership roles to oversee all recycling, composting, and waste-sorting at the end of each lunch period. The program can also help to create positive community spirit. Most importantly, by reducing our school garbage, we reduce carbon and methane emissions that contribute to Climate Change.

**2) Monthly Assignments**

Every month, one class is assigned to be the ***Ranger Class*** for each lunch period. For each week, please assign 4 - 5 students to specific Ranger Jobs (see job descriptions below). The goal is to give as many students as possible the opportunity to be Rangers throughout the remainder of the school year.

**3) Teacher Support and Involvement**

1. **Scheduling – Cafeteria Ranger Sign-up Sheets**

You will receive 2 copies of this chart. Please fill out the same information in both charts. One copy remains in the classroom and the other is posted in the cafeteria. Please ask the *Green Leader* to take the chart to the cafeteria on the first day of your assigned month.

**b. Review the Job Descriptions with your students**

*Please take the time to review each job description with your class just before your assigned Ranger month.* This will ensure that each student feels confident about his/her job.

**4) Daily Reminders**

**Morning Meeting** is an excellent time to remind students of Ranger assignments to briefly review responsibilities. **MONDAYS and any day after a break** are especially important because a new group of Rangers starts for the week. Here are **the reminder highlights:**

1. Rangers should be first in the school food line;
2. Rangers need to focus on eating and finish lunch before it is time to get up and work;
3. The ***Green Leader*** makes certain that each ***Ranger Captain*** has a pair of gloves and the correct badge. They also collect all the badges at the end of lunch period.

**5) Ongoing Positive Reinforcement**

Please acknowledge the excellent work that our students are doing in the cafeteria with this program! Help us make this program a success by saying “Thank You” to the Rangers and all students when you pick up your class after lunch.

**Cafeteria Ranger Job Descriptions**

TRASH CAPTAIN

* Make sure that no plates (or trays)[[1]](#footnote-1), food, milk cartons, or forks go into the trash bin.
* At the end of the period, collect any plates, recyclables, and trash left on the tables.
* Teach others that food scraps, plates, milk cartons, plastic forks, and plastic containers do *not* go into the trash bin because these items can be recycled or composted.[[2]](#footnote-2)

RECYCLE CAPTAIN

* Help others to pour out all liquids into the bucket.
* Make sure that all forks, spoons, cartons, plastic cups, and lids go into the blue bin.
* Make sure that no garbage and food go into the blue recycling bin!
* When the bucket is getting full, let the kitchen staff know.
* Dump food scraps that are in the strainer into the compost bin.

TRAY CAPTAIN

* Help everyone to *flip, tap then stack* their plates (*tap* against the *inside* of the compost bin).
* Teach others to stack their empty plates very neatly so the stacks do not fall over.
* When plate stacks get high, move them over and start a new stack.

COMPOST CAPTAIN

* Teach others to put all food scraps and napkins into the compost bin.
* Make sure that *no plastic* forks, *no* *plastic* wrap, and no ketchup packets go into the compost bin.
* Check plates *before* they are flipped to be sure that only food and napkins are left.

GREEN LEADER

* Check the posted Ranger schedule and make sure that all Rangers are at lunch.
* If a Ranger is absent, ask an adult to help choose a substitute.
* Make sure that each Ranger gets his/her badge and one pair of gloves.
* Help students to pre-sort things on their tray either before they line up or while they are waiting in line at the sorting station.
* At the end of lunch period, collect all Ranger badges and return them to the hook (or bin).

1. If your school is not a New York City (NYC) Department of Education school, your cafeteria may serve school meals on a tray that is not recyclable (such as a styrofoam tray) or may be using reusable trays or dishware. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This is specific to recycling and compost regulations in NYC. If you are not in NYC, please check with your local government on how to recycle correctly at school. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)