



JoyFoodly

Novato Unified School District  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***Novato Unified School District Farm-to-School Cooking Labs Expanding!***

Novato, CA... Beginning in the fall of 2016, Loma Verde, Hamilton and Pleasant Valley Elementary Schools will be joining Lu Sutton Elementary School in the [Wellness in the Schools](#) program that is being brought to the Novato Unified School District (NUSD) by Chef Hollie Greene, founder of [JoyFoodly®](#), as a part of her [Joyful 12 School Project](#) in partnership with the District's FANS ([Food and Nutritional Services](#)) Department, led by Miguel Villarreal.

The students at these schools will participate in two Cooking Labs, one in the fall and one in the spring, focused on teaching children the importance of eating locally and sustainably while weaving in the fundamentals of cooking and nutrition.

Miguel Villarreal and Chef Hollie Greene will collaborate with the Golden Gate Dietetic Program and the San Francisco State University Dietetic Internship Programs to help teach the cooking labs. Children will prepare and taste seasonal farm-fresh recipes that focus on the importance of eating locally and sustainably. In all, over 1,800 Elementary students will go through the 50-minute WITS Labs, take home recipes to cook with their families (in English and Spanish).

And the learning doesn't stop there. While these labs only happen a few times a year at school, all parents, students, and teachers of Joyful 12 School Project sites receive complementary lifetime access to Chef Hollie's [Joyful 12 Online Kitchen Learning Lab](#). This Online Kitchen Learning Lab teaches parents how to engage with their kids through videos, Chef Hollie's specific tips for each recipe, and 144 recipes that help parents learn what's in season over the course of a year—12 each season, 48 vegetables and fruits in all.

Novato Unified School District launched this innovative approach to food education to help children eat more vegetables and fruits at school in the 2015-16 school year. Over 350 children at Lu Sutton Elementary School participated in two Cooking Labs.

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In addition, NUSD was the first ever West Coast pilot of the national program [Wellness in the Schools](#) (WITS) by Chef Hollie Greene. The program is supported by presenting sponsor, Whole Foods Market, community sponsors Kaiser Permanente and Bi-Rite Market, and valued partnerships with Wellness in the Schools, Indian Valley Campus Organic Farm and Garden, and the SF-Marín Food Bank.

“What better way to learn about locally grown food, cooking and nutrition than by actually preparing and cooking it,” commented NUSD Superintendent Jim Hogeboom.

**Why is food education so important?** “You can improve the food served in schools, but if you don’t teach children how to engage with these new foods with all of their senses and reduce the fear of trying new foods, there is a huge disconnect between what’s served and what’s eaten,” says Chef Hollie. She knows the challenge first hand from her years volunteering and cooking in New York schools, while working for Wellness in the Schools, a non-profit that brings healthy food and fitness to 40,000 students across 75 public schools, cafeterias, classrooms, and recess yards.

“This transformative program could change my entire community’s health. We have reduced sugar, banned processed meats and other junk foods. But my work stops at the schoolyard fence; I can’t reach into the classroom or into families’ home kitchens.” said Miguel Villarreal, Food and Nutritional Director for Novato Unified School District.

“What if I told you that I could get families to fall in love with cooking and eating vegetables and fruits?” said Chef Hollie Greene, founder of JoyFoodly. “Parents have told me that their kids joyfully try zucchini and eggplant, cabbage and kohlrabi – because they know how to cook them simply at home, and make them delicious.”

The program is fiscally sponsored by the Social Good Fund, a 501c3 non-profit organization, and has recently piloted in neighboring San Rafael with the Youth on the Move Program at the Short School, offering a Joyful 12 afterschool curriculum to elementary students participating in LEAP programming.

**About JoyFoodly:** JoyFoodly is a San Francisco-based company seeking to create a new food culture where kids and families celebrate the joy of good food together. Founded in 2013, JoyFoodly unveiled its first product, the [Joyful 12](#), a web-based cooking crash course for families, in 2014. The Joyful 12 is a beautiful, engaging and affordable site that offers members video tutorial “bites”, allergen-and-gluten-free recipes ideal for kids’ palates, a shopping list generator, and a community space to share successes and challenges. Through the Joyful12, food education expert Chef Hollie Greene teaches parents simple cooking techniques and engagement strategies that motivate families to joyfully eat seasonal vegetables and fruits throughout the year. With 16 years in the classroom, including teaching over 2,000 kids from the East Coast to California, Chef Hollie has been featured in Whole Foods Market Northern California’s “Now In Season” program, which highlights the best seasonal produce available to shoppers. Chef Hollie is passionate about helping parents feel good about the food they feed

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their kids, and helping families celebrate the JOY of mealtime together. Engage with us:  
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