

Cleaning Up Your School's Plate

One of the most difficult yet necessary things we need to do is clean up our responsibility plates at school. We can easily get overloaded as individuals and as a community. It is almost like a lunch buffet: We start at one end of the buffet and load up on everything that looks delicious, thinking we **have** to try everything. And before we know it, we are halfway through the table with no more room, yet still good entrées to try and imbalances in our plate. But if we are mindful of our selections, we may not get to try everything but we can be satisfied with our selections and confident that our plate will meet our needs.

This exercise is both an aspirational exercise and an active decision-making exercise. It contains four parts and by the time you are done, you will have action steps for prioritizing your efforts in your school(s).

Part 1: What needs to be on your plate?

You know that old food pyramid that broke down ideal amounts of various food groups? That has long been abandoned by nutritional experts in favor of visual tools for proportioning up your food plate based on macronutrients—proteins, fats, and carbs—and recognizing that there are foods with more or less nutritional value in those categories. In other words, foods are not good or bad but have various nutritional utility in meeting our protein, fat, and carb needs.

We can use the same idea with education. Below, first identify your 3 main values/objective/purpose with your school(s). Think of them as your nutritional building blocks for your school. What are your proteins, fats, and carbs? You only get three. Write them in below.

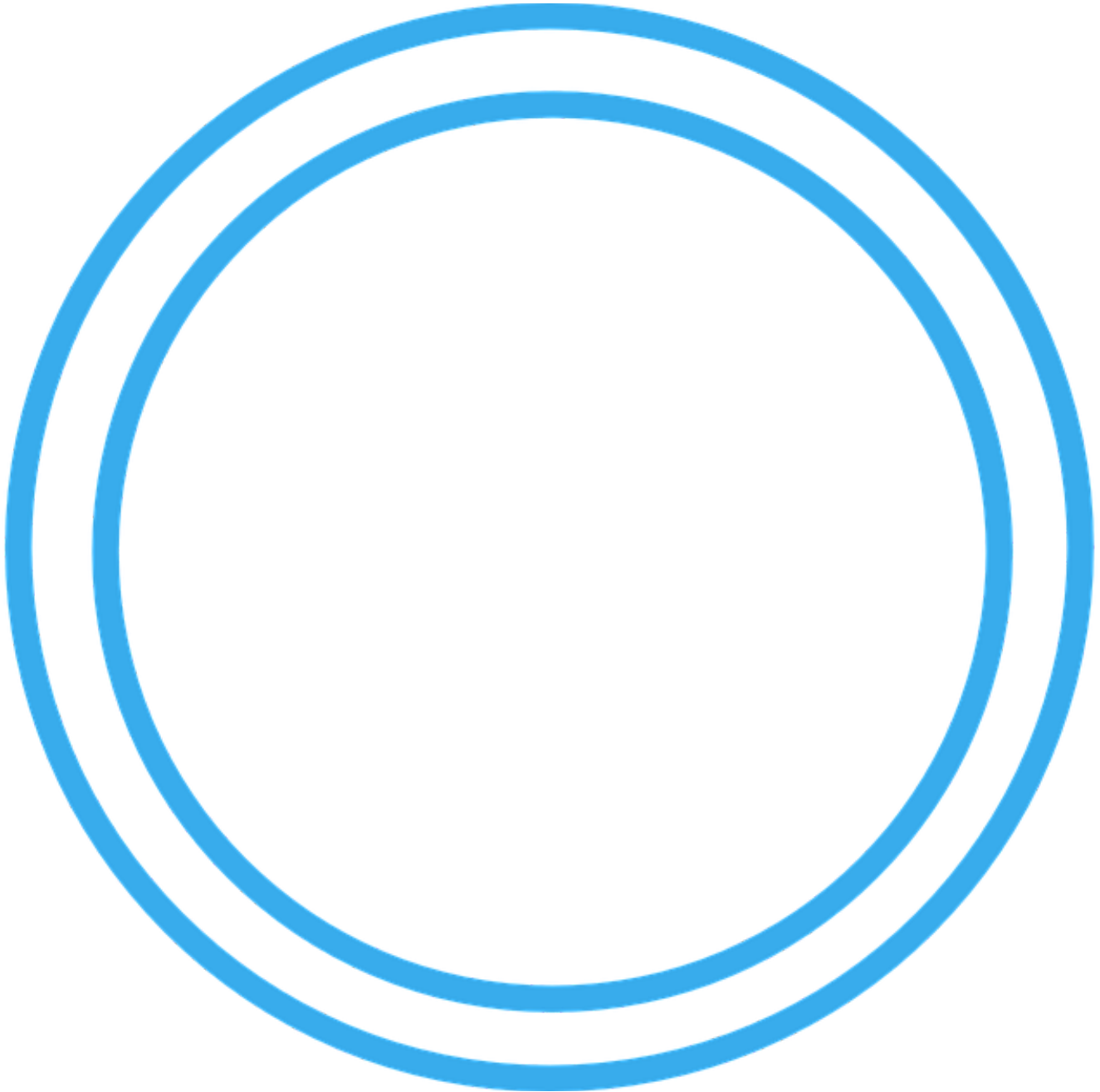
Example: <i>Protein</i>	Protein	Carb	Fat
<i>Educator Well-being</i>	Value here	Value here	Value here

Now that you have your 3 main building blocks, identify as many systems, practices, and policies that actualize those blocks. It doesn't matter how effective they are at this moment and it doesn't matter if you are using them now.

Example: <i>Educator Well-being</i>	Value here	Value here	Value here
<i>ARC, increased planning time, dinner parties, yoga classes</i>			

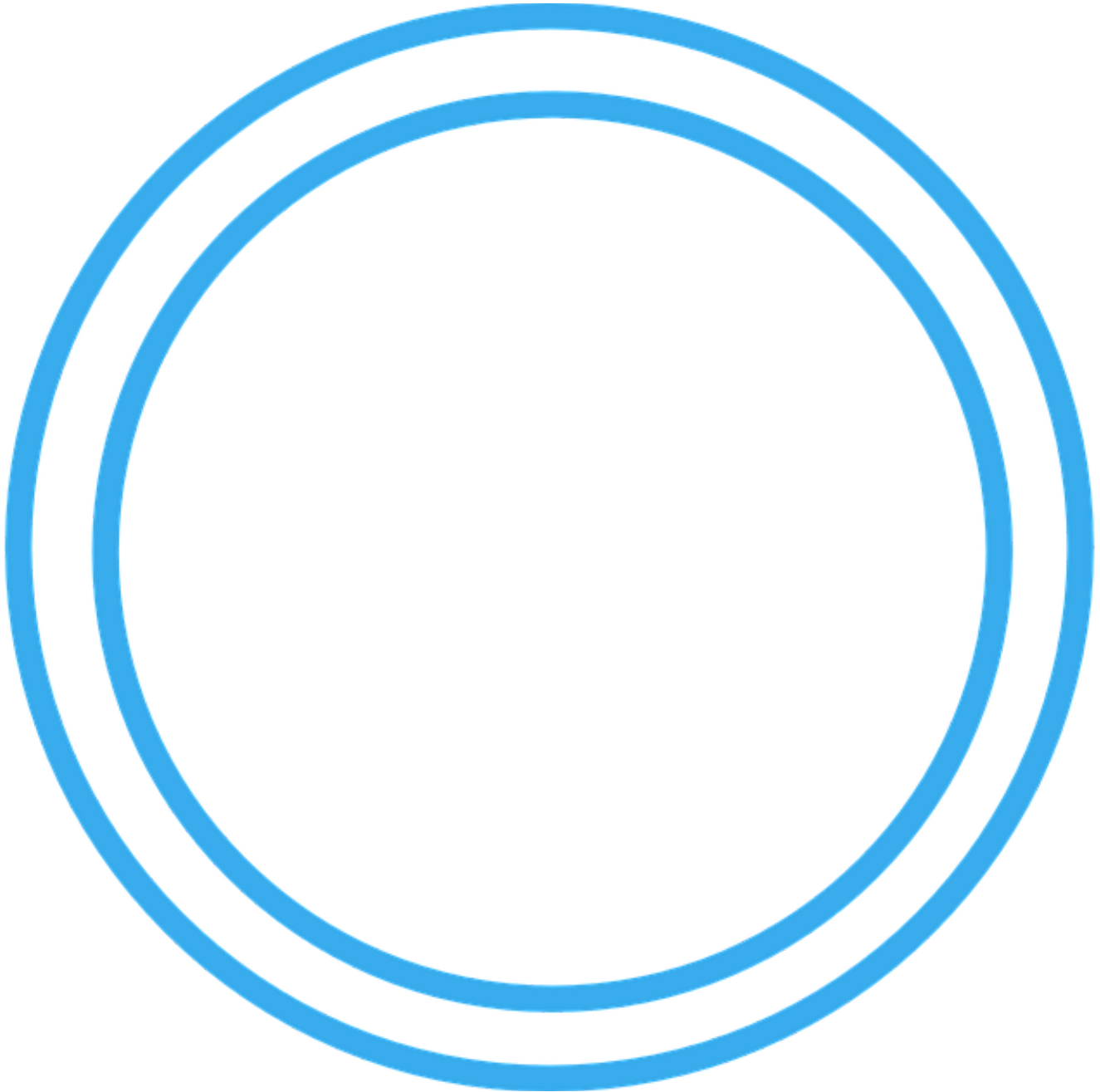
Part 2: What does your plate look like now?

Next step is to be honest with what our plate looks like right now. It may not be pretty or ideal, and that is okay. Draw it out/portion out your plate as it currently stands with the practices you listed above. Do your best to remember and display everything you do in your school(s). And if you can't fit everything on your plate in the proportions, that's okay and that is actually quite telling of all the work you are doing.



Part 3: What is your ideal plate?

Thinking back to your school(s)'s building blocks, and the various activities you could do, what would your ideal plate look like? What would you want to focus on? What aligns most with your and your school's values? What activities are most effective within each building block and how much time/resources would you give them? Proportion that out below.



Part 4: Making minor changes

One of the biggest blunders people make when trying to change their nutrition is that they make drastic sweeping changes immediately without setting up microhabits and changes. We need to avoid making the same mistake with our schools. Proportion your plate below by dropping all the extra stuff that feels necessary but isn't. Keep the practices and systems that still actualize your building blocks. And then make room for one slight change to your plate to get you closer to your ideal plate.

