

National School Lunch Program Meal Pattern

Food Components	Grade K - 5	Grade 6 – 8	Grade 9 - 12
Milk*	5 cups/week (1 cup daily)	5 cups/week (1 cup daily)	5 cups/week (1 cup daily)
Meat or Meat Alternates -Weekly minimum- maximum**	8-10 oz equivalent/week** (1 oz daily minimum)	9-10 oz equivalent/week** (1 oz daily minimum)	10-12 oz equivalent/week** (2 oz daily minimum)
Vegetables (total) -Daily/ Weekly minimum	3¾ cups/week (¾ cup daily minimum)	3¾ cups/week (¾ cup daily minimum)	5 cups/week (1 cup daily minimum)
<i>Dark Green Subgroup</i>	½ cup/wk	½ cup/wk	½ cup/wk
<i>Red / Orange Subgroup</i>	¾ cup/wk	¾ cup/wk	1¼ cup/wk
<i>Legumes Subgroup</i>	½ cup/wk	½ cup/wk	½ cup/wk
<i>Starchy Subgroup</i>	½ cup/wk	½ cup/wk	½ cup/wk
<i>Other Subgroup</i>	½ cup/wk	½ cup/wk	¾ cup/wk
Fruits -Daily/ Weekly minimum	2½ cups/week (½ cup daily minimum)	2½ cups/week (½ cup daily minimum)	5 cups/week (1 cup daily minimum)
Grains / Breads -Weekly minimum- maximum** -At least 80% of grains served per week must be whole grain rich, the rest must be enriched	8-9 oz equivalent/week** (1 oz daily minimum)	8-10 oz equivalent/week** (1 oz daily minimum)	10-12 oz equivalent/week** (2 oz daily minimum)
Minimum – Maximum Calories (kcal) -Weekly average	550 – 650	600 – 700	750 - 850
Saturated Fat (% of total calories) -Weekly average	<10%	<10%	<10%
Sodium*** -Weekly average	≤1230 mg	≤1360 mg	≤1420 mg
Trans Fat	0 grams / serving	0 grams / serving	0 grams / serving

*Schools must offer at least two different types of fluid milk daily; one must be unflavored. Milk must be flavored or unflavored fat-free or 1% low-fat.

** Staying within the maximums helps with dietary specifications but is not required.

*** Sodium targets to decrease in SY 23-24 for lunch only.

School Breakfast Program Meal Pattern

Food Components	Grade K - 5	Grade 6 – 8	Grade 9 - 12
Milk*	5 cups/week (1 cup daily)	5 cups/week (1 cup daily)	5 cups/week (1 cup daily)
Meat or Meat Alternates	None required but may substitute 1 oz equivalent of meat /meat alternate for 1 oz equivalent grains after minimum daily grain is met.	None required but may substitute 1 oz equivalent of meat /meat alternate for 1 oz equivalent grains after minimum daily grain is met.	None required but may substitute 1 oz equivalent of meat /meat alternate for 1 oz equivalent grains after minimum daily grain is met.
Vegetables	May be substituted for fruits.	May be substituted for fruits.	May be substituted for fruits.
Fruits -Daily/ Weekly minimum	5 cups/week (1 cup daily minimum)	5 cups/week (1 cup daily minimum)	5 cups/week (1 cup daily minimum)
Grains / Breads -Daily/ Weekly minimum-maximum** -At least 80% of grains served per week must be whole grain rich, the rest must be enriched	7 oz equivalent/week** (1 oz daily minimum)	8 oz equivalent/week** (1 oz daily minimum)	9 oz equivalent/week** (1 oz daily minimum)
Minimum – Maximum Calories (kcal) Weekly average	350 – 500	400 – 550	450 - 600
Saturated Fat (% of total calories) Weekly average	<10%	<10%	<10%
Sodium Weekly average	≤ 540 mg	≤ 600 mg	≤ 640 mg
Trans Fat	0 grams/serving	0 grams/serving	0 grams/serving

*Schools must offer at least two different types of fluid milk daily; one must be unflavored. Milk must be flavored or unflavored fat-free or 1% low-fat.

**Staying within the maximums helps with dietary specifications but is not required.

Milk



Breakfast

All Grades: 5 cups/week
(1 cup daily)

Lunch

All Grades: 5 cups/week
(1 cup daily)

Must offer a variety (two or more choices)

Fluid milk must be:

- ◆ Low-fat (1% milk fat or less, unflavored or flavored)
- ◆ Fat-free (unflavored or flavored)
- ◆ Lactose-reduced or Lactose-free (1% or fat-free)


Meat or Meat Alternate

Breakfast

None required but may substitute 1 oz equivalent of meat/meat alternate for 1 oz equivalent grains after minimum daily grain is met

Lunch

Grades K–5: 8–10 oz equivalent/week (1 oz)
Grades 6–8: 9–10 oz equivalent/week (1 oz)
Grades 9–12: 10–12 oz equivalent/week (2 oz)

- 
- ◆ Lean Meat, Poultry or Fish
 - ◆ Dried/Semi-dried shelf-stable meat/poultry
 - ◆ Seafood - Tempeh, Surimi
 - ◆ Alternate Protein Products
 - ◆ Cheese
 - ◆ Eggs
 - ◆ Beans or Legumes *
 - ◆ Peanut and Other Nut or Seed Butters
 - ◆ Yogurt

See USDA Food Buying Guide for details

* Legumes/beans may be used as a meat/meat alternate OR as a vegetable

Grains / Breads

Breakfast

Grades K-5: 7oz min. equivalent/week (1 oz)
Grades 6-8: 8 oz min. equivalent/week (1 oz)
Grades 9-12: 9 oz min. equivalent/week (1 oz)

Lunch

Grades K-5: 8 oz min. equivalent/week (1 oz)
Grades 6-8: 8 oz min. equivalent/week (1 oz)
Grades 9-12: 10 oz min. equivalent/week (2 oz)

Grains Creditability and Whole grain rich determination:

Does the product contain only Creditable Grains?

- ◆ Non creditable grains include: oat fiber, corn fiber, wheat starch, corn starch, bran, germ and modified food starch (including potato, legume and other vegetable flours)
- ◆ Grains in amounts < .25 oz equivalent (3.99 grams for items in groups A-G or 6.99 grams in group H) or <2% of the product formula do not need to be considered
- ◆ Non creditable grains in 100% Whole grain RTE Cereal may not exceed 6.99 grams

Yes

Are all grains in the product Whole Grain or Enriched?

- ◆ Grains in amounts < .25 oz equivalent (3.99 grams for items in groups A-G or 6.99 grams in group H) or <2% of the product formula do not need to be considered
- ◆ RTE cereal must be fortified, per FDA requirements

Yes

Is the product Whole Grain Rich?

- ◆ Grain content is $\geq 50\%$ whole grain by weight
- ◆ Contains ≥ 8 grams of whole grain per oz equivalent serving (Groups A-G on Exhibit A)
- ◆ Product has the FDA whole grain health claim "Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol, may help reduce the risk of heart disease and certain cancers"

Yes

Creditable & Whole Grain Rich*

No

No

Non Creditable

No

Creditable — Not Whole Grain Rich*

* At least 80% of all grains must be whole grain rich.

Exhibit A: Grain Requirements For Child Nutrition Programs^{1, 2}

Color Key: Footnote 5 = Blue, Footnote 3 or 4 = Red

Food Products per Group	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq)
Group A	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group A
Bread type coating Bread sticks (hard) Chow Mein noodles Savory Crackers (saltines and snack crackers) Croutons Pretzels (hard) Stuffing (dry) <i>Note: weights apply to bread in stuffing</i>	1 oz eq = 22 gm or 0.8 oz 3/4 oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz 1/2 oz eq = 11 gm or 0.4 oz 1/4 oz eq = 6 gm or 0.2 oz
Group B	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group B
Bagels Batter type coating Biscuits Breads - all (for example sliced, French, Italian) Buns (hamburger and hot dog) Sweet Crackers⁵ (graham crackers - all shapes, animal crackers) Egg roll skins English muffins Pita bread Pizza crust Pretzels (soft) Rolls Tortillas Tortilla chips Taco shells	1 oz eq = 28 gm or 1.0 oz 3/4 oz eq = 21 gm or 0.75 oz 1/2 oz eq = 14 gm or 0.5 oz 1/4 oz eq = 7 gm or 0.25
Group C	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group C
Cookies³ (plain - includes vanilla wafers) Combread Corn muffins Croissants Pancakes Pie crust (dessert pies³, cobbler³, fruit turnovers⁴, and meats/meat alternate pies) Waffles	1 oz eq = 34 gm or 1.2 oz 3/4 oz eq = 26 gm or 0.9 oz 1/2 oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz 1/4 oz eq = 9 gm or 0.3 oz
Group D	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group D
Doughnuts⁴ (cake and yeast raised, unfrosted) Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars⁴ (plain) Muffins (all, except corn) Sweet roll⁴ (unfrosted) Toaster pastry⁴ (unfrosted)	1 oz eq = 55 gm or 2.0 oz 3/4 oz eq = 42 gm or 1.5 oz 1/2 oz eq = 28 gm or 1.0 oz 1/4 oz eq = 14 gm or 0.5 oz

¹ In the NSLP and SBP (grades K-12), at least eighty percent of the weekly grains offered must meet the whole grain-rich criteria and the remaining grain items offered must be made from whole-grain flour, whole-grain meal, corn masa, masa harina, hominy, enriched flour, enriched meal, bran, germ, or be an enriched product, such as enriched bread, or a fortified cereal. Please note: State agencies have the discretion to set stricter requirements than the minimum nutrition standards for school meals. For additional guidance, please contact your State agency. For all other Child Nutrition Programs, grains must be made from whole-grain flour, whole-grain meal, corn masa, masa harina, hominy, enriched flour, enriched meal, bran, germ, or be an enriched product, such as enriched bread, or a fortified cereal. Under the CACFP child and adult meal patterns, and in the NSLP/SBP preschool meals, at least one grains serving per day must meet whole grain-rich criteria.

² For the NSLP and SBP (grades K-12), grain quantities are determined using ounce equivalents (oz eq). All other Child Nutrition Programs determine grain quantities using grains/breads servings. Beginning Oct. 1, 2021, grain quantities in the CACFP and NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals will be determined using oz eq. Some of the following grains may contain more sugar, salt, and/or fat than others. This should be a consideration when deciding how often to serve them.

³ Allowed in NSLP (up to 2.0 oz eq grain-based dessert per week in grades K-12) as specified in §210.10 and at snack service in SFSP. Considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component in CACFP or NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals as specified in §§226.20(a)(4) and 210.10.

⁴ Allowable in NSLP (up to 2.0 oz eq grain-based dessert per week for grades K-12) as specified in §210.10. May count toward the grains component in SBP (grades K-12) and at snack and breakfast meals in SFSP. Considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component in the CACFP and NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals as specified in §§226.20(a)(4) and 210.10.

⁵ Allowed in NSLP (up to 2.0 oz eq grain-based dessert per week in grades K-12) as specified in §210.10. May count toward the grains component in the SBP (grades K-12), CACFP, NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals, and SFSP.

Group E	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group E
Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars ⁴ (with nuts, dried fruit, and/or chocolate pieces) Cookies ³ (with nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces and/or fruit purees) Doughnuts ⁴ (cake and yeast raised, frosted or glazed) French toast Sweet rolls ⁴ (frosted) Toaster pastry ⁴ (frosted)	1 oz eq = 69 gm or 2.4 oz 3/4 oz eq = 52 gm or 1.8 oz 1/2 oz eq = 35 gm or 1.2 oz 1/4 oz eq = 18 gm or 0.6 oz
Group F	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group F
Cake ³ (plain, unfrosted) Coffee cake ⁴	1 oz eq = 82 gm or 2.9 oz 3/4 oz eq = 62 gm or 2.2 oz 1/2 oz eq = 41 gm or 1.5 oz 1/4 oz eq = 21 gm or 0.7 oz
Group G	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group G
Brownies ³ (plain) Cake ³ (all varieties, frosted)	1 oz eq = 125 gm or 4.4 oz 3/4 oz eq = 94 gm or 3.3 oz 1/2 oz eq = 63 gm or 2.2 oz 1/4 oz eq = 32 gm or 1.1 oz
Group H	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group H
Cereal Grains (barley, quinoa, etc.) Breakfast cereals (cooked) ^{6,7} Bulgur or cracked wheat Macaroni (all shapes) Noodles (all varieties) Pasta (all shapes) Ravioli (noodle only) Rice	1 oz eq = 1/2 cup cooked or 1 ounce (28 gm) dry
Group I	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group I
Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry) ^{6,7}	1 oz eq = 1 cup or 1 ounce for flakes and rounds 1 oz eq = 1.25 cups or 1 ounce for puffed cereal 1 oz eq = 1/4 cup or 1 ounce for granola

- ³ Allowed in NSLP (up to 2.0 oz eq grain-based dessert per week in grades K-12) as specified in §210.10 and at snack service in SFSP. Considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component in CACFP or NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals as specified in §§226.20(a)(4) and 210.10.
- ⁴ Allowable in NSLP (up to 2.0 oz eq grain-based dessert per week for grades K-12) as specified in §210.10. May count toward the grains component in SBP (grades K-12) and at snack and breakfast meals in SFSP. Considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component in the CACFP and NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals as specified in §§226.20(a)(4) and 210.10.
- ⁶ Refer to program regulations for the appropriate serving size for supplements served to children aged 1 through 5 in the NSLP; breakfast served in the SBP, and meals served to children ages 1 through 5 and adult participants in the CACFP. Breakfast cereals are traditionally served as a breakfast menu item but may be served in meals other than breakfast.
- ⁷ In the NSLP and SBP, cereals that list a whole grain as the first ingredient must be fortified, or if the cereal is 100 percent whole grain, fortification is not required. For all Child Nutrition Programs, cereals must be whole-grain, enriched, or fortified; cereals served in CACFP and NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce.

Measurement References

Volume Equivalents

1 Tbsp =	3 tsp	= 0.5 fl oz
1/8 cup =	2 Tbsp	= 1 fl oz
1/4 cup =	4 Tbsp	= 2 fl oz
1/3 cup =	5 Tbsp + 1 tsp	= 2.65 fl oz
3/8 cup =	6 Tbsp	= 3 fl oz
1/2 cup =	8 Tbsp	= 4 fl oz
5/8 cup =	10 Tbsp	= 5 fl oz
2/3 cup =	10 Tbsp + 2 tsp	= 5.3 fl oz
3/4 cup =	12 Tbsp	= 6 fl oz
7/8 cup =	14 Tbsp	= 7 fl oz
1 cup =	16 Tbsp	= 8 fl oz
1 pint =	2 cups	= 16 fl oz
1 quart =	2 pints	= 32 fl oz
1 gallon =	4 quarts	= 128 fl oz

Equivalent Weights

16 oz =	1 lb	= 1.000 lb
12 oz =	3/4 lb	= 0.750 lb
8 oz =	1/2 lb	= 0.500 lb
4 oz =	1/4 lb	= 0.250 lb
1 oz =	1/16 lb	= 0.063 lb

Scoop Sizes

6 =	3/8 cup
8 =	1/2 cup
10 =	3/4 cup
12 =	1/3 cup
16 =	1/4 cup

Metric Conversion

To Change	To	Multiply By
Ounces (oz)	Grams (g)	28.35
Pounds (lb)	Kilograms (kg)	0.45
Fluid ounces	Milliliters (ml)	29.58
Cups (c)	Liters (l)	0.24

Metric Equivalents

by Weight

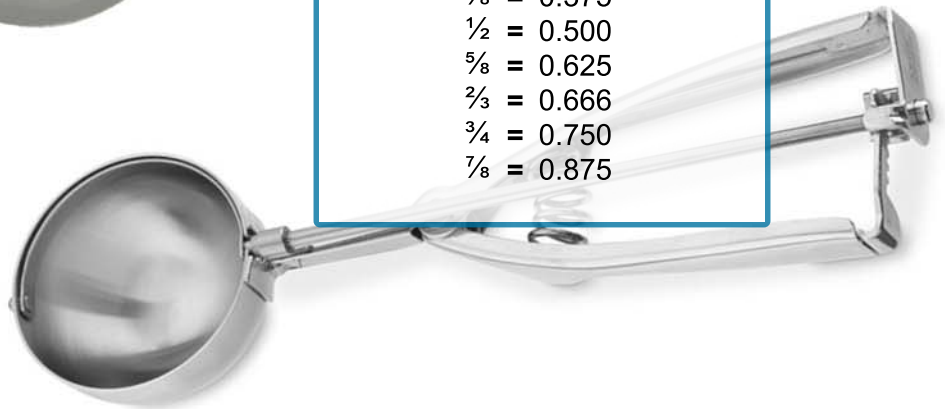
1 oz =	28.35 gm
4 oz =	113.4 gm
8 oz =	226.8 gm
16 oz =	453.6 gm
1 lb =	453.6 gm
2.2 lb =	1 kg

by Volume

8 fluid oz =	236.59 mL
32 fluid oz =	946.36 mL
48 fluid oz =	1.42 L
33.818 fluid oz =	1 L

Fraction to Decimal Equivalents

1/8 =	0.125
1/4 =	0.250
1/3 =	0.333
3/8 =	0.375
1/2 =	0.500
5/8 =	0.625
2/3 =	0.666
3/4 =	0.750
7/8 =	0.875



Vegetables

Breakfast

Not required BUT may be substituted for fruits.

Lunch

Grades K–5: 3¾ cups/week (¾ cup)
Grades 6–8: 3¾ cups/week (¾ cup)
Grades 9–12: 5 cups/week (1 cup)

Minimum creditable serving: ⅛ cup
1 cup leafy green = ½ cup serving
All juice must be 100% full strength

No more than half of fruit or vegetable offerings may be in the form of juice

Subgroup

Dark Green

- ◆ Bok Choy
- ◆ Broccoli
- ◆ Chard
- ◆ Collard Greens
- ◆ Dark Green Leaf Lettuce
- ◆ Kale
- ◆ Mesclun
- ◆ Mustard Greens
- ◆ Romaine Lettuce
- ◆ Spinach
- ◆ Turnip Greens
- ◆ Watercress

Breakfast

Not required

Lunch

Grades K–5: ½ cup/week
Grades 6–8: ½ cup/week
Grades 9–12: ½ cup/week
Larger amounts may be served

Red / Orange

- ◆ Acorn Squash
- ◆ Butternut Squash
- ◆ Carrots
- ◆ Hubbard Squash
- ◆ Pumpkin
- ◆ Red Peppers
- ◆ Sweet Potatoes
- ◆ Tomatoes
- ◆ Tomato Juice

Breakfast

Not required

Lunch

Grades K–5: ¾ cup/week
Grades 6–8: ¾ cup/week
Grades 9–12: 1¼ cups/week
Larger amounts may be served

Legumes

- ◆ Black Beans
- ◆ Black-eyed Peas (mature)
- ◆ Edamame
- ◆ Garbanzo Beans (chickpeas)
- ◆ Kidney Beans
- ◆ Lentils
- ◆ Navy Beans
- ◆ Pinto Beans
- ◆ Soy Beans
- ◆ Split Peas
- ◆ White Beans

Breakfast

Not required

Lunch

Grades K–5: ½ cup/week
Grades 6–8: ½ cup/week
Grades 9–12: ½ cup/week
Larger amounts may be served

Subgroup

Starchy

- ◆ Cassava
- ◆ Corn
- ◆ Black-eyed peas (not dry)
- ◆ Green Bananas
- ◆ Green Peas
- ◆ Green Lima Beans
- ◆ Jicama
- ◆ Hominy (Whole)
- ◆ Plantains
- ◆ Potatoes
- ◆ Taro
- ◆ Water Chestnuts

Breakfast

Not required

Lunch

Grades K–5: ½ cup/week
Grades 6–8: ½ cup/week
Grades 9–12: ½ cup/week

Larger amounts may be served

Other

- ◆ Artichokes
- ◆ Asparagus
- ◆ Avocado
- ◆ Bean Sprouts
- ◆ Beets
- ◆ Brussels Sprouts
- ◆ Cabbage
- ◆ Cauliflower
- ◆ Celery
- ◆ Cucumbers
- ◆ Eggplant
- ◆ Green Beans
- ◆ Green Bell Peppers
- ◆ Iceberg (Head) Lettuce
- ◆ Mushrooms
- ◆ Okra
- ◆ Onions
- ◆ Parsnips
- ◆ Turnips
- ◆ Wax Beans
- ◆ Zucchini

Breakfast

Not required

Lunch

Grades K–5: ½ cup/week
Grades 6–8: ½ cup/week
Grades 9–12: ¾ cup/week

Larger amounts may be served

This sub group may be met with items from the dark green, red-orange or beans/peas sub groups

Fruits

Breakfast

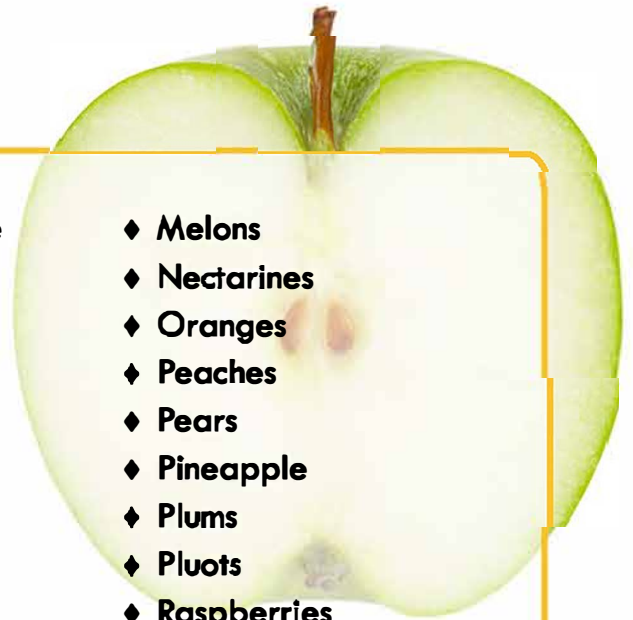
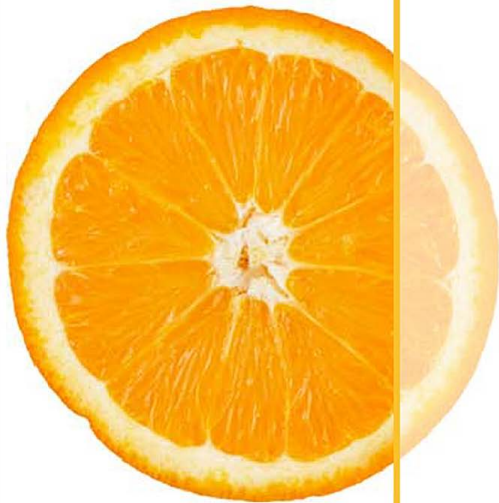
Grades K–5: 5 cups/week (1 cup)
Grades 6–8: 5 cups/week (1 cup)
Grades 9–12: 5 cups/week (1 cup)

Lunch

Grades K–5: 2½ cups/week (½ cup)
Grades 6–8: 2½ cups/week (½ cup)
Grades 9–12: 5 cups/week (1 cup)

Minimum creditable serving: ⅛ cup
¼ cup dried fruit = ½ cup fruit serving
All juice must be 100% full strength

No more than half of fruit or vegetable offerings may be in the form of juice



- ◆ Apples or Applesauce
- ◆ Apricots
- ◆ Bananas
- ◆ Blackberries
- ◆ Blueberries
- ◆ Cantaloupe
- ◆ Coconut
- ◆ Cherries
- ◆ Grapes
- ◆ Grapefruit
- ◆ Honeydew Melon
- ◆ Kiwi
- ◆ Mandarin Oranges
- ◆ Mango
- ◆ Melons
- ◆ Nectarines
- ◆ Oranges
- ◆ Peaches
- ◆ Pears
- ◆ Pineapple
- ◆ Plums
- ◆ Pluots
- ◆ Raspberries
- ◆ Satsumas
- ◆ Strawberries
- ◆ Tangerines
- ◆ Watermelon



Menu Planning Principles

Balance

- ◆ Balance higher fat foods with ones that have less fat
- ◆ Balance higher sodium foods with lower sodium foods

Variety

- ◆ Use a combination of mild and strong flavors
- ◆ Use a variety of shapes and sizes
- ◆ Include variety in day to day menu choices
- ◆ Vary the types of main courses
- ◆ Include food in different forms and prepare them in a variety of ways

Contrast

- ◆ Think about the texture of foods as well as taste and appearance
- ◆ Use a variety of textures (soft/crispy/smooth/firm/chewy)
- ◆ Use a combination of sizes and shapes of foods

Color

- ◆ Avoid using too many foods of the same color in the same meal
- ◆ Use colorful foods in combination dishes

Eye Appeal

- ◆ Think about total presentation
- ◆ Make the serving line attractive
- ◆ Plan the way you will place the menu items on the tray or plate

Offer Choices

- ◆ Plan some choices for individual taste preferences

- ✓ Balance
- ✓ Variety
- ✓ Contrast
- ✓ Color
- ✓ Eye Appeal
- ✓ Offer Choices

Evaluating your MENU

Foods Selected

- Do the foods have appealing colors and textures?
- Does the menu have foods with different shapes, sizes, and colors?
- Do the breakfast and lunch menus complement each other?
- Have you considered special events and promotions?
- Have you incorporated seasonal foods and USDA Foods?
- Have you introduced any new food items?

Staffing/Equipment

- Can some preparations be done ahead?
- Is the workload balanced among employees?
- Can you prepare and serve meals with available equipment?
- Are the oven and surface-cooking areas adequate for items planned?

Cost

- Have you considered cost?
- Are high and low cost foods balanced?

Recipes/Production Records

- Have you specified standardized recipes and preparation techniques?
- Are portion sizes stated in correct amounts?
- Have you listed the condiments to be served?
- Have you determined meal pattern contribution?



School Meal Best Practices

Selecting Low Added-Sugar Foods

School breakfasts served through the School Breakfast Program align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans - they are rich in whole grains, high quality protein, and a variety of vitamins and minerals children need to grow and be healthy. School breakfast participation is associated with healthier body weight^{1,2,3,4} and higher standardized test scores⁵. To further enhance the nutritional benefits of school breakfast, offer foods that are lower in added sugars!

What is added sugar?

Added sugars are sugars and sweeteners added to foods or beverages when they are processed or prepared. This does not include naturally occurring sugars such as those in milk and fruits.

How much added sugar is too much?

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends "Healthy Eating patterns limit added sugars to **less than 10% of calories per day.**" Currently, children aged 9-18 get almost 18% of their daily calories from added sugar.

This added sugar primarily comes from sweetened beverages. Beverages account for almost half (47%) of all added sugars consumed by the U.S. population. The other major sources of added sugars are snacks and sweets.

Best Practices:

- Limit offerings of grain-based desserts (sweet rolls, pastries, breakfast cookies/bars, etc.) at breakfast to once per week.
- Serve breakfast cereals that contain 6 grams or less sugar per dry ounce.
- Serve yogurts that contain 15 grams or less sugar per 4 oz (113g).

Convenient, low-sugar foods:

Healthy and easy to serve alternatives to high added sugar breakfast foods.

- Fresh Fruit and Vegetables
- Low sugar Cereal
- Low sugar Yogurts
- Protein-rich breakfast sandwiches
- Whole Grain-Rich Bagels



Foods to Limit:

While quick to prepare and easy to serve, these food often have high amounts of added sugars.

- Pastries and donuts
- Cookies and Cakes
- Syrups
- Granola/breakfast bars

Tip

Fresh and local foods often contain less added sugar than their processed counterparts. Some schools bake their own muffins or breads! This is a great way to serve delicious foods while keeping added sugars to a minimum.

School Meal Best Practices

Best Practices for Unpaid Meal Debt

New Rules regarding Unpaid Meals

Following the 2019 legislative session, OSPI Child Nutrition Services clarified two key points regarding unpaid meals.

- 1) Parents/guardians have the first and final say in how much school meal debt a student can accrue. Districts should respect a parents wish to not allow meal charging.
- 2) The Hunger-Free Students Bill of Rights only applies to reimbursable meals (not a la carte or second meals).

Best Practices:

- **Identify Eligible Children** - Running Direct Certification often (at least monthly, per law) is key to ensuring that eligible students are identified.
- **Utilize CEP or Provision 2 if possible** - Because all students eat at no cost under these claiming options, meal debt is essentially eliminated.
- **Provide Application Assistance** - Offer assistance to potentially eligible families who may struggle to complete the application independently.
- **Establish Charge Limits with Parents** - Work with parents to establish charge limits for students who are not eligible for Free or Reduced-Price meals.

Remember:

Districts must have a clearly written meal charge policy.



Resources: [OSPI Local Meal Charge Policy Reference Sheet](#) & [OSPI Alternate Meals Reference Sheet](#)

