

NSLP/SBP Meal Pattern Training

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June 2025



NSLP Meal Pattern

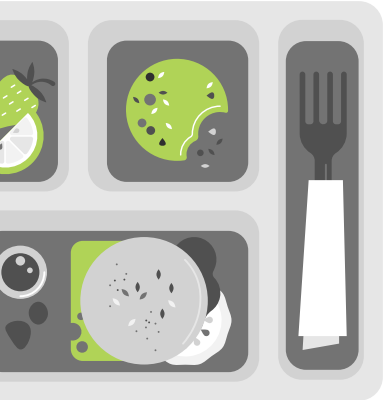


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Basic Requirements for Lunch

Conducting a Nutrient Analysis will help you stay on track!

- Offer all 5 of the Required components daily
- Meet Daily & Weekly component minimums
- Meet Weekly Vegetable Subgroup minimums
- Stay within the caloric range
- Stay below the max allowed sodium limit
- Stay below the max allowed saturated/trans fat limit

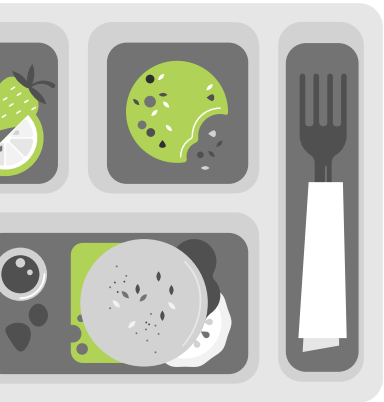


Age Groupings and Menu Planning

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Allowable Groupings at Lunch

- Grades k-5
- Grades 6-8
- Grades 9-12
- You can combine two groups to make a k-8 grouping, calories and sodium meet the most restrictive level



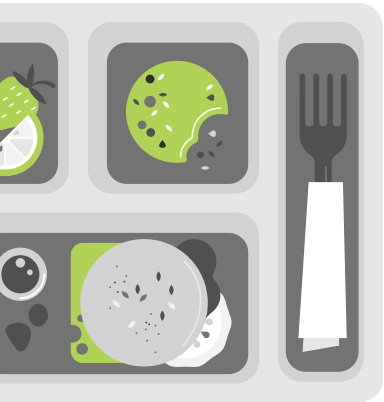
There is no such thing as k-12 grouping at lunch!!!!

Required Components

5

These 5 must be offered at lunch every day at Lunch

1. Meat/Meat Alternate (M/MA)
2. Grain (G)
3. Vegetable (V)
4. Fruit (F)
5. Milk (M)



Meat / Meat Alternate at Lunch

Take note of differences in daily minimums across the different grade groups!

Just offering the daily minimum will not help you to meet weekly goal!

Food Components	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-4	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Meat or Meat Alternate (M/MA)			8 oz. eq./wk	9 oz. eq./wk	10 oz. eq./wk
When combining K-5 & 6-8 to establish a K-8 group.			9 oz. eq.^x/wk		
Lean meat, poultry, fish	1 oz.	1 ½ oz.	1 oz. eq. ^x per day minimum	1 oz. eq. ^x per day minimum	2 oz. eq. ^x per day minimum
Cheese	1 oz.	1 ½ oz.			
Large egg(s)	½	¾			
Cooked, dry beans or peas	¼ cup	3/8 cup			
Peanut butter (or any nut or seed butter)	2 Tbsp	3 Tbsp			
Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts or seeds	½ oz.	¾ oz.			
Yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened	4 oz. or ½ cup	6 oz. or ¾ cup			

Meat / Meat Alternate at Lunch

The meat/meat alternate component had a few changes from the final rule.

Flexibility to Start July 1, 2024:

Nuts and seeds may be used to satisfy 100% of the meat/meat alternate requirement.

Sugar Limits to be Implemented by 2025/2026:

Yogurt may have no more than 12 grams of added sugar per 8 fluid ounces.

Grains at Lunch

Take note of differences in daily minimums across the different grade groups!

Just offering the daily minimum will not help you to meet weekly goal!

Quantities Required to Offer						
Food Components	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-4	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12	Specific Requirements:
Grains / Breads			8 oz. eq/wk	8 oz. eq/wk	10 oz. eq/wk	
When combining K-5 & 6-8 to establish a K-8 group.			8 oz. eq ^w /wk			
Servings of grains or breads must be 100% whole-grain rich.	5 per week at least K eqg/day	8 per week at least 1 eqg/day	1 oz. eq. per day minimum	1 oz. eq. per day minimum	2 oz. eq. per day minimum	



- at least 80% of Grains must be WGR
- Remaining grains must be enriched
- To meet USDA's WGR standard, a product must contain at least 50% whole grain, and the remaining grain must be enriched
- Product formulation statements are useful tools for determining if the item is whole grain

Option: Plan menus so enriched grains are served on one day only. This example will only work if you serve 2 oz. eq. of grains per day.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
WRG 2 oz. eq.	WRG 2 oz. eq.	WRG 2 oz. eq.	WRG 2 oz. eq.	Enriched 2 oz. eq.

Grain-Based Desserts



- May be offered
- May not exceed 2 oz eq. of grain per week
- Keep in mind upcoming meal pattern changes when you add desserts to your menu.

Vegetables at Lunch

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K-8

9-12

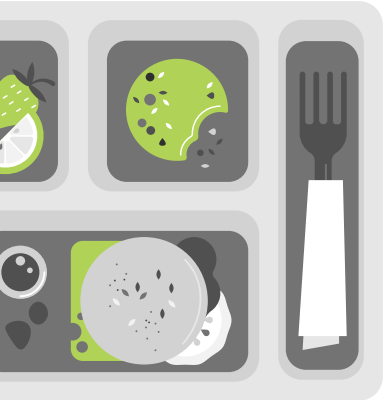
Take note of differences in daily minimums across the different grade groups, and the different amounts for each subgroup!

Vegetable			$\frac{3}{4}$ cup every day	1 cup every day
Dark Green	1/2 cup either or	1/2 cup either or	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup every week	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup every week
Red/Orange			$\frac{3}{4}$ cup every week	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups every week
Beans/Peas/Lentils			$\frac{1}{2}$ cup every week	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup every week
Starchy			$\frac{1}{2}$ cup every week	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup every week
Other			$\frac{1}{2}$ cup every week	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup every week

Vegetable Subgroups at Lunch

These subgroups must be offered over the course of the week

1. Dark Green
2. Red / Orange
3. Beans / Peas
4. Starchy
5. Other



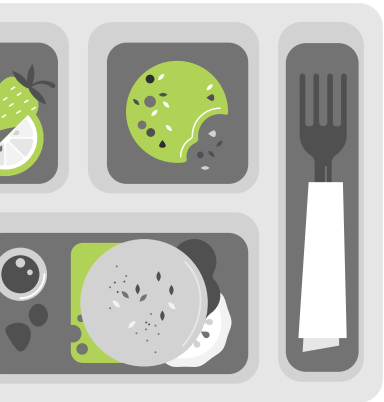
The easiest way to meet veggie subgroups weekly is to offer at least 2 veggies per day with a serving size of $\frac{1}{2}$ cup each.

Vegetables at Lunch

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Don't offer too much vegetable juice!

Full strength vegetable juice may contribute no more than $\frac{1}{2}$ of the total weekly vegetable requirement.



Vegetables at Lunch

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The vegetables component had a few changes from the final rule.

The beans/peas subgroup is now called beans/peas/lentils.

Flexibility to Start July 1, 2024:
Beans, peas, and lentils offered towards the meat/meat alternate component can also satisfy the weekly vegetable subgroup requirement.



Important:

Beans, peas, and lentils cannot count towards the daily component as both meat/meat alternate and vegetables in the same meal.

Example: Red Beans and Rice



Source: MRS 2021

MRS: 2555 – Pork (2500s)

RED BEANS AND RICE WITH SAUSAGE (DRIED)

MEAL COMPONENT CONTRIBUTION:

2 ½ oz. eq. meat/meat alternate, 1 oz. eq. whole grain

NUMBER OF PORTIONS: 100 **SIZE OF PORTION:** 1 serving

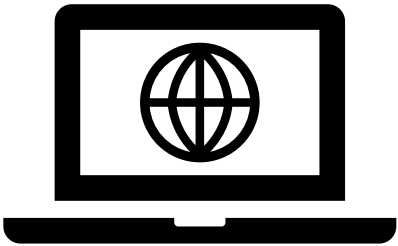
RECIPE HACCP PROCESS: #2 - Same day service



MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATE : WHOLE GRAINS

Daily requirements: Crediting towards meat/meat alternate component

Weekly requirements: Crediting towards meat/meat alternate component **and** satisfying the beans, peas, and legumes subgroup requirement



Keep in mind that the new menu planning flexibilities are not active in your nutrient analysis software. Look for updates from your software company as they are produced.

Take note of differences in daily minimums across the different grade groups!

Quantities Required to Offer						
Food Components	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-4	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12	Specific Requirements:
Fruit			½ cup every day	½ cup every day	1 cup every day	No more than ½ of the total weekly requirement may be met with 100% full-strength fruit juice.

Two DIFFERENT choices of milk must be offered every day!

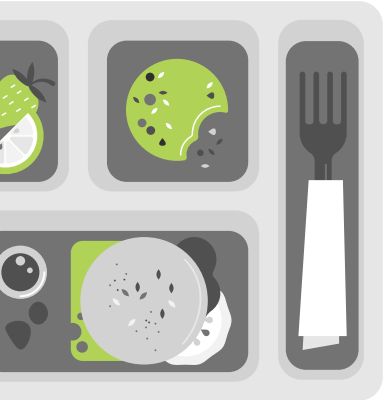
	Ages 1-4	Grades K-12	
Milk (fluid offered as a beverage)	¾ cup (6 fl. oz)	½ pint (8 fl. oz)	Milk may be 1% or fat free. Flavored or unflavored milk may be offered. <u>Sugar limits to be implemented by school year 2025/2026:</u> Flavored milk must contain no more than 10 grams of added sugar per 8 fluid ounces.

Dietary Specifications & Nutrient Analysis at Lunch

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Conducting a Nutrient Analysis will help you to ensure compliance with

- Caloric ranges
- Sodium limits
- Saturated fat limits
- Upcoming: Added sugar limits



NSLP Caloric Range Requirements

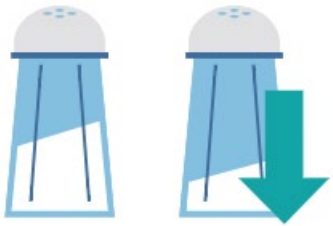
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Based on a 5-Day Average

Quantities Required to Offer						
Food Components	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-4	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12	Specific Requirements:
Min and Max Calorie Ranges in an average 5-day week menu	517*		550-650	600-700	750-850	★= Menus for students Ages 1-2 and Ages 3-4 have a minimum calorie requirement of 517 calories averaged over the school week.
When combining K-5 & 6-8 to establish a K-8 group.			600 - 650			

Gradually phase in one reduction of weekly limit.

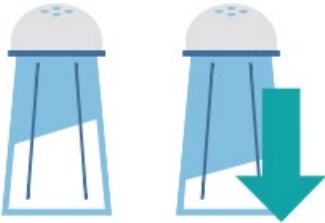
- For the next 3 school years (through 2026-2027), schools will maintain current sodium limits
 - Target 1A will continue for lunch; Target 1 will continue for breakfast
- By school year 2027-2028 (beginning July 1, 2027), schools will implement a 15% reduction for lunch and a 10% reduction for breakfast.



Gradually phase in one reduction of weekly limit.

✔ indicates implementation date.

Requirements	SY 2024-25	SY 2025-26	SY 2026-27	SY 2027-28
Lunch - 15% reduction from current sodium limits: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades K-5: ≤ 935 mg• Grades 6-8: ≤ 1,035 mg• Grades 9-12: ≤ 1,080 mg	Continue sodium target 1A from transitional final rule while working toward meeting future requirement.			✔
Breakfast - 10% reduction from current sodium limits: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades K-5: ≤ 485 mg• Grades 6-8: ≤ 535 mg• Grades 9-12: ≤ 570 mg	Continue sodium target 1A from transitional final rule while working toward meeting future requirement.			✔



Sodium Standards: National School Lunch Program

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<u>Age/Grade Group</u>	<u>Target 1:</u> <u>Effective July 1,</u> <u>2022</u>	<u>Interim Target</u> <u>1A:</u> <u>Effective July 1,</u> <u>2023</u>	<u>15% Sodium</u> <u>Reduction</u> <u>Effective July 1,</u> <u>2027:</u>
K-5	$\leq 1,230$ mg	$\leq 1,110$ mg	≤ 935 mg
6-8	$\leq 1,360$ mg	$\leq 1,225$ mg	$\leq 1,035$ mg
9-12	$\leq 1,420$ mg	$\leq 1,280$ mg	$\leq 1,080$ mg

Limits on added sugar will use a phased approach.

- **Phase 1: Limits on specific high-sugar products (cereals, yogurt, and flavored milk)**
 - Implemented by school year 2025-2026 (beginning July 1, 2025)
- **Phase 2: Overall weekly limits.**
 - Weekly dietary limits to be implemented by school year 2027-2028 (beginning July 1, 2027)
 - <10% weekly calories from added sugars



Limits on added sugar will use a phased approach.

✔ indicates implementation date. Blank cells indicate no changes/no new requirements.

Requirements	SY 2024-25	SY 2025-26	SY 2026-27	SY 2027-28
Product-based limits for breakfast cereals, yogurt, and flavored milk		✔		
Weekly limit (<10% weekly calories from added sugars for both lunch and breakfast programs)				✔



- Limits on added sugar will use a phased approach.

Breakfast cereals may have no more than 6 grams of added sugar per dry ounce.

Yogurt may have no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce).

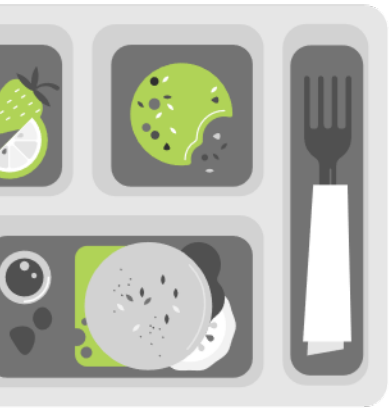
Flavored milk may have no more than 10 grams of added sugars per 8 fluid ounces or, for flavored milk sold as a competitive food for middle or high schools, 15 grams of added sugar per 12 fluid ounces.



Saturated/Trans Fat Restrictions at Lunch

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- Calories from saturated fat must not exceed 10% of calories (based on a 5-day average)
- Only zero trans fat is acceptable



SBP Meal Pattern



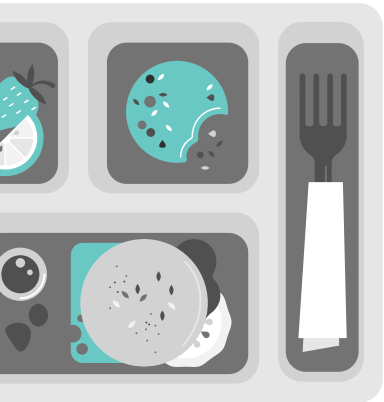
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Age Groupings and Menu Planning

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Allowable Groupings at Breakfast

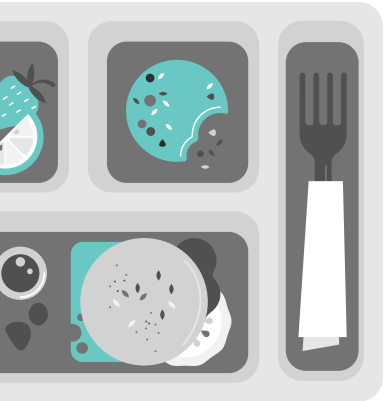
- Grades k-5
- Grades 6-8
- Grades 9-12
- You can combine groups into either a k-8 group or a k-12 group



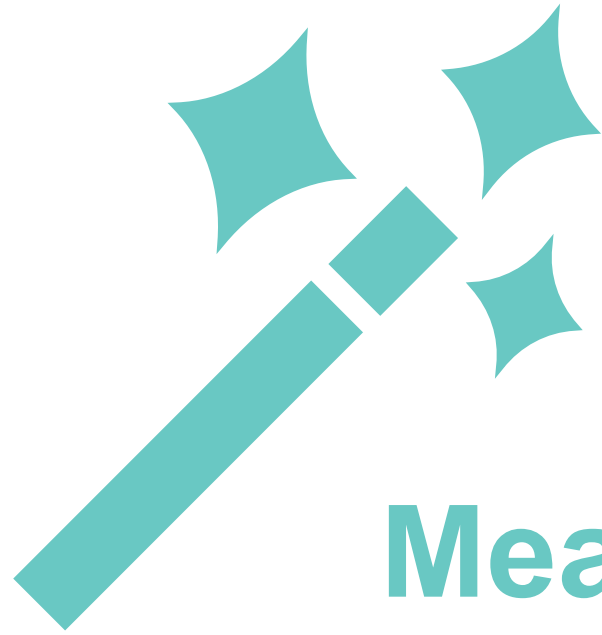
Required Components

These 3 Must be offered every day at Breakfast

- Grains and/or Meat/Meat Alternate
- Fruit or Vegetable
- Milk

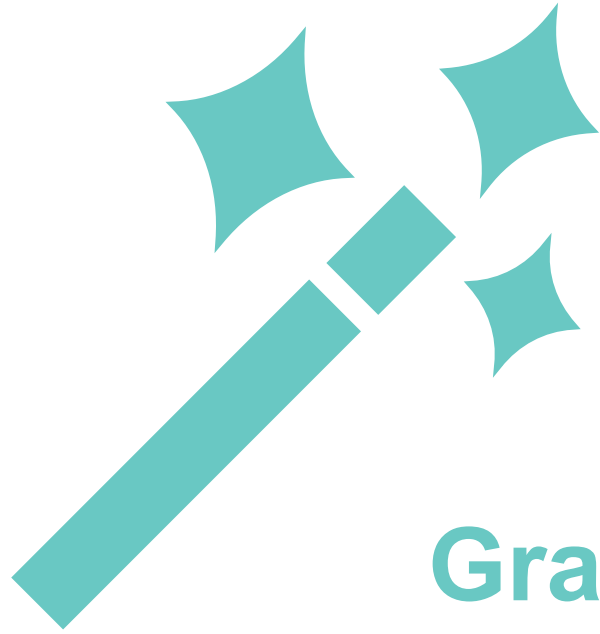


The grains and meat/meat alternate component are now combined!



Meat “magically” becomes
a Grain at breakfast!





Grains and Meat/Meat Alternates are a combined group at breakfast.

Required Component Offerings	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12	Specific Requirements:
Grains and Meat/Meat Alternates	1 oz. eq./day 7 oz. eq./week	1 oz. eq./day 8 oz. eq./week	1 oz. eq./day 9 oz. eq./week	Grains and meat/meat alternates are a combined group. Schools may offer grains, meat/meat alternate, or a combination of both to satisfy this meal component.
WHEN CREATING A K-8 GROUP	8 oz. eq.			Daily and weekly minimums must be met. 80% of grains offered must be whole grain rich. The remaining grains must be enriched.
WHEN CREATING A K-12 GROUP	9 oz. eq.			Nuts and seeds may be used to satisfy 100% of the meat/meat alternate requirement. <u>Sugar limits to be implemented by school year 2025/2026:</u> Breakfast cereals may have no more than 6 grams of added sugar per dry ounce. Yogurt may have no more than 12 grams of added sugar per 8 fluid ounces.

The new meal pattern flexibilities can be used for next school year!

Schools, at their option, may offer grains, meats/meat alternates, or a combination of both at breakfast.

Grain Only:



Meat/ Meat Alternate Only:



Combination of Grain and Meat/Meat Alternate:



Due to the new rule, there was a change to the red book! Meat/Meat alternate can now be recorded at breakfast.

Date:	2	3a	3b	4	5	6	7	8		
Participation	MENUS and Recipe Numbers	Plan Extra	Extra Extra	FOOD ITEMS	B	L	S N	CONTRIBUTION SIZE		
BREAKFAST SERVED:	BREAKFAST			MEAT/MEAT <u>ALTERNATE</u> M M M M M				9-12		
K-5 _____										1
6-8 _____										2
K-8 _____										3
9-12 _____										4
ADULTS PAID:										5
_____										6
IN KIND:										7
_____										8
_____										9
_____										10
_____										11
_____										12
_____							13			

Fruit (and Vegetables) at Breakfast

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K-5

6-8

9-12

Fruit (and Vegetable)	1 cup / day 5 cups/wk	1 cup / day 5 cups / wk	1 cup / day 5 cups / wk	
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Juice MUST be 100% full strength.

If offering vegetables only 1 day per school week, any vegetable subgroup may be offered.

If offering vegetables 2 or more days per school week, vegetables from at least two different subgroups must be offered.

Milk at Breakfast

Must offer at least two DIFFERENT choices of milk each day.

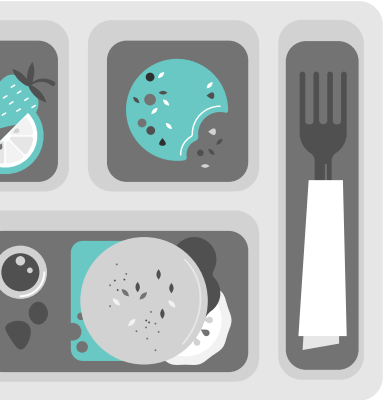
Milk 1% or Fat Free Only	1 cup each day; 5 cups per week	<p>Milk may be 1% or fat free. Flavored or unflavored milk may be offered.</p> <p><u>Sugar limits to be implemented by school year 2025/2026:</u> Flavored milk must contain no more than 10 grams of added sugar per 8 fluid ounces.</p>
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Dietary Specifications & Nutrient Analysis at Breakfast

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Conducting a Nutrient Analysis will help you to ensure compliance with

- Caloric ranges
- Sodium limits
- Saturated fat limits
- Upcoming: Sugar Limits



Caloric Range Requirements at Breakfast

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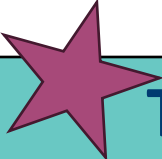
Based on a 5-Day Average

Take note of
different
configurations of
grade groups!

Calorie Ranges	350-500 calories	400-550 calories	450-600 calories	Minimum and Maximum Calorie ranges in an average 5-day weekly menu
WHEN CREATING A K-8 GROUP	400-500 calories			
WHEN CREATING A K-12 GROUP	450-500 calories			

Sodium Standards: School Breakfast Program

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Age/Grade Group	 Target 1: Effective July 1, 2022 – SY 2024	10% Sodium Reduction Effective July 1, 2027
K-5	≤ 540 mg	≤ 485 mg
6-8	≤ 600 mg	≤ 535 mg
9-12	≤ 640 mg	≤ 570 mg

Saturated/Trans Fat Restrictions at Breakfast

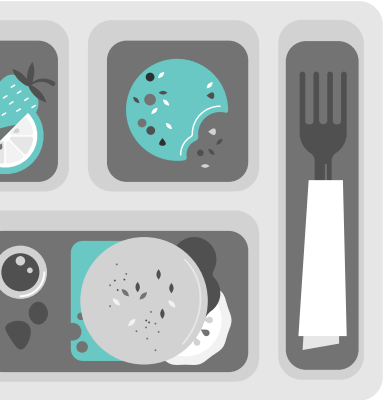
42

- Calories from saturated fat must not exceed 10% of calories (based on a 5-day average)
- Only zero trans fat is acceptable

Special Dietary Needs

Meal Modifications outside the Meal Pattern

- Substitutions may be made, and meals may be reimbursable, when those substitutions are supported by a **written statement that is signed by a recognized medical authority**
- Medical statements must include: recommended alternative foods and the need for the meal modification to accommodate a student with a disability



Meal Modifications

✓ indicates implementation date. Blank cells indicate no changes/no new requirements.

Requirements	SY 2024-25	SY 2025-26	SY 2026-27	SY 2027-28
Clarifies existing policy guidance by including in regulation that state licensed healthcare professionals may write medical statements to request meal modifications on behalf of students with disabilities in the school meal programs. ¹	✓			
Defines a state licensed healthcare professional as an individual authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law, consistent with current policy guidance. ¹	✓			
In addition to state licensed healthcare professionals, also permits registered dietitians to write medical statements to request meal modifications on behalf of students with disabilities in the school meal programs.		✓		
Regarding non-disability requests, makes clear in regulation that USDA encourages schools to meet participants' non-disability dietary preferences when planning and preparing school meals.	✓			

Updated meal pattern charts will be included in your red book. They are also on the MDE website on the Child Nutrition landing page.

School Breakfast Program (SBP)
Meal Pattern Requirements for Various Age/Grade Groups

Quantities Required to Offer				
Required Component Offerings	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12	Specific Requirements:
Grains and Meat/Meat Alternates	1 oz. eq./day 7 oz. eq./week	1 oz. eq./day 8 oz. eq./week	1 oz. eq./day 9 oz. eq./week	Grains and meat/meat alternates are a combined group. Schools may offer grains, meat/meat alternate, or a combination of both to satisfy this meal component. Daily and weekly minimums must be met. 80% of grains offered must be whole grain rich. The remaining grains must be enriched. Nuts and seeds may be used to satisfy 100% of the meat/meat alternate requirement. <u>Sugar limits to be implemented by school year 2025/2026:</u> Breakfast cereals may have no more than 6 grams of added sugar per dry ounce. Yogurt may have no more than 12 grams of added sugar per 8 fluid ounces.
WHEN CREATING A K-5 GROUP	8 oz. eq.			
WHEN CREATING A K-12 GROUP	9 oz. eq.			
Fruit and Vegetable	1 cup / day 5 cups / week	1 cup / day 5 cups / week	1 cup / day 5 cups / week	No more than ½ of the total weekly requirement may be met with 100% full-strength juice. Schools choosing to offer vegetables at breakfast one day per school week have the option to offer any vegetables, including a starchy vegetable. Schools choosing to substitute vegetables for fruit at breakfast on two or more days per school week are required to offer vegetables from at least two different vegetable subgroups. Milk may be 1% or fat free. Flavored or unflavored milk may be offered. <u>Sugar limits to be implemented by school year 2025/2026:</u> Flavored milk must contain no more than 10 grams of added sugar per 8 fluid ounces.
Milk 1% or Fat Free Only	1 cup each day; 5 cups per week			
Calorie Ranges	350-500 calories	400-550 calories	450-600 calories	
WHEN CREATING A K-5 GROUP	400-500 calories			Minimum and Maximum Calorie ranges in an average 5-day weekly menu
WHEN CREATING A K-12 GROUP	450-500 calories			
Sodium (mg)	≤ 540	≤ 600	≤ 640	When combining grade groups, the more restrictive requirement must be used. K-5: ≤ 540 K-12: ≤ 540

The School Lunch Pattern for Various Age/Grade Groups
The United States Department of Agriculture, National School Lunch Program requires that portions of meal components be adjusted by age/grade group to better meet the food and nutritional needs of children according to their ages.

Quantities Required to Offer						
Food Components	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-4	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12	Specific Requirements
Meat or Meat Alternate (M/MA)			8 oz. eq./wk	9 oz. eq./wk	10 oz. eq./wk	Must be served in the main dish or as the main dish and only one other menu item.
When combining K-5 & 6-8 to establish a K-9 group.			9 oz. eq./wk			
Lean meat, poultry, fish	1 oz.	1 ½ oz.				Vegetable protein products, cheese, alternate cheese products, and enriched macaroni with fortified protein may be used to meet part of the meat/meat alternate requirement. Food and Nutrition Service Fact Sheets on each of these alternate foods give detailed instructions for use.
Cheese	1 oz.	1 ½ oz.				
Large egg(s)	½	¾				
Cooked, dry beans or peas	½ cup	¾ cup				
Peanut butter (or any nut or seed butter)	2 Tbsp	3 Tbsp	1 oz. eq. ¹ per day minimum	1 oz. eq. ¹ per day minimum	2 oz. eq. ¹ per day minimum	Nuts and seeds may be used to satisfy 100% of the meat/meat alternate requirement.
Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts or seeds	½ oz.	¾ oz.				<u>Sugar limits to be implemented by 2025/2026:</u> Yogurt may have no more than 12 grams of added sugar per 8 fluid ounces.
Yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened	4 oz. or ½ cup	6 oz. or ¾ cup				
Grains			8 oz. eq./wk	8 oz. eq./wk	10 oz. eq./wk	Require 80% of the weekly grains in the NSLP and SBP be whole grain-rich (WGR), and the remaining weekly grains must be enriched.
When combining K-5 & 6-8 to establish a K-9 group.			8 oz. eq./wk			
Servings of grains or breads must be whole-grain rich	5 per week at least ½ avg. day	8 per week at least 1 avg. day	1 oz. eq. per day minimum	1 oz. eq. per day minimum	2 oz. eq. per day minimum	
Vegetable			½ cup every day		1 cup every day	No more than ½ of the total requirement may be met with full-strength vegetable juice.
Dark Green			½ cup every week		½ cup every week	
Red/Orange			½ cup every week		1 ½ cups every week	In grades K-12 the vegetable subgroups need to be offered throughout the week. The amounts listed here are the minimum amount that must be offered during the week.
Beans/Peas/Lentils	1/2 cup either or	1/2 cup either or	½ cup every week		½ cup every week	Beans, peas, and lentils offered towards the meat/meat alternate component can also count toward the weekly vegetable subgroup requirement.
Starchy			½ cup every week		½ cup every week	
Other			½ cup every week		½ cup every week	
Fruit			½ cup every day	½ cup every day	1 cup every day	No more than ½ of the total weekly requirement may be met with 100% full-strength fruit juice.
Milk (fluid offered as a beverage)	½ cup (6 fl. oz.)		½ pint (8 fl. oz.)			Milk may be 1% or fat free. Flavored or unflavored milk may be offered.
Min. and Max. Calorie Ranges in an average 5-day week menu	517*		550-650	600-700	750-850	<u>Sugar limits to be implemented by school year 2025/2026:</u> Flavored milk must contain no more than 10 grams of added sugar per 8 fluid ounces. Menus for students ages 1-2 and ages 3-4 have a minimum calorie requirement of 517 calories averaged over the school week.
When combining K-5 & 6-8 to establish a K-9 group.			600-650			
Sodium			≤ 1110	≤ 1225	≤ 1280	K-5 group sodium max = 1110 mg

*Schools serving lunch 7 days per week should increase the weekly quantity by approximately 20% for each additional day. Food Buying Guide FNS Instruction 783-1, Rev. 2 Grains and Bread Instruction provides the information for the minimum weight of serving.

- [Grain Exhibit A](#)
- [Lunch Meal Pattern](#)
- [Breakfast Meal Pattern](#)
- [Updates to the School Nutrition Standards | Food and Nutrition Service \(usda.gov\)](#)



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