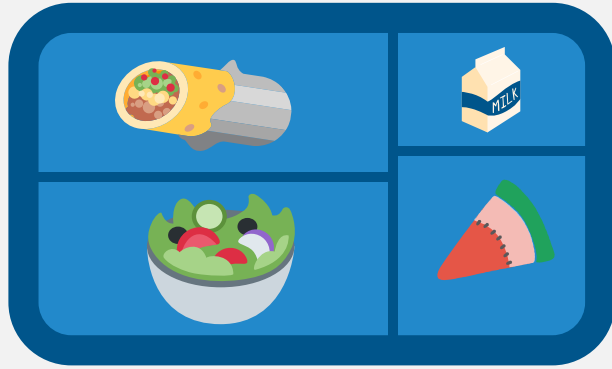


# THE ARIZONA TEACHER'S GUIDE TO SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS



## WHAT MEALS ARE OFFERED?

There's more to school nutrition programs than school lunch. Eligible schools have the potential to offer children three balanced meals a day, plus a healthy snack, if they choose to operate all programs.

### NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM (NSLP)

### AFTERSCHOOL CARE SNACK PROGRAM

*Must be eligible by site or area.*

### SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

*Must be eligible by site or area.*

### SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM (SBP)

### AT-RISK AFTERSCHOOL MEALS

*Must be eligible by site or area.*

## WHO DECIDES WHAT FOOD IS SERVED?

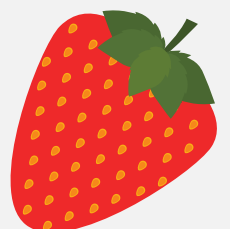
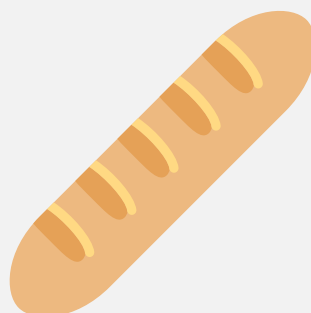
### USDA REGULATIONS, LOCAL DECISION

The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 called for new United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines for school meals. A committee from the Institute of Medicine and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention developed scientific recommendations which USDA used to set nutrition requirements. We call these nutrition requirements the NSLP "meal pattern."

The actual menus offered to students are planned at the school or district level. Every three years, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) reviews each school or district to ensure they are meeting USDA requirements.

### SUMMARY OF LUNCH MEAL PATTERN REQUIREMENTS

- At least 3/4 - 1 cup vegetables offered daily
- Vegetables from each subgroup must be offered throughout the week (dark green, red/orange, legumes, starchy, and other)
- At least 1/2 - 1 cup fruits offered daily
- Juice must be 100% juice
- Only 50% of fruit offered each week can be in the form of juice
- Grains must be offered daily, and at least half of grains offered must be whole grain-rich
- It is encouraged that all grains offered be whole grain-rich
- Milk must be offered daily in at least two varieties based on fat content and flavor
- A meat or meat alternate must be offered daily
- Total calories offered must fall within the appropriate range based on grade group
- Less than 10% of calories can come from saturated fat
- Any food served must contain ZERO trans fat
- Sodium must be under a set weekly average which varies by grade group



# HOW ARE THESE PROGRAMS FUNDED?

## FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT, NON-PROFIT OPERATION

Schools receive reimbursement from USDA for serving "reimbursable meals." A reimbursable meal is a meal that meets the meal pattern and contains enough food to support a healthy diet. USDA gives money to ADE and ADE gives reimbursement money to school nutrition programs based on how many free, reduced price, or paid meals were served each month.

Reimbursement funds for school meals are kept in a separate account from other school funds. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is very explicit about how school food service reimbursement funds can and cannot be spent. Essentially, school food service funds must be used to pay for labor, equipment, food, kitchen utilities, and bettering the program in general, not to support other school departments.

## WHY DO STUDENTS HAVE TO TAKE THREE ITEMS?

ADE and USDA take serving nutritious meals to children very seriously. In order to receive federal money for serving school meals, menus must meet USDA standards. Schools must offer five components daily (milk, grains, meat/meat alternate, fruit, and vegetable). To reduce food waste, many schools choose to operate a model called "Offer versus Serve" (OVS). OVS means students choose at least three of the five components, and one of those three must be a fruit or vegetable. Students may choose to take more than three items if they'd like, but three is the minimum in an OVS model. OVS is intended to ensure that students take a complete and balanced meal while reducing the amount of food thrown away. Some schools operate a "Serve Only" model, which means all students are served all five components in order for the meal to be eligible for federal reimbursement.

# WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS?

## FILLING HUNGER GAPS

School nutrition programs are the first line of defense against food insecurity and hunger in school-aged children. Roughly 25% of children in Arizona suffer from food insecurity. School nutrition programs give students access to balanced meals during the school week and summertime.

## IMPROVING DIET QUALITY

Research has indicated that students who eat school lunch eat more fruit and vegetables and consume less sugar-sweetened beverages and sugary and fatty snacks at lunch.

## NUTRITION EDUCATION

Many children are not exposed to healthy meals at home and may very rarely be offered a fruit or vegetable. By serving balanced meals every day, including fruits and vegetables, students are taught what a complete and balanced meal should look like.

# HOW CAN TEACHERS HELP?

## MODEL GOOD NUTRITION BEHAVIOR



Set a good example with healthy food and beverage choices!

## ENCOURAGE FAMILIES TO SUBMIT HOUSEHOLD APPLICATIONS



No one should be forced to submit an application, but help make sure they don't get lost in backpacks!

## SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE BREAKFAST MODELS



Help your school successfully operate Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab N Go Breakfast or Second Chance Breakfast.

## KNOW WHO RUNS YOUR DISTRICT AND SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS



Know who is planning and preparing your students' food so you can be a partner in ensuring children are well-fed.

## JOIN YOUR LOCAL WELLNESS COMMITTEE



You can help create policies and programs promoting healthy habits at your school by joining the Local Wellness Committee. Every district should have one. Ask your School Nutrition Director for details.

## COMMUNICATE STUDENT NEEDS



You know what your students need better than anyone in the school. If you think a student isn't getting enough to eat at home, communicate needs to the cafeteria manager and school counselors.