
THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM

1. What is the School Breakfast Program?

The School Breakfast Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. It began as a pilot project in 1966, and was made permanent in 1975. The School Breakfast Program is administered at the Federal level by the Food and Nutrition Service. At the State level, the program is usually administered by State education agencies, which operate the program through agreements with local school food authorities in more than 87,000 schools and institutions.

2. How does the School Breakfast Program work?

The School Breakfast Program operates in the same manner as the National School Lunch Program. Generally, public or nonprofit private schools of high school grade or under and public or nonprofit private residential child care institutions may participate in the School Breakfast Program. School districts and independent schools that choose to take part in the breakfast program receive cash subsidies from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for each meal they serve. In return, they must serve breakfasts that meet Federal requirements, and they must offer free or reduced price breakfasts to eligible children.

3. What are the nutritional requirements for school breakfasts?

School breakfasts must meet the applicable recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans which recommend that no more than 30 percent of an individual's calories come from fat, and less than 10 percent from saturated fat. In addition, breakfasts must provide one-fourth of the Recommended Dietary Allowance for protein, calcium, iron, Vitamin A, Vitamin C and calories. The decisions about what specific food to serve and how they are prepared are made by local school food authorities.

4. How do children qualify for free and reduced price breakfasts?

Any child at a participating school may purchase a meal through the School Breakfast Program. Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the Federal poverty level are eligible for free meals. Those with incomes between 130 percent and 185 percent of the poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals. (For the period July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010, 130 percent of the poverty level is \$28,665 for a family of four; 185 percent is \$40,793.) Children from families over 185 percent of poverty pay full price, though their meals are still subsidized to some extent.

5. How much reimbursement do schools get?

Most of the support USDA provides to schools in the School Breakfast Program comes in the form of a cash reimbursement for each breakfast served. The current (July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010) basic cash reimbursement rates for non-severe need are:

Free breakfasts	\$1.46
Reduced-price breakfasts	\$1.16
Paid breakfasts	\$0.26

Schools may qualify for higher "severe need" reimbursements if 40% of their lunches are served free or at a reduced price in the second preceding year. Severe need payments are up to 28 cents higher than the normal reimbursements for free and reduced-price breakfasts. About 74 percent of the breakfasts served in the School Breakfast Program receive severe need payments. Higher reimbursement rates are in effect for Alaska and Hawaii.

Schools may charge no more than 30 cents for a reduced-price breakfast. Schools set their own prices for breakfasts served to students who pay the full meal price (paid), though they must operate their meal services as non-profit programs.

For the latest reimbursement rates visit FNS website at

www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/notices/naps/NAPs.htm

6. What other support do schools get from USDA?

Through Team Nutrition, USDA provides schools with technical training and assistance to help school food service staffs prepare healthy meals, and with nutrition education to help children understand the link between diet and health.

7. How many children have been served over the years?

In Fiscal Year 2007, over 10.1 million children participated every day. That number grew to 10.5 million in Fiscal Year 2007. Of those, 8.1 million received their meals free or at a reduced-price.

Participation has slowly but steadily grown over the years: 1970: 0.5 million children; 1975: 1.8 million children; 1980: 3.6 million children; 1985: 3.4 million children; 1990: 4.0 million children; 1995: 6.3 million children; 2000: 7.5 million children.

8. How much does the program cost?

For Fiscal Year 2008, the School Breakfast Program cost \$2.4 billion, up from \$1.9 billion in Fiscal Year 2005. The cost in previous years was in 1970, \$ 10.8 million; in 1980, \$287.8 million; in 1990, \$ 599.1 million; and in 2000, \$1.39 billion.

For more information:

For information on the operation of the School Breakfast Program and all the Child Nutrition Programs, contact the State agency in your state that is responsible for the administration of the programs. A listing of all our State agencies may be found on our web site at www.fns.usda.gov/cnd, select "Contact Us" then select "Child Nutrition Programs."

You may also contact us through the office of USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, Public Information Staff at 703-305-2286, or by mail at 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 914, Alexandria, Virginia 22302.

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MENU PLANNING IN THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM

School meals are intended to "safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children." Participating schools must serve breakfasts that are consistent with the applicable recommendations of the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans including: eat a variety of foods; choose a diet with plenty of grain products, vegetables and fruits; choose a diet moderate in sugars and salt; and choose a diet with 30% or less of calories from fat and less than 10% of calories from saturated fat. In addition, breakfasts must provide, on average over each school week, at least 1/4th of the daily Recommended Dietary Allowances for protein, iron, calcium, and vitamins A and C. To provide local food service professionals with flexibility, there are five menu planning approaches to plan healthful and appealing meals. Schools choose one of the approaches below. The choice of what specific foods are served and how they are prepared and presented are made by local schools.

The Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning Approach

Under the Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning Approach, schools must comply with specific component and quantity requirements by offering four food items from the following food components: vegetables and/or fruits; milk; and two servings of meat/meat alternate, two servings of grains/breads OR one serving of each of these components. Minimum portion sizes are established by ages and grade groups.

(See chart on following page)

TRADITIONAL FOOD-BASED MENU PLANNING APPROACH-MEAL PATTERN FOR BREAKFASTS			
FOOD COMPONENTS AND FOOD ITEMS	AGES 1-2	AGES 3,4 AND 5	GRADES K-12
MILK (fluid) (as a beverage, on cereal or both)	4 fluid ounces	6 fluid ounces	8 fluid ounces
JUICE/FRUIT/VEGETABLE: Fruit and/or vegetable; or full-strength fruit juice or vegetable juice	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
SELECT ONE SERVING FROM EACH OF THE FOLLOWING COMPONENTS, TWO FROM ONE COMPONENT, OR AN EQUIVALENT COMBINATION:			
GRAINS/BREADS :			
Whole-grain or enriched bread	½ slice	½ slice	1 slice
Whole-grain or enriched biscuit, roll, muffin, etc.	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving
Whole-grain, enriched or fortified cereal	¼ cup or 1/3 ounce	1/3 cup or ½ ounce	¾ cup or 1 ounce
MEAT OR MEAT ALTERNATES:			
Meat/poultry or fish	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce
Alternate protein products ¹	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce
Cheese	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce
Large egg	½	½	½
Peanut butter or other nut or seed butters	1 tablespoon	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons
Cooked dry beans and peas	2 tablespoons	2 tablespoons	4 tablespoons
Nuts and/or seeds (as listed in program guidance) ²	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce
Yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened	2 ounces or ¼ cup	2 ounces or ¼ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup

¹ Must meet the requirements in appendix A of 7 CFR 210.

² No more than 1 ounce of nuts and/or seeds may be served in any one breakfast.

The Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning Approach is designed to meet nutritional standards set forth in program regulations.

Traditional Breakfast Menu Planning

1. The **FOUR** required food items for a daily breakfast are:

- Two servings of Grains/Breads or two servings of Meat/Meat Alternate or one serving of each
- One serving of Milk
- One serving of Juice/Fruit/Vegetable

2. The number of food items for breakfast is a *daily* criteria.

The meal pattern specifies a minimum number and size of servings *per day* for each food item required.

3. Minimum requirements are shown.

The meal pattern shows the *minimum* number of servings and portion sizes for each of the required food components.

4. Information is given for several different age/grade groups.

As you can see, information is given for several different age/grade groups. Schools serving K-12 must use at least the one established age/grade group shown in column 3 — this is for Grades K-12. In addition, to better target the needs of children, K-12 schools using the Enhanced approach may *also* use the optional group shown in column 4 — for Grades 7-12.

Because some schools serve very young children, the meal pattern also shows minimum quantities for preschoolers as well as for children 1- to 2-years-old. USDA has not set nutrient standards for the 1- to 2-year-old group.



**Sample Breakfast Menus—
Traditional FBMP (Grades K-12)**

FOOD ITEMS	FOOD COMPONENTS
Assorted Cereal Toast & Jam Orange Juice Milk	
Cheese & Egg Quesadilla with Salsa Applesauce Milk	
Flavored Yogurt Bagel Half with Jelly Dried Fruit Mix Milk	
Toasted Ham & Cheese Sandwich Half Pineapple Chunks Milk	
Baked French Toast Orange Wedges Milk	

Sample Breakfast Menus— Traditional FBMP (Grades K-12)

**Offer
to
Serve**

MENU ITEMS OFFERED	FOOD COMPONENTS	REIMBURSABLE MEALS	NOT REIMBURSABLE
Muffin Square Scrambled Egg Fruit Salad Choice of Milk	1 svg G/B 2 M/MA (1 Large Egg) ½ cup V/F 8 oz MILK		
Pancake with Syrup Sausage Patty Sliced Peaches Choice of Milk	1 svg G/B 1 oz M/MA ½ cup V/F 8 oz MILK		
Breakfast Burrito with Salsa Kiwi/fruit Choice of Milk	1 M/MA + 1 svg G/B ¼ cup V/F ¼ cup V/F 8 oz MILK		
Hard-cooked Egg Oatmeal with Raisins Choice of Juice Choice of Milk	2 M/MA (1 Large Egg) 1 svg G/B ½ cup V/F 8 oz MILK		
Choice of Cereal Toasted Mint-Bagel with Jam Fresh Banana Choice of Milk	1 svg G/B 1 svg G/B ½ cup V/F 8 oz MILK		

The Enhanced Food-Based Menu Planning Approach

The Enhanced Food-Based Menu Planning Approach uses the same meal pattern and age groups as the Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning Approach. The only difference is the addition of an optional age/grade group was added for grades 7-12 to better meet the needs of children in that crucial growth period by adding low fat calories from additional servings of grains/breads.

ENHANCED FOOD-BASED MENU PLANNING APPROACH-MEAL PATTERN FOR BREAKFASTS				
FOOD COMPONENTS AND FOOD ITEMS	REQUIRED FOR			OPTION FOR
	AGES 1-2	PRESCHOOL	GRADES K-12	GRADES 7-12
Milk (fluid) (as a beverage, on cereal or both)	4 fluid ounces	6 fluid ounces	8 fluid ounces	8 fluid ounces
JUICE/FRUIT/VEGETABLE: Fruit and/or vegetable; or full-strength fruit juice or vegetable juice	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
SELECT ONE SERVING FROM EACH OF THE FOLLOWING COMPONENTS, TWO FROM ONE COMPONENT OR AN EQUIVALENT COMBINATION:				
GRAINS/BREADS:				
Whole-grain or enriched bread	½ slice	½ slice	1 slice	1 slice
Whole-grain or enriched biscuit, roll, muffin, etc.	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving	1 serving
Whole-grain, enriched or fortified cereal	¼ cup or 1/3 ounce	1/3 cup or ½ ounce	¾ cup or 1 ounce	¾ cup or 1 ounce plus an additional serving of one of the Grains/Breads above.
MEAT OR MEAT ALTERNATES:				
Meat/poultry or fish	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Alternate protein products ¹	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Cheese	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Large egg	½	½	½	½
Peanut butter or other nut or seed butters	1 tablespoon	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons	2 tablespoons
Cooked dry beans and peas	2 tablespoons	2 tablespoons	4 tablespoons	4 tablespoons
Nuts and/or seeds (as listed in program guidance) ²	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened	2 ounces or ¼ cup	2 ounces or ¼ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup

¹ Must meet the requirements in appendix A of 7 CFR 210.

² No more than 1 ounce of nuts and/or seeds may be served in any one breakfast.

The Enhanced Food Based Menu Planning Approach is designed to meet the nutritional standards set forth in program regulations.

The Nutrient Standard Menu Planning Approach

Nutrient Standard Menu Planning (sometimes called "NuMenus") is a computer based menu planning system that uses approved computer software to analyze the specific nutrient content of menu items automatically while menus are being planned. It is designed to assist menu planners in choosing food items that create nutritious meals and meet the nutrient standards.

The Assisted Nutrient Standard Menu Planning

Assisted Nutrient Standard Menu Planning (sometimes called "Assisted NuMenus") is a variation of Nutrient Standard Menu Planning. It is for schools that lack the technical resources to conduct nutrient analysis themselves. Instead, schools have an outside source, such as another school district, State agency or a consultant, plan and analyze a menu based on local needs and preferences. The outside source also provides schools with recipes and product specifications to support the menus. The menus and analyses are periodically updated to reflect any changes in the menu or student selection patterns.

Here are the required minimums for nutrients and calories for these nutrient standard menu planning approaches:

NUTRIENTS AND ENERGY ALLOWANCES	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS		OPTIONAL
	PRESCHOOL	GRADES K-12	GRADES 7-12
Energy allowances (calories)	388	554	618
Total fat (as a percentage of actual total food energy)	1 ¹	1,2	2
Saturated fat (as a percentage of actual total food energy)	1	1,3	3
RDA for protein (g)	5	10	12
RDA for calcium (mg)	200	257	300
RDA for iron (mg)	2.5	3	3.4
RDA for Vitamin A (RE)	113	197	225
RDA for Vitamin C (mg)	11	13	14

¹ The Dietary Guidelines recommend that after 2 years of age "...children should gradually adopt a diet that, by about 5 years of age, contains no more than 30 percent of calories from fat."

² Not to exceed 30 percent over a school week.

³ Less than 10 percent over a school week.

Any Reasonable Menu Planning Approach

This menu planning approach allows states and school districts to develop their own innovative approaches to menu planning, subject to the guidelines established in our regulations. These guidelines protect the nutritional and fiscal integrity of the program.