

Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Meal Pattern for School Nutrition Program (SNP) Operators

Section 11, Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Meal Pattern for School Nutrition Program Operators Update Guide

- October 8, 2018 Updated *Section 11, Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Meal Pattern for School Nutrition Program (SNP) Operators* to clarify guidance on the following:
- *Food Buying Guide*
 - *Meat/Meat alternate substitution at breakfast*
 - *Meal accommodations*
- January 22, 2018 Updated *Section 11, Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Meal Pattern for School Nutrition Program (SNP) Operators* to incorporate the following United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) memos:
- *USDA Memo SP 01-2018, Updated Infant and Preschool Meal Patterns in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program; Questions and Answers* (October 19, 2017)
 - *USDA Memo CACFP 01-2018, Grain Requirement in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers* (October 19, 2017)
 - *USDA Memo SP 37-2017, Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers* (June 30, 2017)
- Provided clarification or information on the following issues
- Grains, grain-based dessert
 - Juice
 - Meal pattern flexibility for comingled age/grade groups
 - Meal service options for pre-K students
 - Milk
 - Offer versus serve (OVS)
 - Water

June 28, 2016

Updated *Administrator's Reference Manual, Section 11, Infant Feeding* so that it now provides general pre-kindergarten (pre-K) meal pattern guidance for School Nutrition Programs (SNPs) that operate the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) or serve meals to pre-kindergarten students. The new title of the section will be *Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Meal Pattern for School Nutrition Program (SNP) Operators*.

Revisions were made to incorporate general guidance from the following United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) memos and guidance:

- *USDA Memo SP 30-2017, Transition Period for the Updated Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Patterns and the Updated National School Lunch Programs and School Breakfast Program Infant and Preschool Meal Patterns* (May 10, 2017)
- *USDA Memo CACFP 09-2017, Vegetable and Fruity Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers* (March 23, 2017)
- *USDA Memo CACFP 02-2017, Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers* (October 14, 2016)
- *USDA Memo CACFP 25-2016, Vegetable and Fruit Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers* (September 9, 2016)
- *USDA Memo SP 42-2016, Early Implementation of the Updated Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Pattern Requirements and the National School Lunch Programs' Infant and Preschool Meal Patterns* (June 24, 2016)
- *Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, Final Rule* (April 25, 2016)

Table of Contents

Definitions for This Section	11.6
Milk Component.....	11.7
Fat Content.....	11.7
Allowable Types of Milk.....	11.7
Non-Dairy Beverages	11.7
Fruit and Vegetable Components	11.8
Breakfast.....	11.8
Lunch, Supper, and Snack	11.8
Beans and Peas	11.8
Juice.....	11.8
SNP Sites Operating Any Combination of SBP, NSLP, and ASCP.....	11.8
SNP Half Day Pre-K Programs Operating SBP Only, NSLP Only, or NSLP and ASCP.....	11.8
CACFP Sites Operating At Risk Snack and At Risk Supper.....	11.9
Minimum Creditable Amount for Fruit and Vegetables.....	11.9
Whole Grain-Rich Component.....	11.10
Serving.....	11.10
NSLP, SBP, ASCP	11.10
Half Day Pre-K	11.10
CACFP At Risk.....	11.10
Grain-Based Desserts.....	11.11
Breakfast Cereals.....	11.11
Substitution.....	11.11
Meat/Meat Alternate Component.....	11.11
Serving.....	11.11
Meat Alternates	11.11
Dietary Specifications	11.12
Sugar	11.12
Daily Specifications.....	11.12
Pre-K Meal Service Options for NSLP or SBP Operators	11.13
Offer Versus Serve (OVS) for Pre-K Students.....	11.13
Choices for Pre-Plated or Cafeteria Style Meals for Pre-K Students.....	11.13
Family Style for Pre-K Students.....	11.13
Crediting.....	11.13

Alternate Meal Item	11.13
Standardized Recipes	11.14
Pre-K Students with Medical Disabilities or Special Dietary Needs	11.14
A La Carte Items	11.15
Performance-Based Reimbursement	11.15
Severe Need Reimbursement	11.15
Meal Pattern Flexibility for Comingled Age/Grade Groups	11.15
Serving Options That Are Not Considered to Be Comingled	11.16
Serving Options That May Be Considered to Be Comingled	11.16
Pre-K Meal Pattern for NSLP and SBP	11.17
TDA Forms	11.20
Records Retention	11.20
Food Production Documentation	11.20
Planned, Offered, and Selected/Served	11.21
Compliance	11.22

Chart Table of Contents

Juice Service Chart	11.8
Information Box 1, Grain-Based Desserts	11.9
Information Box 2, Calculating the Amount of Sugar in Breakfast Cereal and in Yogurt	11.11
Nutrition Standards in the School Breakfast Program (SBP)—Meal Pattern Chart	11.16
Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)—Meal Pattern Chart....	11.17
Measurement Conversion Chart.....	11.18
Information Box 3, Records Retention	11.19

Contact Information for the

Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), Food and Nutrition

When contacting TDA by phone, Contracting Entities (CEs) need to have their CE Identification Number (CE ID) (and site ID, if applicable). CEs should include their name and CE ID (and site name and ID if applicable) in all communication or documentation.

General Contact Information	
<i>Physical Address:</i>	1700 N. Congress, 11th Floor, Austin, TX 78701
<i>Mailing Address:</i>	PO Box 12847, Austin, TX 78711-2847
<i>Phone:</i>	877-TEXMEAL, (877) 839 -6325
<i>Fax:</i>	(888) 203-6593
<i>Email Contact:</i>	squaremeals@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Website:</i>	www.squaremeals.org
Email Contact for Issues Related to Applications	
<i>Child & Adult Care Food Program:</i>	CACFP.BOps@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, & Special Milk Program:</i>	NSLP-SBP.BOps@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Seamless Summer Option:</i>	SSO.BOps@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Summer Food Service Program:</i>	SFSP.BOps@TexasAgriculture.gov
Email Contact for Issues Related to Program Operation	
<i>Capital Expenditures:</i>	NSLP-SBP.BOps@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Commodity Operations:</i>	CommodityOperations@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Community Operations (Child & Adult Care Food Program & Summer Food Service Program):</i>	Commuinty.Ops@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Local Products:</i>	LocalProducts.SquareMeals@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Procurement, Including Sole Source:</i>	CE.ProcurementReviews.BOps@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>School Operations (National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, & Special Milk Program):</i>	School.Operations@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>TX-UNPS Direct Certification Direct Verification System:</i>	DirectCertification@TexasAgriculture.gov
Email Contact for CE Flexibility Options	
<i>Breakfast Waiver:</i>	SNPWaivers@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Excessive Balance Plan:</i>	School.Operations@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Gender Exception:</i>	SNPWaivers@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Grains Exemption:</i>	Nutrition@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Milk Substitute Notification:</i>	Nutrition@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>RCCI Age/Grade Group Meal Pattern Flexibility:</i>	School.Operations@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Seamless Summer Operation (SSO) Age/Grade Flexibility:</i>	SNPWaivers@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Child Nutrition Program Requirement Waiver:</i>	SNPwaivers@TexasAgriculture.gov
<i>Summer Mandate:</i>	SNPWaivers@TexasAgriculture.gov

9/25/18

Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Meal Pattern

For the School Nutrition Program (SNP) Operators

Contracting Entities (CEs) that operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or the School Breakfast Program (SBP) must use Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) pre-kindergarten (pre-K) meal pattern when serving students 5 years of age and under who are not enrolled in kindergarten.

[NOTE: CEs are required to implement the updated CACFP pre-K meal pattern for SBP and NSLP pre-K students, but other CACFP operational requirements do not apply to NSLP or SBP sites.]

The guidance in this section provides guidance for the pre-K meal pattern that is specific to CEs operating NSLP or SBP. For detailed guidance related to the pre-K meal pattern that is not addressed in this section, including the infant meal pattern, CEs should use the *Child and Adult Care Food Program—Child Care Centers Handbook* which is available at www.squaremeals.org.

USDA has released an updated *Food Buying Guide for School Nutrition Programs* which addresses the pre-K and NSLP or SBP meal patterns in the same guide.

Definitions for This Section

For this section, the following definitions provide information that may assist CEs in determining eligibility:

<i>Enriched</i>	Product conforms to the Food and Drug Administration’s Standard of Identity for levels of iron, thiamin, riboflavin, and niacin. The terms enriched means nutrients that were lost during food processing have been added back into the product, such as adding back certain vitamins lost in processing wheat to make white flour.
<i>Juice</i>	Undiluted product obtained by extraction from sound fruit. ¹ It may be fresh, canned, frozen, or reconstituted from concentrate and may be served in either liquid or frozen state. Diluted juice is no longer allowed.
<i>Offer Versus Serve (OVS)</i>	Meal service method that allows students to decline some of the food items/components offered in a reimbursable lunch or breakfast. As long as the student takes the minimum servings of the required components for a reimbursable meal under OVS, the meal is reimbursable. The goals of OVS are to reduce food waste and to permit students to choose the foods they want to eat.
<i>Sound Fruit</i>	Product made from 100% fruit.

¹ In this definition, *sound fruit* means a product made from 100% fruit.

<i>Tofu</i>	Soybean-derived food that is made by a process in which soybeans are soaked, ground, mixed with water, heated, filtered, coagulated, and formed into cakes. Basic ingredients are whole soybeans, one or more food-grade coagulants (typically a salt or an acid), and water.
<i>Whole Grain</i>	Edible part of wheat, corn, rice, oats, rye, barley, etc. Parts of the grains such as the germ or the bran are not considered whole-grain. Whole-grain flour or meal is the product derived by grinding the entire grain minus the husk/hull. If a flour or meal does not contain all edible parts of the grain, it is not whole-grain.
<i>Whole Grain-Rich</i>	Grain products containing at least 50 percent whole grains and enriched grains for the remaining amount.

Milk Component

Fat Content

- One year olds must be served whole milk.²
- Two year olds and older must be served low-fat or fat-free unflavored milk.
- All milk must be pasteurized.

Allowable Types of Milk

- Low-fat or fat-free milk
- Low-fat or fat-free lactose reduced milk or low-fat or fat-free lactose free milk
- Low-fat or fat-free buttermilk
- Low-fat or fat-free cultured milk
- Low-fat or fat-free acidified milk

Non-Dairy Beverages

- Non-dairy fluid milk substitutes that meet the dietary specifications for a milk substitute may be served to students if the CE provides the same substitute to all students in accordance with CE policy.³
- Other beverages, including water, cannot be offered in place of milk as part of the reimbursable meal or snack.

² For more information on the transition of infants to whole milk, see *Child and Adult Care Food Program—Child Care Centers Handbook* which is available at www.squaremeals.org.

³ If a CE offers a milk substitute, the CE must notify TDA using the *Milk Substitute Worksheet* which is available at www.squaremeals.org. NSLB/SBP operators must follow the NSLP or SBP requirements as described in *Administrator’s Reference Manual, Section 13, Accommodations Students with Medical Disabilities and Special Dietary Needs*.

Fruit and Vegetable Components

Breakfast

- Fruit and vegetables are one component at breakfast.

Lunch, Supper, and Snack

- Fruit and vegetables are two separate components at lunch, supper, and snack.
- Two vegetables may be served in place of a fruit component and a vegetable component for breakfast and lunch. If two vegetable servings are offered at breakfast and lunch, two different vegetables must be served.
- Food items that are mixtures of fruit and vegetables may credit for the fruit component as long as the fruit portion size is creditable ($\frac{1}{8}$ cup or more) and for the vegetable component as long as the vegetable portion size is creditable ($\frac{1}{8}$ cup or more).

Beans and Peas

- If two distinct servings of beans and peas (legumes) are provided, the CE may credit one serving toward the vegetable component and one serving toward the meat/meat alternate component as long as the beans and peas (legumes) are in separate food items and are not the same vegetable. Two serving of the same vegetable at the same meal service cannot be credited as one serving of the vegetable component and one serving of the meat/meat alternate component for pre-K students.

Juice

- Juice must be full strength, 100 percent juice. Mixed fruit and vegetable juice credit as either the fruit or vegetable component (not both) based on the most prominent ingredient.
- Pureed fruits or vegetables in a smoothie may be credited toward the fruit and/or vegetable component as 100 percent juice. The limitation on the number of juice servings per day applies to the juice in a smoothie.
- Fruit juice is creditable at one meal per day across all meals at the site based on the programs the CE operates.

SNP Sites Operating Any Combination of SBP, NSLP, and ASCP

CEs may credit juice as the fruit or vegetable component (not both) for pre-K students one time across all meals or snacks served each day at the same site across all SNPs operating at the site.

SNP Half Day Pre-K Programs Operating SBP Only, NSLP Only, or NSLP and ASCP

CEs may credit juice as the fruit or vegetable component (not both) for pre-K students one time for pre-K students attending a morning half day session and a second time for the other pre-K students attending an afternoon half day session. The CE may also treat the combined half day sessions a whole day

and only serve juice in either the morning session or afternoon session. If the students in the afternoon session also attend ASCP, juice may credit as the fruit or vegetable component (not both) for pre-K students one time across the lunch and snack services.

For half-day pre-K programs, the juice crediting option the CE uses must be consistent with the requirement to serve a whole grain-rich food item once per day as described in the *Whole Grain-Rich Component* subsection of this section.

CACFP Sites Operating At Risk Snack and At Risk Supper

CEs may credit juice as the fruit or vegetable component (not both) for pre-K students one time across all meals or snacks served each day at the same site across all CACFPs operating at the site.

Pre-K Juice Option Scenario Chart						
One Juice Serving Across All Meals at the Same Site On the Same Day						
Scenarios	SNP			CACFP At Risk		Allowable?
	SBP	NSLP	ASCP	Snack	Supper	
Scenario 1	Juice	No Juice	No Juice	Juice	No Juice	Yes
Scenario 2	No Juice	Juice	No Juice	No Juice	Juice	Yes
Scenario 3	No Juice	No Juice	Juice	Juice	No Juice	Yes
Scenario 4	Juice	Juice	No Juice	No Juice	No Juice	No ¹
Scenario 5	No Juice	Juice	Juice	Juice	No Juice	No ²
Scenario 6	Juice	No Juice	No Juice	Juice	Juice	No ³

¹ Juice cannot be offered in two SNP meals services at the same site on the same day.
² Juice cannot be offered in two SNP meal services at the same site on the same day.
³ Juice cannot be offered at two CACFP snacks/meals at the same site on the same day.

Minimum Creditable Amount for Fruit and Vegetables

- The minimum creditable amount for fruits and vegetables is 1/8 of a cup.

Whole Grain-Rich Component

Serving

- One whole grain-rich food item must be served each day across all meals.

NSLP, SBP, ASCP

When a CE operates one or more of SNPs and offers a grain, the CE must offer a whole grain-rich food item at least once over all SNP meal services for the day at the location.

- If operating only one SNP and a grain is offered, the grain must be whole grain-rich at the meal/snack service for the day at the location.

Half Day Pre-K

For half day pre-K programs, the CE may choose to implement the whole grain-rich requirement as one whole grain-rich food item for each half day session or may offer one whole-grain rich food item across all meals offered for all half-day sessions on that day in that location.

For half-day pre-K programs, the requirement to serve a whole grain-rich food item once per day must be consistent with the juice crediting option the CE uses as described in the *Juice* subsection in this section.

CACFP At Risk

When a CE operates a CACFP At Risk program and offers a grain, the CE must offer a whole grain-rich food item at least once over all CACFP At Risk meal services for the day at the location.

- If the CE provides snack only and a grain is offered, the grain must be whole grain-rich.
- If the CE provides snack and supper and a grain is offered, a whole grain-rich item must be offered in at least one of the meal services.

Information Box 1 Grain-Based Desserts

The following food items are considered to be grain-based desserts:

- Breakfast bars
- Brownies, including black bean brownies
- Cake
- Cereal bars
- Cookies
- Doughnuts
- Granola bars (made in house or commercial)
- Rice pudding
- Sweet bread pudding
- Sweet pie crusts
- Sweet rolls
- Sweet scones
- Toaster pastries

This list is not exhaustive. When there is a question about whether food item may be a grain-based dessert, CEs should consider the ingredients and appearance of the product if the specific grain food item is not listed in *Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs, Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* or other USDA guidance.

- Crediting must be based on ounce equivalents by October 1, 2019. SNP CEs may base servings on ounce equivalents which are currently in use for NSLP or SBP.

Grain-Based Desserts

- Grain-based desserts are not creditable toward the grains component. CEs may occasionally serve grain-based desserts to pre-K students for celebrations or other special occasions.
- Quick breads,⁴ pancakes, waffles, savory⁵ scones, savory puddings, and savory pies are not considered to be grain-based desserts.
- CEs continue to have the flexibility to serve grain-based desserts as an additional food item that is not part of a reimbursable meal.
- The fruit in a grain-based dessert may credit toward the fruit component, even though the grain portion of a grain-based dessert cannot count toward the grain component.

Breakfast Cereals

- Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar⁶ per dry ounce.
- Breakfast cereals must be whole grain, enriched, or fortified.

Substitution

- Meat / meat alternates may be substituted for the entire grain requirement a maximum of three times a week **for breakfast**.

Meat/Meat Alternate Component

Serving

- Meat/Meat alternates may be served for the entire grain component no more than three times per week for breakfast.

Meat Alternates

- Tofu may be served.⁷
- Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces.

⁴ See *Exhibit A of the USDA Memo CACFP 01-2018, Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Questions and Answers* for additional information on crediting quick breads. USDA will be updating the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* to include this information. Available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

⁵ In this reference savory means a food item that is not sweet. Savory food items are typically flavored with herbs and often contain protein ingredients such as cheese.

⁶ This formula is not the same formula used to calculate sugar for Competitive Foods.

⁷ Same specifications as NSLP or SBP, see the *Administrator's Reference Manual, Section 8 Breakfast* or *Section 9, Lunch* for additional information on the specifications.

Water Availability

CEs serving meals to pre-K students must continue to follow the NSLP or SBP requirement to have water available during meal service. Moreover, since very young children may lack the ability to request water, CEs are encouraged to offer water to pre-K students at every meal rather than just have it available.

Dietary Specifications

Sugar

- Breakfast cereals can have no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce.⁸
- Yogurt can have no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces.

Daily Specifications

- All dietary specifications for the pre-K meal pattern are based on daily or individual item limits; therefore, meals served under the pre-K meal pattern are not included in the weekly dietary specifications for NSLP or SBP.
- Pre-K students may be served the same size portions as older students as long as the daily or individual food item specifications are met.

Information Box 2

Calculating the Amount of Sugar in Breakfast Cereal

To determine if there is more than 6 grams of sugar per ounce, use the following formula:

1. Find the serving size in grams and the amount of sugar per serving on the product label.
2. Divide the total sugars by the serving size in grams.

$$\frac{\text{Total Grams Sugar per Serving}}{9 \text{ Grams}} \div \frac{\text{Total Grams Serving Size}}{55 \text{ Grams}} = \frac{\text{Grams of Sugar per Ounce}}{0.164}$$

If the answer is 0.212 or less, the cereal is within the required sugar limits.

Calculating the Amount of Sugar in Yogurt

To determine if there is more than 6 grams of sugar per ounce, use the following formula:

1. Find the serving size in grams and the amount of sugar per serving on the product label.
2. Divide the total sugars by the serving size in grams.

$$\frac{\text{Total Grams Sugar per Serving}}{23 \text{ Grams}} \div \frac{\text{Total Grams Serving Size}}{6 \text{ Grams}} = \frac{\text{Grams of Sugar per Ounce}}{3.833}$$

If the answer is 3.833 or less, the yogurt is within the required sugar limits.

⁸ USDA provides calculation tools and training related to calculating sugar in breakfast cereal and yogurt at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp-meal-pattern-training-tools>.

Pre-K Meal Service Options for NSLP or SBP Operators

Offer Versus Serve (OVS) for Pre-K Students

- OVS is not allowed for pre-K students.

Choices for Pre-Plated or Cafeteria Style Meals for Pre-K Students

- While OVS is not allowed, a student may have choices among food items as long as the student is required to take a meal with all required components for a reimbursable meal. For breakfast, this includes the three required components; for lunch, five required components. The student cannot decline a food component and receive a reimbursable meal.

For Example:

One Component Choice

A student has a choice between green beans and carrots. The student must take the minimum portion size of one of the vegetables for the meal to be reimbursable.

Complete Meal Choice

A student has a choice between two pre-plated meals. Each meal contains all required components. The student must take one of the pre-plated meals for the meal to be reimbursable.

Family Style for Pre-K Students

- Family style service is allowed for all age groups.
- A pre-K student must take at least $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of a vegetable or fruit for a meal to be reimbursable.
- The supervising adult should initially offer the required minimum serving size of each food component/food item to each pre-K student.

Crediting

Alternate Meal Item

- For NSLP or SBP sites providing pre-K meals, a parent may provide food items for the student to eat onsite as long as it is allowable under local policy. However, the CE must provide all meal components for a reimbursable meal—the parent cannot replace a food component for a reimbursable meal.

Standardized Recipes

- CEs may credit food items with more than one component if the CE uses a standardized recipe, CE-developed or manufacturer developed.⁹
 - All USDA Foods recipes are standardized; therefore, CEs may use the crediting information provided on the recipe as long as the CE follows the recipe.
 - Child Nutrition (CN) label crediting information is created using standardized recipes; therefore, CEs may use the crediting information as long as the CE follows the preparation and serving directions provided on the CN label.¹⁰
 - A manufacturer may provide a product formation statement with crediting information; therefore, if a product formula statement is provided, the CE may use the crediting information as long as the product is prepared and served as specified.¹¹
 - CEs may also create their own standardized recipes using the information provided in the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*¹² in the recipe analysis section and credit components based on the calculations described in the standardized recipe development process.

Pre-K Students with Medical Disabilities or Special Dietary Needs

For pre-K students with medical disabilities or special dietary needs, NSLP CEs must follow the guidance described in the *Administrator's Reference Manual, Section 13, Accommodating Students with Medical Disabilities and Special Dietary Needs*, **not the CACFP regulations for accommodating students with medical disabilities and special dietary needs.**

⁹ USDA provides guidance on creating standardized recipes in the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*, available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>.

¹⁰ See the *Administrator's Reference Manual, Section 24, Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling and Product Documentation* for additional information on this topic.

¹¹ See the *Administrator's Reference Manual, Section 24, Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling and Product Documentation* for additional information on this topic.

¹² Available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

A La Carte Items

CEs may sell a la carte items to pre-K students. However, the sale of a la carte items must not encourage a student to purchase an a la carte item over a reimbursable meal. A la carte sales for pre-K students must meet the competitive food rule.

Performance-Based Reimbursement

When the CE serves pre-K students under the NSLP program, all reimbursable lunches served, including lunches to pre-K students, earn performance-based reimbursement.

Severe Need Reimbursement

When a CE serves pre-K students under NSLP or SBP, all reimbursable meals served, including meals served to pre-K students, earn severe need reimbursement if the CE/site receives severe need reimbursement.

Meal Pattern Flexibility for Comingled Age/Grade Groups

USDA allows flexibility in the pre-K meal pattern for CEs that are serving meals to pre-K students in the same service area at the same time as older age/grade groups. With this flexibility CEs may serve the pre-K students the same meal pattern as the kindergarten students at the meal service. The flexibility to use comingled is based on the CE's ability to identify the age/grade groups of the students and the amount of time to serve the meals. However, USDA encourages CEs to evaluate a variety of serving strategies that will allow them to serve the pre-K meal pattern to pre-K students before utilizing this flexibility.

Before adopting this flexibility, the CE must consider the following:

1. Can the pre-K class or group of pre-K students be reasonably distinguished in the service line?
2. Is there reasonably sufficient time to serve the pre-K students the pre-K meal pattern before older students are served?

The presence of pre-K students in the dining area at the same time as older students does not mean that the meal service is comingled. The CE must still consider the ability to distinguish age/grade groups and if there is reasonable time or opportunity to change the service line. CE's may also find that there is a comingled serving situation at one meal service and not another.

Serving Options That Are Not Considered to Be Comingled

When the pre-K student is easily distinguishable, and there is time and opportunity to serve the appropriate pre-K meal pattern, the pre-K meal pattern must be used.

For Example:

- *Pre-K students are served and consume breakfast in the classroom. In this situation, pre-K students are served the pre-K meal pattern.*
- *Pre-K students pick up a grab-n-go meal in an area of the building dedicated to pre-K students. In this situation, pre-K students are served the pre-K meal pattern.*

Serving Options That May Be Considered to Be Comingled

When the pre-K student is not easily distinguishable, and there is not time or opportunity to change the service line set up for different age/grade groups, the CE may use the meal pattern that is used for kindergarten students at that meal service. For breakfast, the age/grade groups are K-5, K-8, or K-12; for lunch, K-5 or K-8.

For Example:

- *Pre-K students pick up a grab-n-go meal in the cafeteria where students of all age/grade groups pick up a grab-n-go meal. In this situation, pre-K students may be served the kindergarten meal pattern.*
- *Pre-K students go through the cafeteria line and are intermingled with older students or are served in a fashion where pre-K classes alternate with older age/grade group classes. In this situation, pre-K students may be served the kindergarten meal pattern.*

Pre-K Meal Pattern for NSLP and SBP

The following charts provide general information on the portion size requirements for each food component for pre-K students for NSLP and SBPs.

- For detailed guidance on the ASCP and CACFP At Risk meal patterns, see the *Administrator’s Reference Manual (ARM), Section 10, Afterschool Meal Programs*.
- For more detailed guidance on the pre-K meal pattern, see the *Child and Adult Care Food Program—Child Care Centers Handbook*, available at www.squaremeals.org.
- For more detailed guidance on the SBP meal pattern see *Administrator’s Reference Manual, Section 8, Breakfast*, available at www.squaremeals.org.
- For more detailed guidance on the NSLP meal pattern see *Administrator’s Reference Manual, Section 9, Lunch*, available at www.squaremeals.org.

Nutrition Standards in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) – Meal Pattern Chart – As of October 1, 2017							
Minimum Amount of Each Food Component Per Week (Minimum Offering Per Day)							
Pre-Kindergarten(Pre-K)Daily			School Age Daily and Weekly				
Meal Pattern Components	Age 1-2	Age 3-5	Meal Pattern Components	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12	Grades K-12
Fluid Milk ¹³	(½) cup or (4) fl oz	(¾) cup or (6) fl oz	Fluid Milk (1 percent or less low fat, unflavored; fat free, unflavored or flavored)	5 (1) cups	5 (1) cups	5 (1) cups	5 (1) cups
Fruits and Vegetables ¹⁴	(¼) cup	(½) cup	Fruit and Vegetables	5 (1) cups	5 (1) cups	5 (1) cups	5 (1) cups
Grains ¹⁵ (whole-grain rich, enriched, or fortified) <i>Bread Product: (i.e., biscuit, roll, muffin)</i>	(0.5) oz or (½) slice		Grains (whole-grain rich)	7.0-10.0 (1.0) oz eq	8.0-10.0 (1.0) oz eq	9.0-10.0 (1.0) oz eq	9.0-10.0 (1.0) oz eq
Cooked: <i>Cereal</i> <i>Cereal Grain</i> <i>Pasta</i>	(0.5) oz or (¼) cup		Nutrient Specifications: Daily Amount Based on Average 5-Day Week				
			Min-MaxCalories(kcal)	350-500	400-550	450-600	450-500
			Saturated Fat (% of total calories)	< 10	< 10	< 10	< 10
Ready-To-Eat Breakfast Cereal, Dry or Cold: ¹⁶ <i>Flakes or Rounds</i> <i>Puffed Cereal</i> <i>Granola</i>	(0.5) oz or (½) cup	(1.0) oz or (¾) cup	Sodium Target 1 (mg)	T1: ≤540 mg T2: ≤485 mg	T1: ≤540 mg T2: ≤535 mg	T1: ≤540 mg T2: ≤570 mg	T1: ≤540 mg T2: ≤485 mg
			Trans Fat	Product nutrition label/manufacture specification must indicate 0 grams of <u>trans</u> fat per serving.			

¹³ One year olds must be served unflavored whole milk; two year olds and older, must be served unflavored low-fat or fat-free milk. Pre-K students are not given a choice of flavored milk.

¹⁴ Juice must be full strength (100 percent juice) and may be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal per day, including snack.

¹⁵ At least one serving per day, across all meals served must be whole grain-rich unless a meat/meat alternate is being served in place of grain that day. Meat and meat alternates may be substituted for the entire grain requirement a maximum of three times a week. Grain-based desserts (i.e., cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars sweet rolls, sweet pie crusts, doughnuts, toaster pastries, cake, brownies, etc.) are not creditable toward meeting the grains requirement.

¹⁶ Until October 1, 2019, the minimum serving size for any type of ready-to-eat breakfast cereals is ¼ cup for children ages 1-2 and ½ cup for children ages 3-5. Breakfast cereals must be whole grain, enriched, or fortified and contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (21.2 grams sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).

Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)—Meal Pattern Chart—As of October 1, 2017							
Minimum Amount of Each Food Component Per Week (Minimum Offering Per Day)							
Pre-Kindergarten Lunch Meal Pattern			School Age Daily and Weekly				
Meal Pattern Components	Age 1-2	Age 3-5	Meal Pattern Components	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades K-8	Grades 9-12
Fluid Milk ¹⁷	(½) cup <i>or</i> (4) fl oz	(¾) cup <i>or</i> (6) fl oz	Fluid Milk (1 percent or less low fat, unflavored; fat free, unflavored or flavored)	5 (1) cups	5 (1) cups	5 (1) cups	5 (1) cups
Fruits ¹⁸	(½) cup	(¼) cup	Fruits	2½ (½) cups	2½ (½) cups	2½ (½) cups	5 (1) cups
Vegetables ¹⁹	(½) cup	(¼) cup	Vegetables	3¾ (¾) cups	3¾ (¾) cups	3¾ (¾) cups	5 (1) cups
			Dark Green	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
			Red/Orange	¾ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup	1¼ cups
			Beans/Peas (Legumes)	½ cup	½	½	½
			Starchy	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
			Other	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup
Additional Vegetable	1 cup	1 cup	1 cup	1 cup	1 cup	1½ cups	
Grains ²⁰ (whole grain-rich or enriched)			Grains (whole grain-rich)	8.0-9.0 (1.0) oz eq	8.0-10.0 (1.0) oz eq	8.0-9.0 (1.0) oz eq	10.0-12.0 (2.0) oz eq
<i>Bread product such as biscuit, roll, or muffin</i>	(0.5) oz <i>or</i> (½) serving						
<i>Cooked breakfast cereal, cereal grain, and/or pasta</i>	(0.5) oz <i>or</i> (¼) cup						
Meat/Meat Alternates ²¹			Meat/Meat Alternates	8-10 (1) oz eq	9-10 (1) oz eq	9-10 (1) oz eq	10-12 (2) oz eq
<i>Lean meat, poultry, or fish</i>	(1.0) oz	(1.5) oz	Other Nutrient Specifications: Daily Amount Based on the Average for a 5-Day Week				
<i>Tofu, soy product, or alternate protein products</i>	(1.0) oz	(1.5) oz	Min-Max Calories (kcal)	550-650	600-700	600-650	750-850
<i>Cheese</i>	(1.0) oz	(1.5) oz	Saturated Fat (% of total calories)	< 10	< 10	< 10	< 10
<i>Large egg</i>	(1.0) oz eq <i>or</i> (½) cup	(1.5) oz eq <i>or</i> (½) cup	Sodium Target 1 (mg)	T1: ≤ 1230 mg T2: ≤ 935 mg	T1: ≤ 1360 mg T2: ≤ 1035 mg	T1: ≤ 1230 mg T2: ≤ 935 mg	T1: ≤ 1420 mg T2: ≤ 1080 mg
<i>Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut or seed butter</i>	(1.1) oz <i>or</i> (2) Tbsp	(1.7) oz <i>or</i> (3) Tbsp	Trans Fat	Product nutrition label/manufacturer specification must indicate 0 grams of <u>trans</u> fat per serving.			
<i>Yogurt, plain, or flavored unsweetened or sweetened</i>	(4.0) oz <i>or</i> (½) cup	(6.0) oz <i>or</i> (¾) cup					
<i>Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds</i>	(0.50) oz	(0.75) oz					

¹⁷ One year olds must be served whole unflavored milk; two year olds and older, must be served unflavored low-fat or fat-free milk. Pre-K students are not given a choice of flavored milk.

¹⁸ Juice must be full strength (100 percent juice) and may be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal per day, including snack. A vegetable may be used to meet the entire fruit requirement. When two vegetables are served at lunch or supper, two different kinds of vegetables must be served.

¹⁹ Juice must be full strength (100 percent juice) and may be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal per day, including snack. A vegetable may be used to meet the entire fruit requirement. When two vegetables are served at lunch or supper, two different kinds of vegetables must be served.

²⁰ At least one serving per day, across all meals served must be whole grain-rich. Grain-based desserts (i.e., donuts, pop tarts, cinnamon rolls, granola bars, etc.) are not creditable toward meeting the grains requirement.

²¹ Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces. Any combination of peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds may be credited to meet 50% of the minimum amount to be served.

The following chart may assist CEs as they determine the appropriate serving sizes based on different methods of measurement.

Measurement Conversion Chart								
(Converting Common Serving Portion Sizes into Applicable Measurement Methods) ²²								
Component	Other	Volume		Weight		Scoop Size (Scoop serving per quart)		
		Level Measure (cup, tablespoon/ Tbsp)	Fluid Ounce (fl oz)	Ounce (oz)	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq)			
Fluid Milk	--	½ cup	4	--	--	--		
	--	¾ cup	6	--	--	--		
Fruits/Vegetables	--	¼ cup	--	--	--	16		
	--	½ cup	--	--	--	8		
Grains	<i>Bread Product: (biscuit, roll, muffin)</i>	½ serving	--	--	0.5 oz	0.5 oz eq	--	
	<i>Cooked: Cereal, Cereal Grain, Pasta</i>	--	¼ cup	--	0.5 oz	0.5 oz eq	16	
	<i>Ready-To-Eat Breakfast Cereal (Dry /Cold)</i>	<i>Flakes/Rounds</i>	--	½ cup	--	0.5 oz	0.5 oz eq	8
		<i>Puffed</i>	--	¾ cup	--	1.0 oz	1.0 oz eq	4
		<i>Granola</i>	--	⅛ cup	--	0.5 oz	0.5 oz eq	30
Meat/Meat Alternates	<i>Lean meat, poultry, or fish</i>	--	--	--	1.0 oz	1.0 oz eq	--	
		--	--	--	1.5 oz	1.5 oz eq	--	
	<i>Tofu, soy product, or alternate protein products</i>	--	⅛ cup	--	1.1 oz	0.25 oz eq	30	
		--	⅓ cup	--	1.5 oz	0.33 oz eq	12	
	Cheese	--	¼ cup	--	1.0 oz	1.0 oz eq	16	
		--	⅓ cup	--	1.5 oz	1.5 oz eq	12	
	Large egg	½ serving	⅛ cup	--	--	1.0 oz eq	30	
		¾ serving	⅓ cup	--	--	1.5 oz eq	12	
	<i>Cooked dry beans or peas</i>	--	¼ cup	--	0.5 oz	1.0 oz eq	16	
		--	⅜ cup	--	0.75 oz	1.5 oz eq	10	
	<i>Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut or seed butter</i>	--	2 Tbsp	--	1.1 oz	1.0 oz eq	30	
		--	3 Tbsp	--	1.7 oz	1.5 oz eq	20	
	<i>Yogurt, plain, or flavored unsweetened or sweetened</i>	--	¼ cup	--	2.0 oz	0.5 oz eq	16	
		--	½ cup	--	4.0 oz	1.0 oz eq	8	
		--	¾ cup	--	6.0 oz	1.5 oz eq	4	
	<i>Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds</i>	--	--	--	0.5 oz	1.0 oz eq	--	
--		--	--	0.75 oz	1.5 oz eq	--		

²² The Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs> provides additional information on converting amounts.

TDA Forms

TDA provides the following forms on the *SquareMeals* website²³ to assist CEs in implementing the guidance presented in this section:

- *Daily Food Production Record for Central Kitchen, Receiving Kitchen, and Onsite Kitchen*
- *Fluid Milk Substitute Worksheet*

Records Retention

CEs must retain documentation about food production and service. All documentation or records must be kept on file for a minimum of five years for public and charter schools or three years for private schools, nonprofit organizations, and residential child care institutions after the end of the fiscal year to which they pertain. CEs have the option to maintain records on paper or electronically.

TDA may also request documentation for both offsite and onsite administrative review. CEs are encouraged to develop a system of document retention that allows them to readily retrieve documentation.

For more information on the specific types of documentation that are required, see *Administrator's Reference Manual, Section 3, Records Retention*.

Information Box 2
Records Retention
Public and charter schools are required to keep documentation related to school nutrition programs for 5 years.
Nonprofit private schools, other organizations, and residential childcare institutions (RCCIs) are required to keep documentation for 3 years.

Food Production Documentation

The CE must keep complete and accurate food production documentation including, but not limited to, food production records, menus, standardized recipes, Child Nutrition (CN) labels, production formulation statements, records indicating food substitutions, invoices or receipts for food products purchases, and meal pattern contribution documentation for the meals they produce. Food production documentation demonstrates that the meals served and claimed met meal pattern requirements and are, therefore, reimbursable.²⁴

For meals served to pre-K students, CEs may use their existing NSLP or SBP food production record system as long as they retain documentation that demonstrates their compliance with the meal pattern which includes, but is not limited to, portion sizes, number of servings prepared, number of servings served, and amount of not served. CEs may keep separate records for pre-K students or may combine the records with other age/grade groups. CEs may also use the CACFP food production record form for pre-K meals.

²³ Available at www.squaremeals.org.

²⁴ See *Administrator's Reference Manual, Section 7, Counting and Claiming* for additional information on the claims process.

While there is no one specific strategy for maintaining food production documentation, TDA recommends that each CE develop a system that aligns to its menu cycle.

For Example: A CE uses a four-week menu cycle. For each week, the CE has created a notebook that has a divided section for each serving day of week. In each daily section, the CE has collected that day's food production documentation, standardized recipes, product labels, or manufacturer product formulation statements, and other information.

CEs should keep in mind that this requirement includes all meal services (breakfast, lunch, and snack) including salad and other food bars, quick lines, sack meals, field trips, etc.

CEs should use the following guidance in maintaining production records:

- These records must show how the meals offered and served²⁵ contribute to the required food components and food quantities for each age/grade group every day including, but not limited to,
 - food item replaced,
 - substituted food item, and
 - reason for substitution.
- Any meal claimed for reimbursement must be supported by food production documentation.

Planned, Offered, and Selected/Served

CEs must use the following definitions as they prepare menus and production documentation:

- *Planned.* A planned menu is what the menu planner intends to offer to students. It represents the CE's calculation of the items that will need to be prepared for a school's usual average daily participation (ADP). Ideally, the planned and the offered meals are the same.
- *Offered.* An offered menu is what is actually prepared and set out on the serving lines for students to take. Offered menus may differ from *planned* menus when there are unexpected circumstances.

For Example: A planned food item was not received from the distributor, and the menu planner had to offer a different food item.
- *Selected/Served.* Selected or served refers to the foods that were actually served to, or selected by,²⁶ students. Menu planners should use selected/served food item data to assist in future menu planning and reduce food waste, so the school does not offer items that students do not select. Food production records should be updated to indicate actual

²⁵ Meals service for pre-K students does not include offer versus serve (OVS), however, a student is allowed to refuse a food item.

²⁶ Meals service for pre-K students does not include offer versus serve (OVS), however, a student is allowed to refuse a food item.

selected/service food items after the meal service so that production records reflect serving trends.

Compliance

TDA will review documentation submitted through TX-UNPS, retained onsite during Administrative Reviews (ARs), or on request to ensure that the CE is in compliance with the regulations described in this section. A review will include an assessment of food production documentation and a review of the meal pattern and may include a nutrient analysis of individual food items served. TDA has the discretion to take fiscal action for repeat violations for the following:

- Not meeting the meal pattern requirements
- Not meeting food quantity requirements
- Not meeting nutrition standards for food item as appropriate
- Inadequate or unavailable documentation²⁷

²⁷ See *Administrator's Reference Manual, Section 24, Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling and Product Documentation* for additional information on this topic.