

What are the nutritional requirements for school breakfasts?

School breakfasts must meet the applicable recommendations of the current 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.

What are the nutritional requirements for school lunches?

School lunches must meet the applicable recommendations of the current 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-third 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.

What does a school breakfast include?

A school breakfast contains 4 components which are:

- Meat/Meat Alternate
- Juice/Fruit/Vegetable
- Grains
- Milk

What does a school lunch include?

A school lunch contains 5 components which are:

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

Do students have to take all food items being offered for breakfast & lunch?

Students need to take 3 different meal components for the meal to be considered a school breakfast or school lunch and be eligible for federal reimbursement.

Why do students have a choice about what food items they take?

The School Nutrition Program participates in "Offer Versus Serve." School cafeterias are required to offer all 5 components for lunch but students only have to choose 3 of the 5 components for the meal to meet federal requirements and be eligible for reimbursement. Students may take all 5 components if they choose. Previously, students didn't have to take a fruit or vegetable at all, as long as they took enough other items. Effective with the 2012-2013 school year students must choose at least one serving of fruit or vegetable to meet the new mandated USDA Federal Regulations. For breakfast students must choose 3 of the 4 components offered for the meal to be considered reimbursable.

Are students able to purchase extra items?

The School Nutrition Program does sell a la carte items such as cookies, ice cream, bottled water, etc. in the school cafeterias to help supplement income. Students must have money on their account or at the time of purchase in order to purchase these items. School cafeterias are not allowed to charge a la carte purchases for students or staff.

Can parents limit their child's a la carte purchases?

Yes, parents can limit access to a la carte purchases by writing a note to the cafeteria manager and it will be noted on the student's account.

Why are adult meal prices higher than a student meal?

Adults pay higher prices for school meals than students because student meals are subsidized with federal and state monies. The only money that is made from an adult meal is the amount that is charged for the meal. Federal regulations state "adult meals must be the full cost or at least the price paid by students plus the rate of federal and state reimbursement and the value of USDA donated foods."

What if my child forgets his/her lunch money?

The School Nutrition Program understands that situations may occur when a child forgets their lunch money and we will allow a student to charge a meal. A meal charge is defined as a short-term loan for a child to eat because the child forgot lunch, their lunch money or has lost it. The School Nutrition Program does have a meal charge policy. Full paying elementary students are allowed to charge up to \$6.00 and reduced price students are allowed to charge up to \$2.40 before the student is given an alternate meal of a sandwich and milk. Full paying middle school students are allowed to charge up to \$6.75 and reduced priced students \$2.40 before the student is given an alternate meal of a sandwich and milk. High school students are allowed to charge one meal with the approval of the cafeteria manager. If a student has a negative balance on their meal account, all monies received will go to satisfy the negative balance first and the remaining amount will be applied to the student's account.

How often do parents have to reapply for free and reduced meal benefits?

Parents must reapply for free and reduced price school meal benefits each school year. The meal status that a student had at the end of the previous school year will carry over for the first thirty operating days of the new school year. This carry over period allows parent ample time to fill out the new meal application for the new school year. A student's approved meal status covers both breakfast and lunch only. All a la carte purchases require that the student have money in order to purchase the items. Free and reduced price meals can be applied for at any time during the school year.

What if my child has allergies or dietary restrictions?

The School Nutrition Program is committed in working with all students who have a dietary restriction or food allergy. Please contact the cafeteria manager or school nutrition supervisor if your child has a dietary restriction or food allergy. The School Nutrition main office maintains a file of labels for each food on our menus. Parents, should be aware, however, that manufacturers can change ingredients without informing end users. Parents are welcomed to call and speak to the school nutrition supervisor in regards to their child's food allergy. In order to make a food substitution for a food allergy, the school nutrition program must have a note from the student's physician stating the foods to be avoided and the appropriate substitution.

Is the food prepared in a safe manner?

Absolutely! Every school nutrition manager must be certified by the National School Nutrition Association. To gain this certification they must take a 10 hour food safety & sanitation course and pass an exam. Many of our school nutrition workers have also taken this course. All school nutrition employees are required to take at the minimum a 4 hour food safety & sanitation class taught by the health department. All school nutrition staff members receive additional food safety training and information each year. School Nutrition Programs are also required to have a HACCP plan in place. This system allows managers and staff to monitor food at various stages (critical control points) to ensure safety. In addition, the Bedford County Health Department performs at least two unscheduled inspections per year of each kitchen.

How are checks returned for insufficient funds handled?

The Bedford County School Board has contracted with Envision Payment Solutions for the electronic collection of checks returned for insufficient funds. The school cafeteria will gladly accept your checks; however, in the event your check is returned, your account will be debited electronically for the face amount and fees allowed by the state of Virginia. Checks that are sent into the school cafeteria must contain a valid phone number. Checks written to the school cafeteria that are returned for insufficient funds are sent directly to Envision Payment Solutions for collection and are no longer handled by the School Nutrition Program.

How do I put money on my child's meal account?

A parent has three options to put money on their child's meal account:

- **Online** – Using www.cafeprepay.com. The service is easy to use, convenient, private and secure. There is a service fee of \$2.50 per student, per transaction. If you do not want to make payments online you may simply sign up for cafe prepay to monitor your child's account balance and the purchases made in the school cafeteria. There is no charge to the parent to do this.
- **Check** – **Write a check to your child's school cafeteria. Please be sure that all checks contain a phone number. It is helpful for the parent to write the student's name and pin number in the memo line of the check.**
- **Cash** – Cash can be deposited on the student's account or students may pay cash on a daily basis.