



USDA Reimbursable School Lunch Requirements

5 essential components must be **offered** every day: fruit, vegetables, grains, meat/meat alternatives and milk. Students must take 3 of 5 to count as a reimbursable meal, one of which *must be a fruit or vegetable*.

Lunch components	Minimum amount of food per week (and per day)		
	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits	2½ (½) cups	2½ (½) cups	5 (1) cups
Total Vegetable Servings	3¾ (¾) cups	3¾ (¾) cups	5 (1) cups
Dark green	½ cup	½ cup	½ cups
Red/orange	¾ cup	¾ cup	1¼ cups
Beans and peas (legumes)	½ cup	½ cup	½ cups
Starchy	½ cup	½ cup	½ cups
Other	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cups
Additional Vegetable to reach total	1 cup	1 cup	1½ cups
Grains	8-9 (1) oz.	8-10 (1) oz.	10-12 (2) oz.
Meat/Meat Alternate	8-10 (1) oz.	9-10 (1) oz.	10-12 (2) oz.
Fluid Milk	5 (1) cups	5 (1) cups	5 (1) cups

Minimum and Maximum Nutrient and Calorie Levels for School Lunches (weekly averages)

Nutrients and Energy Allowances	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Energy allowances (Calories)	550-650	600-700	750-850
Saturated fat as a percentage of actual total food energy	Less than 10%	Less than 10%	Less than 10%
Sodium*	≤1230 mg	≤1360 mg	≤1420 mg
Trans Fat	Must indicate zero grams per serving on Nutritional label		

*Sodium requirements relaxed in 2019 from Target 2 previously required to be met by 2017, postponed until 2024:

≤1230 mg	≤1360 mg	≤1420 mg
----------	----------	----------

Fruit

- Fresh, frozen without added sugar, canned in juice/light syrup or dried (¼ cup dried fruit = ½ cup fresh fruit)
- No more than half of the offering each day may be in the form of juice (100% juice only)

Vegetables

- May be fresh, frozen or canned
- All five categories must be served each week [dark green (e.g. broccoli), red/orange (e.g. carrots), beans/peas, starchy (e.g. corn, potatoes), others (e.g. cucumbers, green beans), and additional] to meet weekly total
- Foods from the beans/peas (legumes) subgroup may be credited as a vegetable OR as a meat alternate

Grains

- At least half of the grains offered weekly* must be whole grain-rich, and the remaining grain items offered must be enriched. (This relaxed requirement is new for 2019)
- Whole grain-rich foods need to meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - Whole grains per serving must not be less than 8 grams
 - Product includes FDA's whole grain health claim on the packaging
 - Whole grains are first in product ingredients list
 - For non-mixed dishes (e.g., cereals) whole grains (one grain or combined) must be the primary ingredient by weight
 - For mixed dishes (e.g. pizza) whole grains must be the primary ingredient by weight
- Only two creditable grain-based desserts are allowed per school week

Meat/Meat Alternates

- Legumes, tofu and soy yogurt may be allowed as meat alternates

Milk

- Must offer two or more of the following options:
 - fat-free (unflavored or flavored)
 - low-fat (unflavored or flavored*) (This relaxed requirement is new for 2019)
 - fat-free or low-fat in lactose reduced or lactose free