

## Topic: School Breakfast Meal Pattern At a Glance

### Overview

By regulation, school meals must be based on the goals of the latest Dietary Guidelines for Americans. USDA sets school meal nutrition standards to ensure that schools offer students the right balance of fruits, vegetables, low-fat or fat-free milk, whole grains, and protein foods.

### Requirements:

School Food Authorities (SFA's) must offer the food components and quantities required in the school meal pattern based on age/grade group served.

Age/grade groups are:

- K-5 (Kindergarten through 5th grade)
- 6-8 (6th through 8th grade)
- 9-12 (9th through 12th grade)

Note: The meal pattern requirements for all grades overlap. It is possible to meet all grade requirements with a single menu if:

- daily and weekly requirements are met.
- meals meet average weekly dietary specification for calories, saturated fat and sodium as specified in the meal patterns.

The standard meal pattern is based on a five day week with adjusted meal patterns based on shorter and longer weeks.

<b>Breakfast Meal Pattern: Based on a 5 Day Week</b>			
	K-5	6-8	9-12
Meal Pattern:	Amount of Food Per Week (Minimum Per Day)		
Fruits (cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups)	0	0	0
Grains (oz. equivalent)	7-10 (1)	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)
Meat/Meat Alternate (oz. equivalent)	0	0	0
Fluid Milk (cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Other Specifications: Daily Amount			
Minimum-Maximum Calories	350-500	400-550	450-600
Sodium Interim Target 1	<u>&lt;540mg</u>	<u>&lt;600mg</u>	<u>&lt;640mg</u>
Saturated Fat (% of total calories)	<10	<10	<10
Trans fat: Label or manufacturer statement must indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving			

## Meal Pattern Components: Required Components

### Grains:

Grades	Daily Minimum Requirement	Weekly Minimum Requirement
K-5	1 oz. equivalent	7 oz. equivalents
6-8	1 oz. equivalent	8 oz. equivalents
9-12	1 oz. equivalents	9 oz. equivalents

SFA's must offer more than the minimum daily amount to meet the weekly requirement. The minimum grain amount that can contribute to the meal pattern is a 0.25 oz equivalent. Over the course of the week, at least 80% of grains must be whole grain-rich and all other grain items offered must be enriched.

### Fruit:

Grades	Daily Minimum Requirement	Weekly Minimum Requirement
K-5	1 Cup	5 Cups
6-8	1 Cup	5 Cups
9-12	1 Cup	5 Cups

Menu planners may allow students to select more than the daily minimum serving for fruit if the dietary specifications for average breakfasts offered over the school week are met. Full strength juice may be offered to meet up to one-half of the weekly fruit requirement. All juice must be 100% juice.

The minimum quantity that may be credited towards the fruit component is  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup. Dry fruit credits as double the amount served. Ex.  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup dried fruit =  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fruit

### Fluid Milk:

Grades	Daily Minimum Requirement	Weekly Minimum Requirement
K-5	1 Cup	5 Cups
6-8	1 Cup	5 Cups
9-12	1 Cup	5 Cups

All milk must be fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1% or less). Milk can be flavored or unflavored, provided that unflavored milk is offered at each meal service.

At least two types of milk must be offered.

## Meal Pattern Components: Optional Components

### Vegetables:

There is no requirement to offer vegetables at breakfast; however, SFA's may choose to offer vegetables in place of, or in addition to fruit. In order to offer starchy vegetables at breakfast, at least 2 cups of red/orange, dark green, legumes, or "other" vegetable subgroups must be offered within that week and prior to offering the starchy vegetable.

Please note:

In Section 740, Division A of the Appropriations Act, Congress provides that school food authorities (SFAs) participating in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) may credit any vegetable offered, including potatoes and other starchy vegetables, in place of fruit without including vegetables from other subgroups in the weekly menus. This flexibility is effective for school years (SYs) 2023 and 2024. The minimum vegetable amount that can contribute to the meal pattern is a 1/8 cup. Leafy green vegetables credit as one-half the volume served. Ex. 1/2 cup lettuce = 1/4 cup vegetable.

### Meat/Meat Alternate:

There is no requirement to offer meat/meat alternate at breakfast; however, SFA's may choose to offer meat/meat alternates in one of two ways:

- A meat/meat alternate may be offered as an "extra" food (not credited toward meal pattern requirements).
- A meat/meat alternate may be served to meet the weekly grain requirement, as long as a 1 oz eq minimum of grains is offered daily.

The minimum meat/meat alternate amount that can contribute to the meal pattern is a 0.25 oz equivalent.

## Offer versus Serve at Breakfast

Offer versus Serve (OVS) is a provision in the School Breakfast Program that allows students to decline some of the food offered. The goals of OVS are to reduce food waste in the school meals programs while permitting students to decline foods they do not intend to eat.

- Offer versus Serve (OVS) is optional for breakfast for all grades.
- A food item is a specific food offered within the three food components.
- SFA's must offer four food times from all three required components (grain, fruit and fluid milk).
- Students must select at least three of the four food items including at least 1/2 cup of fruit and/or vegetable for the meal to be reimbursable.
- Students, servers and cashiers must be able to identify what constitutes a reimbursable meal

- Signage explaining what constitutes a reimbursable meal to students including the requirement to select at least 1/2 cup fruit or vegetables is required must be posted at or near the beginning of the service line.

Helpful Resources

[Five Day SBP Meal Pattern Chart](#)

[Short and Long Week SBP Meal Pattern Chart](#)

[Offer versus Serve Manual](#)

[Offer versus Serve Breakfast Tip Sheet](#)

Regulatory Reference:

[CFR 220.8](#) Meal Requirements for Breakfasts

[USDA Memo SP-05 2022](#) Meal Requirements Under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Questions and Answers for Program Operators

[Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023](#): Effect on Child Nutrition Programs

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**Acronym Reference and Definitions**

SBP	School Breakfast Program
OVS	Offer versus Serve
SFA	School Food Authority
UDSA	United States Department of Agriculture