

School Nutrition Program At-A-Glance

Topic: Fluid Milk and Fluid Milk Substitutes

Overview:

School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) must offer students a variety of fluid milk, including at least two different choices. If a child has a milk preference other than fluid milk, the SFA can offer a nutritionally equivalent milk substitute, but is not required to.

Requirements:

- ✓ Schools must offer at least two fluid milk choices at breakfast and lunch.
- ✓ Schools may offer fat free, low fat, reduced fat or whole milk.
- ✓ Milk may be flavored or unflavored, provided unflavored milk is offered at each meal service.
- ✓ Lactose-free and reduced-lactose milk may be offered.
- ✓ Effective July 1, 2025, all flavored milk must have ≤ 10g added sugar per 8 fluid oz.
- ✓ At lunch, nutritionally equivalent milk substitutes are allowable as one of the milk varieties.

Milk Substitute Requirements:

Fluid milk substitution related to a disability:

- ✓ Students with a [Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations](#) signed by a state licensed health care professional or a registered dietitian/registered dietitian nutritionist must be provided with their requested fluid milk substitute. This can include non-nutritionally equivalent fluid milk substitutes.
- ✓ For lunch only, a [Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations](#) for a milk substitute may be signed by a parent or guardian.

Fluid milk substitution related to a preference:

- ✓ If a milk substitute that is not a medical need is desired for a child, the parent/guardian must request the substitute in writing. The ODE [Meal Preference Request Form](#) can be used by households to request a fluid milk substitute.
- ✓ At lunch only, if the SFA makes a nutritionally equivalent milk substitute available for all students to select, a written request is not required.
- ✓ SFA's choosing to offer fluid milk substitutes at breakfast or snack, other than for students with disabilities, must notify ODE CNP. This is reported in CNPweb.
- ✓ Fluid milk substitutions **must** meet the following nutritional guidelines:

Nutrient	Per Cup (8 fluid oz)
Calcium	276 mg
Protein	8 g
Vitamin A	150 mcg RAE
Vitamin D	2.5 mcg
Magnesium	24 mg
Phosphorus	222 mg
Potassium	349 mg
Riboflavin	0.44 mg
Vitamin B-12	1.1 mcg

Nutritionally Equivalent Fluid Milk Substitutes

- ✓ The added sugar requirements do not apply to milk substitutes.
- ✓ Most commercial nut (almond, cashew etc.), coconut, rice or oat beverages do not provide enough of the required nutrients to be considered nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk.
- ✓ Water and/or juice are not allowable substitutes for fluid milk.
- ✓ Milk substitutions must be documented on production records.

Helpful Resources:

- ✓ [ODE CNP Child Nutrition Program Meal Accommodations and Modifications webpage \(Nutritionally Equivalent Milk Substitute section\)](#)
- ✓ [Meeting Meal Accommodations Requirements Video](#)
- ✓ [Meal Preference Request Form](#)
- ✓ [USDA Fluid Milk Tip Sheet](#)

Regulatory Reference:

- ✓ [7 CFR 220.8\(d\)](#)
- ✓ [7 CFR 210.10\(d\)\(2\)](#)
- ✓ [SP 08-2026 Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs](#)
- ✓ [SP 01-2026 Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act of 2025 – Implementation Requirements for National School Lunch Program](#)
- ✓ [SP 19-2024, CACFP 07-2024, SFSP 12-2024: Initial Implementation Memorandum: Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#)
- ✓ [SP 07-2010 Q & As; Milk Substitution for Children with Medical or Special Dietary Needs \(Non-Disability\)](#)

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Acronym Reference and Definitions

CFR	Code of Federal Regulation
mg	Milligram
mcg	Microgram
NSLP	National School Lunch Program
ODE CNP	Oregon Department Education Child Nutrition Program
RAE	Retinol Activity Equivalents
SBP	School Breakfast Program
SFA	School Food Authority
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

The Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction created this document. The Oregon Department of Education modified the document to apply to Oregon.