

Nutrition Tips

How can lunch be sold to students for a price much lower than the cost?

The school receives federal funds for every student meal it serves. This reimbursement makes up the difference between what the lunch costs to produce and what the student pays. The amount of federal reimbursement paid per lunch depends on the economic need of the student.

Are meals priced as a unit or are the food items priced separately?

A balanced meal provides essential nutrients. Omitting foods, such as vegetables and fruits, may lead to under nourishment and poor school performance. Buying the meal as a unit encourages students to accept and eat the complete meal. Meal components may be priced separately - usually more expensive. Research shows the higher the meal price the lower the number of students participating in the lunch program. Students are encouraged to choose all meal components for a balanced meal.



Why should my child buy lunch at school rather than bring it from home?

The school lunch assures that your child is receiving a nutritionally balanced meal. More variety (an established dietary guideline) is easier to achieve through school menus. Also, the subsidized school lunch is less expensive than a lunch of equal nutrition value prepared and packed at home.

Are there other advantages to my child participating in the school lunch program?

Students learn good nutrition habits that provide a basis for better health throughout their lives. School lunches contain a variety of foods and offer students exposure to new foods. The better nourished student will generally have better attendance, be more attentive and have more energy to cope with school day opportunities.

Kids who lunch better learn better.

Hungry children cannot learn. They are lethargic, irritable and have shorter attention spans. Many students would get no meal, or at best a nutritionally poor one, if they had to bring their own lunches. And a good school lunch is not only essential to academic achievement, it is also part of a good education. Nutrition habits and food preferences learned now will be with your students for life. Especially in districts where home nutrition habits are questionable, a school lunch is critical. It is often a student's only chance for a good, balanced meal.

What exactly is a good school lunch?

A USDA-approved school lunch provides one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA). While there are different specific requirements for each age group, it is not difficult to plan good tasting, healthy meals that offer the required balance of meats, breads, dairy products and fruits or vegetables - while reducing salt, fat and sugar.