



Weslaco Independent School District Food Service Department Questions and Answers

Q- Does WISD have a Wellness Policy?

A- In compliance with federal law 108-265, Child Nutrition and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act of 2004, the WISD School Board established a Wellness Policy for WISD that promotes student health and contributes to the reduction of childhood obesity. The components of the local wellness policy include nutrition education, physical education, nutrition guidelines for all foods available during the school day, and other activities that promote student wellness.

Q- How can the school lunch program affect children's eating habits?

A- School lunch can affect children's eating habits by:

- Planning meals that reflect the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans-reduced fat, saturated fat, sodium, and increased grains (whole wheat items)
- Exposing children to new foods and food preparations
- Offering a variety of fruits and vegetables
- Offering a variety of choices so children learn to make wise selections
- Limiting snacks and desserts to those with sound nutrient content
- Teaching nutrition education in the classroom

Q- What is a commodity food and why do we use it?

A- Commodity food is food that is made available to WISD through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The amount of food that a school district receives is based on the number of student lunches served. The type of food offered is based upon the extra commodity food available throughout the country.

Q- Is food prepared under sanitary conditions?

A- All food service managers possess current WISD Sanitation Certification and have successfully completed our extensive manager-training course. A sanitation self-inspection using the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) format has been implemented in all schools. This format requires managers to follow the purchased product through the various stages and temperatures from receipt to service. This is a second food safety measure. All food service employees receive repeated training on proper handling, preparation, and service of food to the customer.

Q- Why do teachers, adults and visitors pay higher meal prices?

A- Student meals are subsidized by USDA commodities and state reimbursements. The state does not allow Teacher/Adult/Visitor meals to receive such reimbursements; therefore, the price is slightly higher.

Q- Do all students automatically receive free lunch?

A- Yes, all students enrolled with Weslaco ISD receive free lunch.

Q- Chocolate milk is bad for kids and causes hyperactivity, right?

A- No, chocolate milk provides essential nutrients, calcium, protein, Vitamin D, Vitamin A, potassium and Vitamin B12. Studies show that chocolate milk does NOT cause hyperactivity. Studies also show that chocolate milk helps children develop strong bones and teeth. Chocolate milk provides 300 mg. of calcium, 1/3 of what the daily requirement is for children. There are 60 more calories in chocolate milk than in white, and children need calories for energy.

Q- Why can't students be served certain types of candy and snacks at school?

A- The Texas Department of Agriculture created a policy for Texas public schools participating in the National School Lunch Program. In an effort to fight childhood obesity, the Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value Policy restricts such foods as soda, water ices, chewing gum, and certain candies from being served or provided on the school campus until after the last lunch period. Elementary campuses are restricted from serving these items throughout the entire school day. For more information about The Texas Public School Nutrition Policy visit The Texas Department of Agriculture website.

http://www.squaremeals.org/fn/render/parent/channel/0,1253,2348_2350_0_0,00.html

Q- Are school lunches high in fat, sodium and calories?

A- WISD meals are planned by Registered Dieticians and according to federal regulations provide 1/3 of the students' Recommended Dietary Allowances and contain no more than 30 percent calories from fat and 10 percent calories from saturated fat averaged over the week. This information is printed on the parent monthly menu. Food items such as chicken nuggets and pizza served in our schools are specified to contain limited amounts of fat and sodium. The nutrient content is different than those sold in local fast food restaurants. To reflect the new *MyPlate for Kids-Eat Right, Exercise, Have Fun* recommendation whole wheat rolls, pizza crust, breakfast cereals, etc. and a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables are offered on menus. In addition special attention is paid to limit sodium and trans fatty acids.

Q-Why can't parents bring in outside food for parties and fund-raisers?

A- The Texas Department of Agriculture has created a new set of guidelines for Texas Public schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program. In an effort to fight childhood obesity, the rule restricting parents, student groups, faculty and administration from selling or providing restricted items is extended throughout the entire school day (last bell). For more information about the TDA Regulations visit www.squaremeals.org and click on Red School House (Texas Public School Nutrition Policy).