

Food Service Information

Food Service often receives questions on the various government rules and regulations we must abide by. We have created this document to detail some of the key questions we often receive.

Our District is part of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the National School Lunch Program, which allows schools in low-income areas to provide meals at no cost to families. Therefore, all students are eligible for a free breakfast and free lunch each day in the 2024-2025 school year, regardless of their family's financial status.

Second breakfasts/lunches, incomplete meals, and a la carte items (ex. milk, juice cups, bottled water) will still need to be paid for at the advertised prices. Milk is considered an a la carte item (\$0.50), but if the student takes a milk and two other meal components, then it would be free.

The a la carte program is part of the smart snack program. None of these items have sugar as the main ingredient. In addition, the a la carte is presented after the lunch so it is not used as a substitute for the lunch.

We do not reheat food.

Smart Snacks (a la carte)

All snack sold to students are approved by PDE and must meet the below requirements. There are no restrictions on food sales, our district policy is that foods and beverages shall not be used as a reward or punishment. A la carte items will be sold every school day except on Wednesdays due to early student dismissal.

Nutrient	Snack	Entree
Calories	200 calories or less	350 calories or less
Sodium	200 mg or less	480 milligrams or less
Total fat	35% of calories or less	35% of calories or less
Saturated fat	Less than 10% of calories	Less than 10% of calories
Trans Fat	0 g	0 g
Total sugars	35% by weight or less	35% by weight or less

What constitutes a meal?

The District participates in the [National School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs](#). This program requires certain meal components to be taken by the students for us to claim a reimbursable meal. We offer fruits, vegetables, meat (or meat alternatives), grain, and milk for our meals. For breakfast, students must take three items to receive the regular meal. For lunch, students must take three components, but are also required to take at least a fruit or vegetable. **If students do not take the required items, cashiers will encourage them to take the necessary items before charging. Students are not required to take milk.**

For more details about the meal components, please see our [reimbursable breakfast and lunch information](#) on the website. The district is committed to providing healthy meal options for all students. Substitutions and modifications to meals can be made for students with disabling special dietary needs or allergies. In order for these accommodations to be made, parents should return a completed [Medical Plan of Care for School Food Service form](#), signed by a physician, to the school nurse. Students with dietary concerns should contact the school nurse for guidance or possibly consider bringing a prepared lunch from home if the uncertainty of the menu is a significant issue.

What does a meal look like?

We are providing "offer vs. serve" this year. This means that food service will offer fruit, vegetable, milk, grain, and meat or meat alternative for lunch, but students only need to take three of these components. One must be a fruit or a vegetable. For example, a chicken patty on a bun with sliced apples would count as a meal. Milk is not a requirement. Students may have two fruits and two vegetables as part of their free meal.

Grain Requirement- A reimbursable lunch includes foods from all 5 food groups (meat, grain, vegetables, fruit and milk). Menus planned for grades K-8 must offer at least 1 serving of grain each day, while grades 9-12 must have at least 2 servings. The Healthy, Hunger/Free Act 2010 requires that Bread must have its first ingredient as whole grain, menus must offer the required number of whole grains weekly.

FAQ: Reimbursable Meal Service in School Cafeterias

1. What is a reimbursable meal?

A reimbursable meal is a meal that meets specific nutritional guidelines set by the USDA. To qualify for reimbursement, the meal must include specific components, such as fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy.

2. Who is eligible for reimbursable meals?

Reimbursable meals are available to all students because our school participates in the Community Eligibility Program.

3. What are the components of a reimbursable meal?

A reimbursable meal typically includes:

- One serving of fruit
- One serving of vegetable
- A source of protein (meat, beans, or cheese)
- A grain (bread, rice, or pasta)
- A serving of milk

4. How can students ensure they are getting a reimbursable meal?

Students should select at least three components of the meal, including at least one serving/ a ½ cups of a fruit or vegetable, to ensure their meal is reimbursable.

5. What happens if a student doesn't take the required components?

If a student does not select the required components, they will be prompted to take a ½ cup of a fruit or vegetable. If they choose not to take a reimbursable meal they will be charged for the meal- \$ 3.00 for breakfast /\$5.00 for lunch.

6. Can students customize their meals?

Yes, students can customize their meals by choosing different fruits, vegetables, and proteins, as long as they meet the reimbursable meal guidelines.

7. Are there options for students with dietary restrictions?

Yes, schools often provide alternative meal options for students with dietary restrictions, allergies or special dietary needs. Parents should provide a medical form from their doctor and submit it to the school nurse.

8. How are prices determined for reimbursable meals?

Prices for reimbursable meals are set by the school district, \$ 3.00 for breakfast /\$5.00 for lunch.

10. Where can I find the school's meal menus?

Meal menus are available on the school district's website Tab Departments/Food Service/HBGSD Nutraslice menus.

11. What if my child doesn't like the available meal options?

The district strives to provide a variety of menu options. Parents may pack a meal for the student if preferred.

12. How does the reimbursable meal program benefit students?

The reimbursable meal program helps ensure that students have access to nutritious meals, which can improve their overall health, well-being, and academic performance.

For additional information please contact:

Beth King Coordinator of Food Services at 717-703-4183.