

## Offer Vs. Serve (OVS) Notification Letter for Households

Our school food service department participates in the National School Lunch Program and implements Offer versus Serve. Offer versus Serve allows students to decline some of the food offered as part of a complete meal. The goals of Offer versus Serve are to reduce food waste in the school nutrition programs and to allow students more customization of the meal they select. For general OVS guidelines, please read the Understanding the Lunch Line section below. Please don't hesitate to reach out to our Food Service Department at 845-782-8678 if you have any questions about the offered menu.

### *Understanding the Lunch Line*

All schools are required by USDA guidelines to have adequate signage posted in the cafeteria and on the serving line to help explain how students can create a complete meal. The friendly staff at your child's school are happy to help as well. At lunch, all students have the opportunity to choose from menu items that fall within five important food groups, including milk, protein, fruits, vegetables, and grains. While the most nutritious lunch contains all of the offered items, we understand that giving our students choices allows them to make better decisions on their own and build better habits now and in the future. Out of the five food groups your student is offered, they must choose at least three food groups to make a complete meal. One of the selections must be at least ½ cup of fruit or vegetable. Students who do not create a complete meal will be charged a la carte pricing for the items selected.

### *Example Menu for Lunch*

Chicken Soft Taco

1/2 cup Black Beans

1/2 cup Corn

1/2 cup Strawberries

1/2 cup Diced Peaches

8oz of Milk

With Offer Versus Serve at lunch, your student could choose:

- Chicken Soft Taco and Corn (Protein + Grain + Vegetable = 3 food groups)
- Chicken Soft Taco, Strawberries, and Milk (Protein + Grain + Fruit + Milk = 4 food groups)
- Black Beans, Corn, Strawberries, Milk (Vegetable + Vegetable + Fruit + Milk = 3 food groups)

***Even though GWLUFSD participates in Offer versus Serve, students are not required to decline items, in fact they're encouraged to take all five food groups, but the choice is up to them!***

If your student comes home and says they did not get enough to eat at lunch, ask if they are taking all of the food group offerings.

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