



**LA VEGA
INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Guide to Student Nutrition

for the 2026-2027 School Year



Powering potential.™

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Our Commitment to Your School

At Aramark Student Nutrition, we are more than a meal service provider, we are your partner in powering student success. We aim to work alongside school leaders and staff to create an engaging meal experience that meets nutritional standards while reflecting the unique needs of your school community.

In this guide, you will discover:

- Your Child Nutrition Leadership Team
- School Food Never Looked So Good
- School Food You Can Feel Good About
- Menus Built with Simple Ingredients
- Understanding School Nutrition Standards
- Meal Prices
- What Makes a Meal
- À la Carte & Smart Snacks
- Special Diets
- Student Engagement
- Field Trips, Testing Day or Half Days



Meet Your Student Nutrition Team

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School Food Never Looked This Good!

Kids are savvy about their food choices. That's why our recipes are developed by chefs in our Culinary Alliance. - our partnership with over 60 professional chefs who believe that school food should be quick, nutritious, and taste really good.

We offer rotating, seasonal menus with **fresh ingredients, global flavors**, and limited-time options, so there's always something new to try.

FIND OUR MENUS ONLINE AT:
<https://lavegaisd.nutrislice.com/menu>



Questions? Contact a Student Nutrition Team Member.

School Food You Can Feel Good About

The meals served in your school are designed to do more than taste good. They meet rigorous federal nutrition standards that support student health and power success.



Balanced to USDA Standards

Every menu aligns with the USDA's strict guidelines, delivering the right balance of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, proteins, and dairy.

Expert Guided Nutrition

Every detail is carefully managed, from portion sizes to sodium limits, with oversight from a team of more than 50 registered dietitians.

Fresh and Locally Sourced

We strive to source food as locally as possible and exceed USDA Buy American requirements.

Scratch-Focused Approach

Meals include scratch-made items whenever possible, complemented by high-quality, ready-to-serve options.

Quality Families Recognize

We partner with trusted brands families already use at home, such as:



Many products are specially formulated to meet the strict school nutrition standards.

Menus Built with Simple Ingredients

Parents asked, and we listened.

Building on our longstanding commitment to quality ingredients, our menus have been refined to remove commonly questioned ingredients. These updates apply as a standard to all schools participating in the National School Lunch Program.

Our 2026/2027 school menus have been developed without

Artificial Dyes

Blue 1
Blue 2
Citrus Red 3
Green 3
Orange B
Red 40
Yellow 5
Yellow 6

The Following Additives

Azodicarbonamide
Brominated Vegetable Oil (BVO)
Butylated Hydroxyanisole (BHA)
Potassium Bromate
Propylparaben
Titanium Dioxide

**In Texas, menus also exclude caramel color as part of state-specific requirements.*

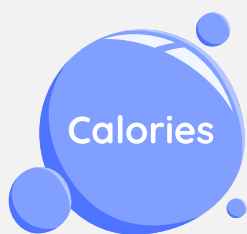
Where possible, products have been reformulated with simpler ingredients, and select items have been thoughtfully replaced. Most ingredients were already limited across our menus. You may notice subtle differences in color or texture as we transition.

Understanding School Nutrition Standards

School meals are balanced and age-appropriate, following USDA regulations to provide students with proper portions and nutrients daily.

Nutritional Standards By Grade

Every meal is designed to meet USDA nutrition guidelines, with standards tailored by age group to support growing students. These guidelines help ensure the right balance of nutrients, portions, and calories at every grade level. For Example, these are the guidelines for lunch:



K - 5: 550-650

6 - 8: 600-700

9 - 12: 750-850



K - 5: < 10%*

6 - 8: < 10%*

9 - 12: < 10%*

*of total calories



K - 5: < 10%*

6 - 8: < 10%*

9 - 12: < 10%*

*of total calories



K - 5: ≤ 1,110mg

6 - 8: ≤ 1,225mg

9 - 12: ≤ 1,280mg

Right Portion Size By Grade

Portion sizes are designed based on grade level to support growing students. Younger students receive smaller portions, while older students receive larger amounts to meet their nutritional needs.

For Example, these are the guidelines for lunch:



K - 8: ½ Cup

9 - 12: 1 Cup



K - 8: ¾ Cup

9 - 12: 1 Cup



K - 8: 1 oz

9 - 12: 2 oz



K - 8: 1 oz

9 - 12: 2 oz



K - 8: 1 Cup

9 - 12: 1 Cup

Meal Prices

Breakfast

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, setting the tone for a successful day of learning. We have breakfast availability to ensure a strong start to the day!

Breakfast

Students: Free
Adults: \$3.25

Lunch

Students want to eat great food and spend time with their friends during lunch so build menus that exciting and convenient for them to get through lines quickly!

Lunch

Students: Free
Adults: \$5.00

La Vega Independent School District will be implementing the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs for School Year 2026-2027. In CEP schools, applications are no longer required.

Schools that participate in CEP provide healthy breakfasts and lunches each day at no charge for ALL students enrolled in that CEP school during the 2026-2027 School Year.

For more additional details regarding Student Nutrition, visit

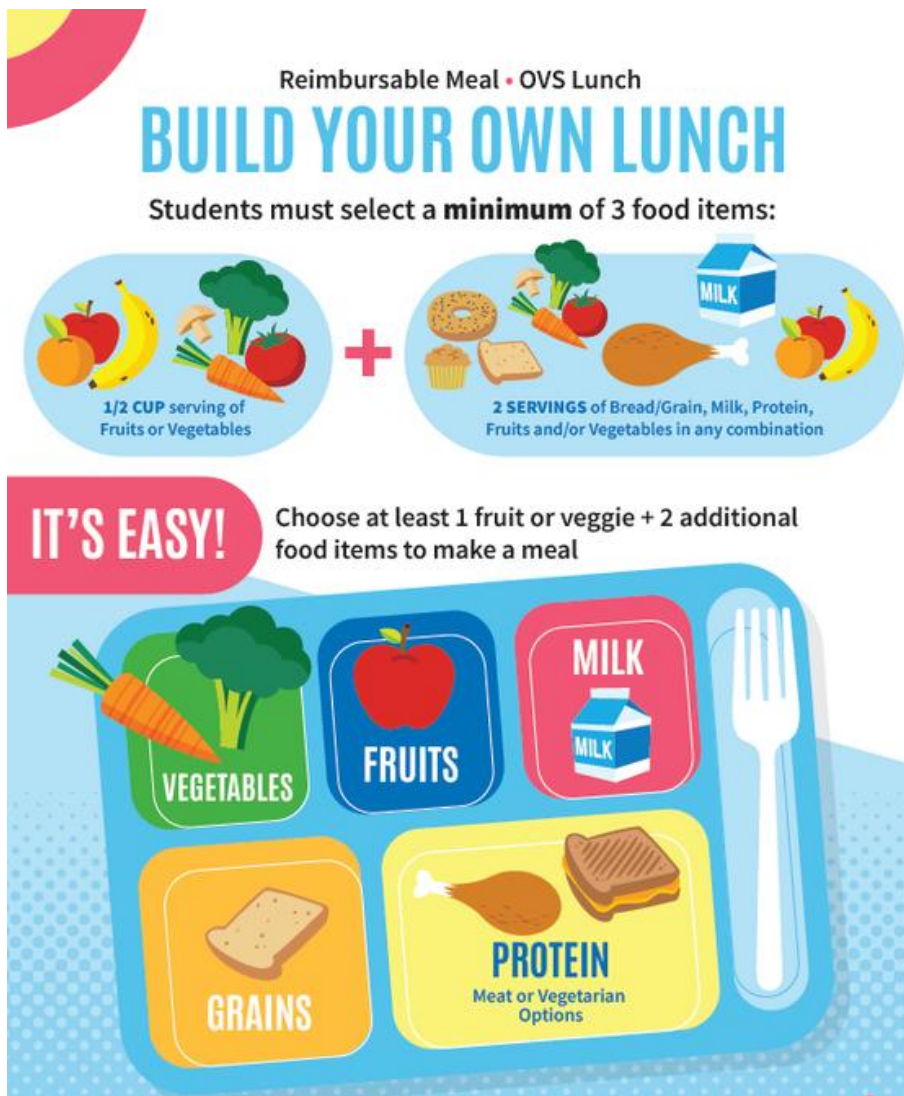
[Child Nutrition - La Vega Independent School District](#)

Questions? Contact a Student Nutrition Team Member.

What makes a meal?

Offer vs Serve

According to USDA guidelines, a reimbursable school meal must include specific components: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, and milk. Students must select at least three of these five components for breakfast and three of these five components for lunch. At least one of these components must be a fruit or vegetable. This structure ensures that every meal served is balanced, nutritious, and aligned with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.



How Offer vs Serve Works

Offer Versus Serve (OVS) is a meal service option in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) that allows students to decline some food items offered, while still receiving a reimbursable meal. The primary goal of OVS is to reduce food waste and allow students to choose the foods they prefer, leading to higher consumption.

How OVS Works:

Offer:

Students are offered items from all food groups—fruits, vegetables, grains, meat/meat alternates, and milk.

Serve:

Students must select at least three food items, with at least one serving of fruit or vegetable. They can decline the remaining food items, as long as they meet the minimum requirements for the reimbursable meal.

Students do not have to take every item (for example, milk is optional), but they are encouraged to choose foods from all groups for a balanced, nutritious meal.

What makes a meal? Straight Serve

Straight Serve is a meal service model in student nutrition where all required meal components are served together as a complete unit. Unlike Offer Versus Serve (OVS), students take all items offered to receive a reimbursable meal. This approach helps ensure students receive a balanced meal with foods from all required components and can support efficiency in service and consistent nutrition intake. This meal service is often used in breakfast in the classroom, grab and go, after school snack, dinner, and Pre-K lunch.



A la Carte & Smart Snacks



All of the products sold in your schools have been specially formulated to meet the USDA Smart Snacks rule.

Our student nutrition program at the Intermediate, Jr. High, and High School will offer an la carte options at lunch. A la carte items follow the Smart Snacks in School Rule.

The Smart Snacks in School Rule, effective July 1, 2014, mandates that all foods and beverages sold to students outside regular meals meet specific nutrition standards. This applies to items from vending machines, school stores, snack carts, and fundraisers during school hours. The goal is to promote healthier snack choices, such as granola bars and fruit cups, enhancing students' well-being and academic performance. Notably, the rule excludes birthday treats from home, staff lounge vending machines, and concession stands at after-school events.

The following are a la carte options at your school:

Product and Pricing Guide			
Category	Item Description	Sweet Snack	
Beverage			Rice Krispies Treat Chocoate Chip
			Fresh Baked Cookies
			Fresh Baked Brownies
	Juice, Snapple, Orange Mango 11.5oz		Fruit Snack Motts Medley
	Juice, Snapple, Fruit Punch 11.5oz		Pop Tarts Frosted Fudge
	Water, Deja Blue 20oz		Grandma's Mini Chocolate Chip
	Bloom Pop Shirley Temple 12oz	Ice Cream	
	Bloom Pop Strawberry Cream 12oz		Strawberry Scooter Bar
	Polar Seltzer Raspberry Lime		Chocolate Scooter Bar
	Polar Seltzer Pink Lemonade		Cone IC Chocolate & Vanilla
	Switch Kiwi Berry		Cone IC Cookies & Cream
	Switch Fruit Punch		Sandwich IC Vanilla
	Switch Strawberry Watermelon		Sandwich IC Cookies n Cream
	Highlighted items served only at Jr.High and HS		Cone IC LF Crazy Cone
Salty Snack			Twister Cup Cotton Candy Yogurt
	Baked Cheetos	Energy Bars	
	Cheetos Fantastix Flamin Hot		Nature Valley Crunchy Granola Bar
	Doritos Cool Rnch		Nature Valley Granola Variety Pack
	Doritos Flamas		
	Doritos Nacho Cheese	Slushies	
	Popcorn, White Cheddar		Slushies

Questions? Contact a Student Nutrition Team Member.

Special Diets

Many students today must follow strict dietary restrictions, whether due to personal preferences, religious beliefs, or a choice to reduce or eliminate meat from their diets. We offer a wide variety of options each day to ensure they can find meals they enjoy, prepared in a way that aligns with their needs.

Supporting Students with Food Allergies

- **1 in 13 school-aged children** are affected by food allergies, making safety and inclusion a top priority.
- Aramark Student Nutrition is committed to creating a **safe, inclusive dining environment** through proactive planning and communication.
- We implement a **School Allergen Readiness Plan (SARP)** to support students with food allergies and keep school teams informed.
- Our food service managers are trained through **AllerTrain® K12**, a leading program focused on food allergy and gluten-free safety in K-12 settings.
- This training ensures **standardized allergen awareness** and equips our teams with clear protocols for ingredient questions and allergy-related incidents.

We are eager work closely with school staff and families to ensure every student feels safe, supported, and included at mealtime.

Collaboration is key.

We ask that school nurses regularly review and update 504 Plans and communicate any changes in student needs.



We also encourage direct conversations with parents or guardians of students with food allergies or special dietary requests. This partnership helps us plan safely and serve every student with confidence. Please have any parents speak with:

Jerry Weatherman – CNS Director 254-299-6810 (office) or 254-457-0234 (mobile)

Student Engagement

Food isn't just fuel—it's a way to connect, celebrate, and build community. As cafeterias and common areas become more than just places to eat, there's a big opportunity to turn mealtime into a moment that reflects our school's spirit. With a little creativity and a custom touch, we can tap into our district's vibe, turning breakfast and lunch into a morale booster, a culture builder, and a reason for students to look forward to the day.

Aramark Student Nutrition is offering **interactive events** that will help get students engaged and create memorable moments they will remember:



Program, Events & Activities – Fall Promotional Calendars

SEPTEMBER

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
31 Put up Ace & Healthy Bites (Try It, Healthy Bites, Beyond the Bites Poster, Ace & Friends)	01 Free Cookie Day Elementary & Primary	02 Discovery Day Elementary	03 Discovery Day Elementary	04 Birthday Luncheon Ace's Birthday
07	08	09 Wing Wednesday	10 Ace Visit Elementary	11 Eggroll Day
14 Pesto Chicken Flatbread	15 Pop-Up: Fish Tacos at High School, Jr High & Intermediate	16 Free Cookie Day Elementary & Primary	17	18
LTO 9/14-9/18	HMM 9/15-10/15	23 Wing Wednesday	24 Frito Lay Pop-Up High School	25
28	29 Pop-Up: Dumplings at Intermediate	30 Free Cookie Day Elementary & Primary Take down all posters & signage.	31 Celebrate Whole Grain Month	
Dumpling Day				

OCTOBER

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
01 Share a Taste	02 Celebrate all month! National Eat Better, Eat Together Month	03 Vegetarian Day	04 Discover Day Elementary & Primary	05 Discover Day Elementary & Primary
06 Crunch Burger	07 Wing Wednesday	08 Discover Day Elementary & Primary	09	10
LTO 10/05-10/09	13 Fall Break	14 Fall Break	15 Fall Break	16 Fall Break
19	20 Pop-Korean Tacos High School	21 Free Cookie Day Elementary & Primary Wing Wednesday	22 Pop-Up: Dr. Pepper at Jr High	23
26 Pumpkin Day	27	28	29 Take down all posters & signage on 10/30.	30 Costume Day for CNS Optional: Halloween

NOVEMBER

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
02 Put up Ace & Healthy Bites (Try It, Healthy Bites, Beyond the Bites Poster, Ace & Friends)	03 Parfaits at all locations	04 Wing Wednesday	05 Discover Day Elementary & Primary	06
09 Calzone	10 Free Cookie Day Elementary & Primary	11 Free Cookie Day Elementary & Primary	12	13
LTO 11/09-11/13	17 Can Food Drive for District Pantry	18 Wing Wednesday	19 Thanksgiving Meal - All Schools	20
23 Thanksgiving Break	24 Thanksgiving Break	25 Thanksgiving Break	26 Thanksgiving Break	27 Thanksgiving Break
30 Take down all posters & signage.	31 Good Nutrition Month			

DECEMBER

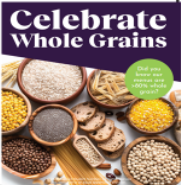
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
01 Put up Ace & Healthy Bites (Try It, Healthy Bites, Beyond the Bites Poster, Ace & Friends)	02 Wing Wednesday	03	04 Sweet!	05 Cookie Day
07 Soup	08	09 Discover Day Elementary & Primary	10	11
LTO 12/07-12/11	15	16 Hot Chocolate Jr High School, Jr High & Intermediate	17 Ace Visit: Primary Breakfast & Elementary Lunch	18
21 Christmas Break Begins	22 Christmas	23	24	25 Christmas Day
28	29	30	31 Take down all posters & signage.	32 Holiday Season

September Calendar

SEPTEMBER

MON TUE WED THU FRI

Put up Ace & Healthy Bites (Try It, Healthy Bites, Beyond the Bites Poster, Ace & Friends)

31	01 	02 Free Cookie Day Elementary & Primary 	03 Discovery Day Elementary	04  Ace's Birthday
07	08	09 Wing Wednesday 	10 Ace Visit Elementary 	11 Ace Visit Primary 
			Eggoji Day	
14 	15 	16 Free Cookie Day Elementary & Primary 	17	18
LTO 9/14-9/18	HHM 9/15-10/15			
21	22 Pop-Up: Fish Tacos at High School, Jr High & Intermediate	23 Wing Wednesday 	24 Frito Lay Pop-Up High School 	25
28	29 Pop-up: Dumplings at Intermediate 	30 Free Cookie Day Elementary & Primary Take down all posters & signage.		
	Dumpling Day		Whole Grain Month: celebrate all month long!	

October Calendar

OCTOBER

MON

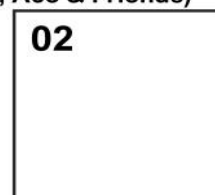
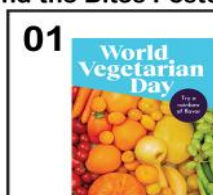
TUE

WED

THU

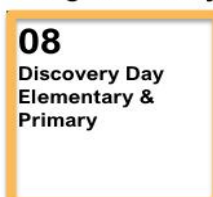
FRI

Put up Ace & Healthy Bites (Try It, Healthy Bites, Beyond the Bites Poster, Ace & Friends)

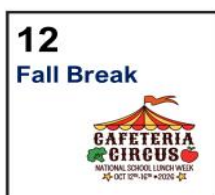


Celebrate all month! National Eat Better, Eat Together Month

Vegetarian Day

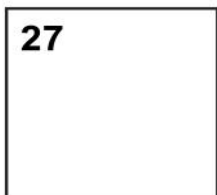
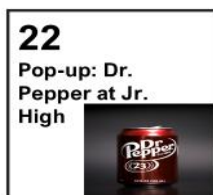
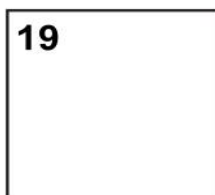


LTO 10/05-10/09



Celebrate National School Lunch Week 10/12-10/16

Remove HHM collateral



Pumpkin Day

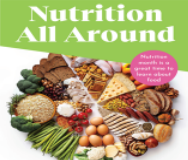
Optional: Halloween

November Calendar

NOVEMBER

MON TUE WED THU FRI

Put up Ace & Healthy Bites (Try It, Healthy Bites, Beyond the Bites Poster, Ace & Friends)

02 	03 Parfaits at all locations 	04 Wing Wednesday 	05 Discovery Day: Elementary & Primary	06
Parfait Day				
09 	10	11 Free Cookie Day: Elementary & Primary 	12	13
LTO 11/09-11/13				
16 Can Food Drive for District Pantry 	17 Pop-up: Bar-B-Q Pulled Pork Sandwich All Locations 	18 Wing Wednesday 	19 Thanksgiving Meal – All Schools 	20
23 Thanksgiving Break	24 Thanksgiving Break	25 Thanksgiving Break	26 Thanksgiving Break	27 Thanksgiving Break
				
Celebrate all month! Good Nutrition Month				
30 Take down all posters & signage.				

Friendsgiving Meal: November 19th

December Calendar

DECEMBER

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

Put up Ace & Healthy Bites (Try It, Healthy Bites, Beyond the Bites Poster, Ace & Friends)



01



02

Wing Wednesday



03

04



Celebrate all month! Root Vegetable & Exotic Fruit Month

Cookie Day



08

09

Discovery Day
Elementary &
Primary

10

11

LTO 12/07-12/11



15

16

Hot Chocolate
Bar: High School,
Jr. High &
Intermediate

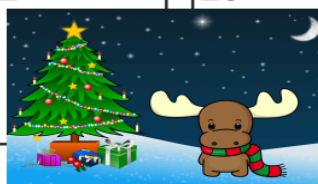
17

Ace Visit: Primary
Breakfast &
Elementary Lunch

18



22



23

24

25

Christmas
Day

28

29

30

31

Take down all
posters &
signage.



Holiday Meal: Date determined by district

ACE & FRIENDS

Elementary

Engaging students through nutrition education programming is a highlight of our efforts. Through ACE & Friends, Healthy Bites, and Beyond Bites, students are exposed to healthy habits and balanced nutrition in a fun and friendly way!



Planning a Field Trip, Testing Day, or Half Days?

It is important to ensure that every student has access to nutritious meals wherever they are! We can deliver fresh, nutritious meals, even when students can't come to the cafeteria..

When organizing a field trip, test day, or even a half day, please reach out to CNS to take care of your food needs!

Advance notice is required so that we can order all the ingredients, typically, at least 10 days in advance.

[Field Trip Request Form](#)

Fresh meals-zero stress! Let us take care of the details.

Please reach out to your campus CNS Manager or the CNS Office - Rosie Slater, Theresa Sealey, or Jerry Weatherman to book your event.



Questions? Contact a Student Nutrition Team Member.

Breakfast Carts or Stations



DID YOU KNOW?

On average, students who eat school breakfast have been shown to achieve 17.5% higher scores on standardized math tests and attend 1.5 more days of school per year.

Our Breakfast Cart Program simplifies the process for students to pick up a quick, nutritious meal on their way to class—eliminating the need for a cafeteria visit. These efficient options guarantee that every student can kick off their day with a healthy breakfast. Your café team will set up carts in convenient locations throughout the school, allowing students to easily grab a delicious meal as they head to class.

Quick & Convenient for Learning



Questions? Contact a Student Nutrition Team Member.

Breakfast in the Classroom



Start every student's day with the nutrition they need—right in the classroom! Our Breakfast in the Classroom program brings healthy, ready-to-eat meals directly to students at the start of the school day, making mornings smoother and learning stronger.

01 **Convenient** - No cafeteria lines or rushed mornings. Breakfast is delivered and eaten in the classroom.

02 **Inclusive** - Every student has the opportunity to eat, helping to reduce stigma and hunger.

03 **Academic Boost** - Well-fed students are more focused, alert, and ready to learn.

04 **Time-Saving** - Breakfast fits easily into morning routines without taking time from learning.

Join us in building healthy habits and better learning—one classroom at a time! Please reach out if you are interested in implementing this program at your campus! Questions can be directed to Jerry Weatherman 254-299-6810 (office) or 254-457-0234 (mobile)

Questions? Contact a Student Nutrition Team Member.



Classroom Celebrations

Whether a fun-filled Field Day or a celebratory class pizza party is in the plans, our dedicated team is ready to deliver the food. Let us be your partner in delivering unforgettable experiences for your students. Allow us to keep your costs down through our vendor partnerships, provide quality food, and minimize event logistics making it easier for your staff to manage.

We have the ability to provide a wide range of product offerings, including but not limited to pizza, hamburgers, corn dogs, and bar-b-q sandwiches, while staying within the TDA guidelines for student nutrition.

**Please reach out to your campus CNS manager
to begin planning your next event.**

Questions? Contact a Student Nutrition Team Member.

Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program



A USDA study found that FFVP students eat more fruits and vegetables than students who do not participate in the program.

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) provides a variety of free, fresh fruit and vegetable snacks to children at eligible schools. Schools deliver FFVP snacks along with bite-sized nutrition lessons. This encourages children to try new foods, learn about seasonal produce, and set healthy eating habits to last a lifetime.*

La Vega ISD has three participating schools –

Primary, Elementary, and Intermediate.

THE FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PROGRAM

Your Student Nutrition team will reach out to schedule a time to meet with you to discuss details.



In the meantime, can you think of a good time during the school day where we can serve your students some delicious fresh fruits and vegetables?

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/ffvp/fresh-fruit-and-vegetable-program>

Questions? Contact a Student Nutrition Team Member.

AFTER SCHOOL SNACKS & DINNER

“The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal program that provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children and adults who are enrolled for care at participating childcare centers, day care homes, and adult day care centers. CACFP also provides reimbursements for meals served to children and youth participating in afterschool care programs, children residing in emergency shelters, and adults over the age of 60 or living with a disability and enrolled in day care facilities.”

Since your school offers after-school care, your school is registered to serve snacks/meals after school. We would love to feed as many children as possible, and with that, any child in an after-school program is eligible for snack/supper.

Menus for snack and supper will be sent to the after-school care providers and posted on the district website.

Questions? Contact a Student Nutrition Team Member.

Food Fundraisers - What You Need To Know

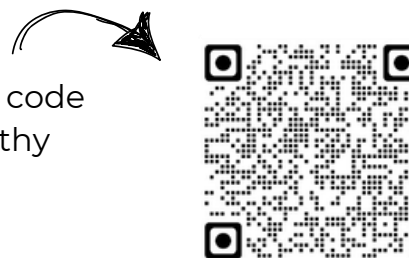
Fundraisers serve as a great tool to generate donations for future school activities or events for students, and we're here to help!

Guidelines for Fundraising Within Federal Regulations

Our department participates in federally funded programs, which necessitate that the district adhere to both state and federal regulations concerning food, beverages, and wellness to qualify for meal reimbursements.

Suggestions for Your Next Fundraiser:

Use the Smart Snack Calculator by scanning this QR code to determine if a food or beverage qualifies as a healthy meal during the school day.



It is essential to maintain records for any food or beverage-related fundraisers held while school is in session. To comply, we will require a copy of the nutritional label and Smart Snacks approval for items, in case state nutrition auditors request a review.

Note that there are certain exemptions for fundraisers, including:

- Foods and beverages that are pre-ordered and not meant for immediate consumption (e.g., pizza kits, cookie dough).
- Sales of food or beverages outside of school hours.
- Non-food related products offered for fundraising

Questions? Contact a Student Nutrition Team Member.