



DANNON INSTITUTE®

Nutrition for Health

GOOD NUTRITION CONVENIENTLY

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In December 2010, President Barack Obama signed S. 3307, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act into law. This act, also known as the 2010 Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act, changes the certification, financial reimbursement, and pricing structure for school meals. It also calls for the gradual phasing in of new nutrition guidelines. At the request of USDA, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) created a framework for school meals that calls for increasing vegetables, fruits, and whole grains while managing calories, saturated fat, and sodium. In February 2010, school food service providers Sodexo, ARAMARK, and Chartwells pledged to meet the IOM guidelines.

Convenience foods, namely, foods that are packaged or pre-prepared, offer school districts a cost-effective solution for serving students healthful foods. Here are the recommendations, along with a sampling of foods to consider for your district:

Provide a daily average of 1.8-2.6 oz equivalents of grain over a five-day week. At least half the grains offered during the school week must be whole grains.

- Oatmeal packets
- Single-serve ready-to-eat cereals
- Frozen whole grain pancakes, waffles, and French toast
- Whole grain and white whole wheat breads, rolls, muffins, and biscuits
- Whole grain pizza
- Whole grain pasta
- Whole grain granola and energy bars

Serve 3/4 to 1 cup of vegetables plus 1/2 to 1 cup of fruit each day. Serve at least 1/2 cup per week each of dark green vegetables, orange vegetables, and legumes (beans and peas).

- Packaged lettuce mixes
- Frozen vegetables
- Packaged fruit cups
- Applesauce
- Pre-cut carrots
- Reduced-sodium canned vegetables and vegetable juice
- Packaged dried fruit

Serve a daily average of 1.6-2.4 oz equivalents meat over a five-day week.

- Beef or pork patties and strips
- Chili
- Breaded fish wedges
- Low-fat or fat-free yogurt*
- Chicken strips, patties and cutlets
- Pasta with meat sauce
- Meatless entrées

**Yogurt is a meat equivalent in the School Meals program*

Ms. Hermann specializes in health communications for parents and children. Her articles have appeared in major health, women's, and parenting magazines and websites. She has worked with the Dannon Institute for the last ten years.

References

Institute of Medicine. Report Brief. School Meals: Building Blocks for Healthy Children. Available at <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2009/School-Meals-Building-Blocks-for-Healthy-Children/Report-Brief-School-Meals.aspx>. Accessed July 11, 2011

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