



NEWTRITION!

UPDATES ON NUTRITION AT YOUR SCHOOL

APRIL 2012

Federal Government Changes School Meals

What New School Food Regulations Mean to Parents & Students

The United States Department of Agriculture announced the first major changes to the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs in 15 years. Implementation of most changes in the National School Lunch Program will begin school year 2012-13. In the School Breakfast Program, changes will be implemented gradually beginning school year 2013-14.



The new regulations closely align with HealthierUS School Challenge guidelines to incorporate more varieties of fruit, dark green and orange vegetables, dry beans and/or peas, whole grains and low-fat and fat-free milk. Opaa! menus are currently designed to meet the meal component of HealthierUS School Challenge so students are already enjoying a variety of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

The new regulations identify five meal components - Meat/Meat Alternates (meat alternates include cheese and certain high-protein vegetables), Grains, Fruits, Vegetables, and Milk.

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Highlights of changes to your lunch program:

- **Self-service of both fruits and vegetables.** Students can choose fruits and vegetables that they want and enjoy the foods they choose. The regulations require that at least ½ cup of either a fruit or vegetable is selected each day.
- **Fruit** – A variety of fruit choices will be offered daily.
- **Vegetables** – Increased variety of vegetables, including subgroups of dark green, red/orange, beans/peas, starchy vegetables & other vegetables will be offered.
- **Meat/Meat Alternate** – New daily minimums and weekly minimums and maximums have been established.
- **Whole Grains** – At least half of the grains offered will be whole grain rich. Starting school year 2014-15, all grains offered will be whole grain rich.
- **Milk** – Unflavored milk can be either 1% low-fat or fat-free. All flavored milk must be fat-free.

Regulations have also been established for calories, fat, trans fat and sodium. The reduction in calories will effectively eliminate our flexibility to offer baked desserts, however; Opaa! will continue to offer our freshly baked whole grain rich breads and hot rolls. Sodium targets will be more gradual, phasing in over a 10-year period of time.

Opaa!'s Wellness and Nutrition Team ensures that menus reflect good menu planning principles, such as serving a variety of healthier foods that look good, taste good and appeal to the students we serve, while keeping your school district in compliance with all USDA regulations.