

## Q&A from the Updated CACFP Meal Pattern Webinar

**Q: We can replace a fruit with a vegetable at lunch. Can we do the same at supper?**

**A:** Yes, replacing a fruit with a vegetable is also allowable at supper. If you do replace the fruit component with a second vegetable, the serving size must be the same as the fruit it is replacing. The two vegetables you are serving must also be different vegetables. Food served at supper may not be claimed under the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program. Please contact a [Community Nutrition](#) team member about claiming supper meals.

**Q: Are there sample breakfast menus available on the website since we cannot offer breakfast bars or cereal bars?**

**A:** The Community Nutrition team has a [six week sample menu](#) for this updated CACFP meal pattern, which includes many great breakfast options. Please be aware that this menu was designed for settings outside of schools, so some menu adjustments may be necessary, depending on your operation.

**Q: Does the person feeding the infant record the infant meal?**

**A:** Yes, since infants are typically fed on demand the person feeding the infant should be the one to record the foods fed to the infant right after feeding. Each infant will have their own infant record.

**Q: Will the slides be available on the website?**

**A:** Yes you may access the slides on our [Infants and Preschool in NSLP and SBP](#) webpage.

**Q: What is a vegetable subgroup?**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) meal patterns for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program include five subgroups of vegetables that count toward the daily and weekly vegetable requirements. There are no requirements to serve specific amounts from these subgroups under the updated CACFP meal pattern, but serving a variety of colorful vegetables is certainly encouraged. There is a [vegetable subgroup handout](#) available to assist you in planning a variety of vegetables into your menus.

**Q: Could you offer two 4 ounce yogurts if you cannot get a 6 ounce yogurt?**

**A:** The amounts listed on the meal pattern tables for both breakfast and lunch are the minimum servings that need to be offered to the corresponding age group. For example, preschoolers ages 3 to 5 must be offered at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup or 6 ounces of yogurt to credit toward the full meat/meat alternate component at lunch. Therefore, it would be possible to offer them two 4 ounce yogurts. Any yogurt served, regardless of serving size, must be below the sugar limit for that particular serving size. Alternatively, you could also choose to offer one 4 ounce yogurt with another meat/meat alternate, such as 0.5 ounce equivalents of lean meat or cheese, to satisfy the entire  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  ounce equivalent minimum meat/meat alternate requirement.

**Q: If we serve breakfast in the classroom to 4K, can they only have white milk and not flavored?**

**A:** Yes. All milk that is offered to children ages 1 to 5 and not yet in kindergarten as part of a reimbursable meal at both breakfast and lunch must be unflavored. Research indicates that flavor and food preferences are shaped early in life and the more sweet foods children consume, the more they prefer sweet foods. It is important to establish in young children the habit of drinking unflavored milk as they develop their taste preferences.

**Q: What is OVS?**

**A:** OVS stands for Offer Versus Serve. This is a meal service option that allows students to decline some parts of the offered meal, while still taking a reimbursable meal. This meal service style is not allowable under the updated CACFP meal pattern. If SFAs would like to give preschool/pre-kindergarten students the option to select the foods they serve themselves, family style meal service is allowable and encouraged. Please visit the [Infants and Preschool in NSLP and SBP](#) for more information on family style meals.

**Q: Our 4k has always been separate and not with daycare, does this mean they cannot have chocolate milk?**

**A:** Correct. All milk that is offered as part of a reimbursable meal for children ages 1 to 5 and not yet in kindergarten must be unflavored. It does not matter if they are classified as “4k” or “day care” as long as they are ages 1 to 5 and not yet in kindergarten.

**Q: Are we able to credit chicken nuggets and mini corn dogs towards both the meat/meat alternate and grains components? Or would we need to add a ½ slice of bread?**

**A:** Combination foods like chicken nuggets and mini corn dogs may credit toward both the meat/meat alternate component and the grains component, just as they do under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. You need to have either a Child Nutrition (CN) label or a Product Formulation Statement to determine how these combination foods will credit toward each component.

**Q: What if a student drops the entire bowl of fruit while self-serving in family style; are those meals not reimbursable since they are missing a component?**

**A:** Family style meal service requires that enough food should be placed on the table to provide at least the minimum serving size of each required food component for each child and any supervising adults who wish to eat with the children. For example, if there are 3 children between the ages of 3 and 5 years and 1 supervising adult seated at a table for lunch, then at least ¼ cup of sliced apples must be available for each person. Therefore, a total of 1 cup of apple slices must be served in the communal plate or bowl that is placed on the table. Since only the minimum serving size of each component is required to be on the table there should be additional servings of each component available in the classroom in case a child requests more. Having additional food available will help prevent the situation described in the question above.

**Q: Are muffins, flavored breads (banana and zucchini breads), and graham crackers disallowed?**

**A:** Muffins, flavored breads, and sweet crackers are not considered grain-based desserts and are creditable towards the grains component under the updated CACFP meal pattern. When serving these items, however, please be mindful of the amount of added sugars they contain. As a best practice, limit the frequency these items are served to encourage children to think of them as a special treat and not something they should be eating every day. This is a healthy change that will have a positive impact on the participants you are serving. When you do serve these items, purchase or prepare them with less added sugar or incorporate fruits, vegetables, oats, or seeds into muffins and quick breads. For more information on grain-based desserts, see [CACFP 16-2017: Grain-Based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

**Q: If serving 3 and 4 year olds at the same time as 5 year olds in kindergarten, does the updated meal pattern apply?**

**A:** Schools that serve meals to preschoolers and K-5 students in the same service area at the same time may choose to follow the grade-appropriate meal patterns for each grade group, or serve the K-5 or K-8 meal pattern. Offer versus serve would also be allowable in situations in which preschool students are served meals at the same place and same time.

USDA is providing this flexibility, however, they strongly encourage schools to find ways to serve grade-appropriate meals to preschoolers and K-5 students to best address their nutritional needs. Since the younger children enrolled in pre-k programs have different nutritional needs than school aged children, the USDA strongly encourages SFAs to explore meal service options to avoid co-mingled situations. For example, offering breakfast in the classroom and staggering meal service times so children come down by grade allows for children to be served the appropriate meal pattern based on their age and development. Using family style meal service in the classroom would also be an option. For more information on how to implement the updated CACFP Meal Pattern when serving multiple age groups please see the [USDA Memo SP-37-2017: Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers](#)

**Q: We have one 4k group that comes to lunch early. The second 4k group comes later with kindergarten and first grade. Can the second 4k group have the K-5 meal pattern?**

**A:** In this situation the 4k students that come to lunch early would be served the updated CACFP meal pattern and the second group which comes down later could be served the K-5 meal pattern. Best practice would be to serve the second group of 4k students before the kindergarten and first grade students so they can be served the updated CACFP meal pattern as it is more in line with their nutritional needs.

**Q: We will be serving 4k with all our other students for breakfast; how do we separate the grade groups? Or is the K-5 meal pattern able to be served to 4k?**

**A:** As stated above, schools that serve meals to preschoolers and K-5 students in the same service area at the same time may choose to follow the grade-appropriate meal patterns for

each grade group, or serve the K-5 or K-8 meal pattern. In the case of breakfast where children of multiple grades are entering the cafeteria at the same time and served in the same place, all children can be served the K-5 or K-8 meal pattern.

**Q: Are the meal pattern requirements on the website?**

**A:** Yes, you can find the meal requirements on the School Nutrition Team's [Infants and Preschool in NSLP and SBP](#) webpage.

**Q: Is there a rule regarding not serving the same food two days in a row, like at breakfast for example?**

**A:** There is no specific rule against serving a food multiple days in a row. However, this is not encouraged. Serving students a variety of foods from the required meal pattern components provides them with a variety of nutrients and helps them become more accepting of more foods. You may reference the Community Nutrition team's [six week sample menu](#) for menu ideas.

**Q: Are there certificates for this training?**

**A:** There are no certificates for this webinar but you can count the webinar toward 1 hour of the training time needed to meet your Professional Standards training requirement. The training code to use is 1100-USDA Nutrition Requirements.