



Implementation of the New School Meal Nutrition Standards

School nutrition professionals have been offering more whole grains, fruits, vegetables and other healthy options in the cafeteria - long before the first requirements under the new federal nutrition standards took effect in 2012. School Nutrition Association (SNA) is proud of this progress and supports most of the new standards (*see requirements shaded in green below*).

New Requirements (SNA supports requirements shaded in green and is requesting flexibility on requirements shaded in red)	Implementation (School Year) for National School Lunch Program (L) and School Breakfast Program (B)				
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2017/18	2022/23
Fruits/Vegetables Component					
<input type="checkbox"/> Offer both fruit and vegetable daily	L				
<input type="checkbox"/> Fruit/Vegetable quantity increase	L		B		
<input type="checkbox"/> Offer vegetables subgroups weekly (dark green, red/orange, legumes)	L				
<input type="checkbox"/> Students must take a fruit or vegetable with each reimbursable meal (1/2 cup min)	L		B		
Grains Component					
<input type="checkbox"/> Half of grains must be whole grain-rich	L	B			
<input type="checkbox"/> All grains must be whole-grain rich			L, B		
Dietary Specifications (to be met on average over a week)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Calorie ranges	L	B			
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturated fat limit (no change)	L, B				
<input type="checkbox"/> Zero grams of trans fat per portion	L	B			
<input type="checkbox"/> Sodium Targets					
o Target 1			L, B		
o Target 2				L, B	
o Final target					L, B
Milk Component					
<input type="checkbox"/> Offer only fat-free (unflavored or flavored) and low-fat (unflavored) milk	L, B				
<i>New requirements effective July 1, 2014: Every grain offered must be whole grain rich; meals must meet the first of three sodium reduction targets; at breakfast, schools must offer a full cup of fruit or vegetable and students must take a half cup. Schools must also meet the Smart Snacks in School rule, which will limit the portion size, calories, fat, sugar and sodium in items sold in vending machines, snack bars and a la carte lines.</i>					

However, under the new mandates, more than one million fewer students choose school lunch each day, thwarting the goal of promoting healthier diets for all students. Declining participation also reduces revenue for school meal programs already struggling with the higher cost of meeting the new standards.

SNA is requesting commonsense flexibility under the new standards to help students adjust to these changes, increase the number of children participating in the school lunch program and keep school meal programs financially stable. Specifically, SNA is asking to:

- Retain the 2012 requirement that half of grains offered with school meals be whole grain rich rather than mandating that all grains be whole grain rich;
- Retain the Target 1 sodium levels, and suspend implementation of further reductions unless and until scientific research supports such limits for children;
- Offer, but don't require that students take a fruit or vegetable as part of a reimbursable meal, as this requirement has increased food waste; and
- Allow healthy foods served with school meals to be sold at any time as an *a la carte* item.