Offer Versus Serve (OVS) Meal or No Meal?

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Content

- Key concepts
- OVS overview
- OVS Quiz Show (for illustration only)
What is OVS?

• OVS is a strategy that:
  • Allows students to decline some food components or food items, and select foods they intend to eat, and
  • Reduces food waste and its impact on school food cost.

• It’s mandatory in the NSLP for high schools only.
• It’s optional in SBP (all grades) and NSLP-Seamless Summer Option.
• Not available for snack service
Key OVS Concepts

• **Food components** *(food groups)*

• Schools are to **offer** the required food components and amounts daily/weekly

• 5 food components at lunch: Milk, Fruit, Vegetable, Grain, and Meat/Meat Alternate (M/MA)

• 3 food components at breakfast: Milk, Fruit, Grain
Key OVS Concepts

• **Food item** (*individual foods*)
  • Students may choose to take one or more food items (*foods*) from each component.

EXAMPLE 1:
Choose 1 item (grain) – bagel, cold cereal, or muffin

EXAMPLE 2:
Choose up to 3 items (fruit) – ½ cup peaches, ½ cup apple juice, fresh orange, fresh apple
OVS Success for SFAs

• Offer all the right food in all the right quantities;

• Train cashiers daily about the reimbursable meal options;

• Use signs to guide students; and

• Have options at the point-of-service to complete the meal.
  • If a student fails to select a reimbursable meal, the food items selected must be priced a la carte.
2 Easy Steps to a Healthy Plate

1.) Take 3 or 4 food COLORS to make a full breakfast

2.) At least one must be a Fruit (1)

Choose at least 3 ITEMS to BUILD YOUR BREAKFAST!

- Grains
- Meat or Meat Alternate
- Milk
- Fruits
- Vegetables

Items may include all colors, but each breakfast tray MUST include a fruit or vegetable.
• Under OVS, students can select all components offered, or may decline components if desired.

• To have a reimbursable meal, students must select:
  • 3 food components at lunch; 3 food items at breakfast, including: ½ cup of fruits and/or vegetables at each meal

• Students are allowed to select the full serving of fruits or vegetables, if desired.
• Except for the fruits/vegetables, all food components or food items selected are to be the full planned serving.

• Meals selected by students with less than the required 3 components/items, or without ½ cup fruits and/or vegetables are not reimbursable:
  • Schools may charge a la carte prices, or allow students to take the meal for free (cannot claim it for reimbursement).
  • Notify households about such policy.

• OVS does not affect the price a student pays for the meal.
OVS in School Breakfast Program (SBP)
OVS in SBP

- **School** are to offer 3 food components daily
  - Milk
  - Fruits
  - Grains

- **Students** are to select at least 3 food items including:
  - ½ cup of fruits (or vegetables as substitute)

- **Offer at least 4 food items** representing the above food components
Milk Component

• Offer 1 cup of milk daily (fat-free or low-fat; unflavored or flavored):
  • Milk variety (two choices)
  • Unflavored milk is always available

• Students may decline milk under OVS.

• Water or other beverages may not be offered in place of milk.
  • Specific non-dairy substitutes may be offered to students with special dietary needs.
Fruit Component

- Fresh, canned, frozen, dried fruit allowed
- 100% juice allowed (no more than half of the weekly fruit)
- Fruits in smoothies can be credited.
- Flexibility: Any vegetable may be offered in place of fruit at breakfast through end of Sept 2019.
  - Thereafter, 2 cups must be from dark green, red/orange, legumes, or from “other vegetables” subgroup on the menu.
- Students are to select at least ½ cup of fruits (vegetables) daily under OVS.
Grains Component

• Minimum daily and weekly requirements

• **Half of the weekly grains offered must be whole grain-rich** (i.e., 50% whole grains).
  • Remaining weekly grains are to be enriched
  • No need for exemption requests beginning SY 2019-2020

• A grains item selected under OVS are to be at least 1 oz. eq.

• Students may decline grains under OVS.
Menu Planner’s Discretion: Grains in SBP/OVS

• Menu planners may choose to:
  • Count a 2 oz. eq. muffin as 1 or 2 food items.
    • 1.5 oz. eq. of cornbread would count as 1 grain item
  • Allow students to select duplicate grain items (e.g., two pieces of toast) and count them as 2 food items
SBP Game:
Meal or No Meal?
Breakfast Offered

5 food items

Cereal: 1 oz. eq. grain
Toast: 1 oz. eq. grain
Small Apple: ½ cup fruit
Fruit Cocktail: ½ cup fruit
Milk: 1 cup
Meal or No Meal?

Student selection

Fruit: ½ cup apple
Milk: 1 cup
Grains: 1 oz. eq.
Yes!

Student selected 3 of 5 food items, including ½ cup of fruit
4 food items

Cereal: 1.0 oz eq grain
Toast: 1.0 oz eq. grain
Milk: 1 cup
Banana: 1 cup fruit
Meal or No Meal?

Student selection

Cereal: 1 oz. eq. grain
Banana: 1 cup of fruit
Not a Reimbursable Meal

Only two items selected

Student are to select a third food item
Breakfast Offered

4 food items

Breakfast Bar: 2 oz. eq. grain (counts as 2 items)
Orange: ½ cup fruit
Milk: 1 cup
School are to offer 1 cup of fruit at breakfast

Breakfast Bar: 2 oz. eq. grain (counts as 2 items)
Orange: ½ cup
Milk: 1 cup
Meat/Meat Alternates (M/MA) in Place of Grains at Breakfast

• M/MA may be offered in place of grains and counts as an item for OVS.
  • School are to also offer 1 oz. eq. grains daily.
  • Whole grain-rich requirement applies to actual grains offered.

• M/MA offered as an “extra item” (in addition to the reimbursable meal) does not count as an item for OVS.
  • Count the “extra item” toward the dietary specifications
Breakfast Offered

4 food items

- Whole grain toast: 1 oz. eq. grain
- Scrambled egg: 1 oz. eq. M/MA (counts as grains)
- Large apple: 1 cup fruit
- Milk: 1 cup
Meal or No Meal?

Student selection

Toast: 1 oz. eq. grains
Scrambled egg: 1 oz. eq. MMA (counts as grains)
Milk: 1 cup
½ cup of fruit is missing

What are the cashier’s options at the point-of-service?
4 food items + 1 extra item

Whole grain toast: 1 oz. eq. grains
Large boiled egg: 2 oz. eq. M/MA (extra item)
Orange juice: ½ cup fruit
Large apple: 1 cup fruit
Milk: 1 cup
Meal or No Meal?

Student selection

Toast: 1 oz. eq. grain
Large boiled egg: 2 oz. eq. M/MA (extra item)
Milk: 1 cup
Fruit is missing; extra item does not count

- The student did not select the fruit, AND
- The student selected the extra item (egg), which does not count as a food item in OVS.
5 items offered

2 Toasts: 2 oz. eq. grain (two food items)
Orange juice: ½ cup fruit
Large apple: 1 cup fruit
Milk: 1 cup
Meal or No Meal?

**Student selection**

2 Toasts: 2 oz. eq. grain
Juice: ½ cup fruit
Reimbursable Meal

3 items selected, including fruit

2 Toasts: 2 oz. eq. grain in total
Juice: ½ cup fruit
Grain & M/MA Combination Items in SBP/OVS

• If counting the M/MA as grain, the combo may count as two grains items.
  • Milk and fruit are to also be offered

• If not counting the M/MA, the combo counts as one grain item.
  • Three additional food items are to be offered
Breakfast Offering

4 food items offered

Muffin: 1 oz. eq. grain
Egg patty: 1 oz. eq. M/MA counts towards weekly grains requirement
Large Apple: 1 cup fruit
Milk: 1 cup
Meal or No Meal?

Student selection

Muffin: 1 oz. eq. grain
Egg patty: 1 oz. eq. M/MA counts towards weekly grains requirement
Apple: 1 cup fruit
3 items selected, including fruit

Muffin: 1 oz. eq. grain
Egg patty: 1 oz. eq. M/MA counts towards weekly grains requirement
Large apple: 1 cup fruit
Meal or No Meal?

Student selection

Large apple: 1 cup fruit
Milk: 1 cup
Not a Reimbursable Meal

Only 2 items selected

Student needs to select the egg sandwich to have at least 3 items
Breakfast Offered

4 food items offered

Granola: 2 oz. eq. grain
Yogurt: ½ cup M/MA (counts as 3 oz. eq. grains)
Strawberries: ½ cup fruit
Blueberries: ½ cup fruit
Milk: 1 cup
Meal or No Meal?

**Student selection**

Yogurt: ½ cup  
Strawberries: ½ cup  
Blueberries: ½ cup  
Milk: 1 cup
Reimbursable Meal

3 items selected, including fruit

Yogurt: ½ cup M/MA counts as grains
Strawberries: ½ cup
Blueberries: ½ cup
Milk: 1 cup
Resources
Offer versus Serve Breakfast Posters

Elementary School

Middle/High School

**COMING SOON!**
Offer versus Serve Tip Sheets

**Offer versus Serve (OVS)**

**Tip Sheet for School Food Service Managers**

**School Breakfast Program**

**What is Offer versus Serve (OVS)?**

The goal of OVS is to reduce food waste while allowing students to choose the foods they want to eat. Everyone plays a role. When students and café staff understand OVS, breakfast lines move smoothly, allowing students to make the most of meal time and enjoy the wholesome and appealing foods they are served. It also helps reduce overall food costs.

Under OVS at breakfast, schools must offer at least four food items from the three required food components: fruit, grains, and fluid milk.

- A food component is one of three required food groups in a reimbursable breakfast. These are: fruits, grains, and fluid milk.
- A food item is a specific food offered within the three food components; for example, 2 slices of whole-grain-bread, 1 cup of grapes, and 1 cup of milk. This meal meets OVS breakfast requirements because three food components and four food items are offered.

Students must select at least three of the four offered food items under OVS at breakfast, including at least 1 cup of fruit and/or vegetable. Please note, OVS is optional at breakfast for all grade levels.

**Required Components at Breakfast**

- **Fruit:** 1 cup
- **Grains:** 1 ounce equivalent (oz eq)
- **Fluid Milk:** 1 cup

**Optional Components at Breakfast**

- **Vegetables:** May be offered as a substitute for fruits.
- **Meats/Meat Alternatives:** A meat/meat alternative may be served to meet the weekly grain requirement, as long as a 1 oz eq minimum of grains is offered daily.
- **A meat/meat alternate may also be offered as an “extra” food (not credited toward meal pattern requirement) if a reimbursable meal is selected.”

*Water does not count as one of the three required food components and cannot be served as a substitute for milk.

**National School Lunch Program**

**What is OVS?**

The goal of OVS is to reduce food waste and allow students to choose the foods they want to eat. Everyone plays a role. When students and cafeterias staff understand OVS, lunch lines move smoothly, allowing students to make the most of lunch time and enjoy the wholesome and appealing foods they are served. It also helps reduce overall food costs.

Schools must offer all five food components in at least the minimum required quantities:

- A food component is one of five required food groups in reimbursable lunches. These are: meats/meat alternates, fruits, vegetables, and fluid milk.

Student items is a specific food offered within the five food components. For example, spaghetti whole grain-rich pasta with tomato sauce is now food item that contains a grain and a vegetable component.

Under OVS, students may select three meat components to ensure they get the nutritional benefits of a meal. OVS is required for lunches served in high schools, but is optional in middle and elementary schools. OVS is not required for meals offered as part of field trips or for any other meals served away from the school campus.

The required five food components must be offered for school lunch. Students must select at least three of the five required food components, including at least 1 cup of fruit and/or vegetable, to have a reimbursable lunch. See the Required Food Components Table for a list of required food components and their minimum quantities that must be offered. Meats/meat alternatives and grains are measured in ounce equivalents (oz eq) and vegetable equivalents to ensure the amount of food patent that is served is equal to one serving.

**Is it Reimbursable?**

Use this simple checklist to determine if student lunches are reimbursable under OVS:

- Does the meal offered to students include the minimum required amounts of vegetables, fruits, grains, meats/meat alternatives, and fluid milk?
- Does the meal selected by the student contain at least three components, including at least 1 cup fruit and/or vegetable?

If the answer to either of these questions is yes, then the school lunch is reimbursable under OVS.

*Water does not count as one of the three required food components and cannot be served as a substitute for milk.*
Technical Assistance Resources from USDA

• Offer Versus Serve Guidance (SY 2015-16)

Available online
Questions?