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.
OVS Signage: Examples

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), Meat/MA (1), Grain (1), Milk (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.
OVS Overview

• Under OVS, students can select all components offered, or may decline components if desired.

• To have a reimbursable meal, students are to 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.
OVS Overview

• 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

• **Offer at least 4 food items** representing the above food components

• **Students** are to **select at least 3 food items** including:
  - ½ cup of fruits (or vegetables as substitute)
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 must be enriched
  • No need for exemption requests beginning SY 2019-2020

• A grains item selected under OVS is 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
Breakfast Offered

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 must 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 must offer 1 cup of fruit at breakfast

Breakfast Bar: 2 oz. eq. grain (counts as 2 items)
Orange: ½ cup
Milk: 1 cup
• 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
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
3 items selected, including fruit

2 Toasts: 2 oz. eq. grain in total
Juice: ½ cup fruit
• 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
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
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
OVS in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)
OVS in NSLP

• Schools are to **offer 5 food components** daily
  • Milk
  • Fruits
  • Vegetables
  • Grains
  • M/MA

• Students are to **select at least 3 food components**, including:
  • ½ cup of fruit and/or vegetable
• Offer 1 cup of milk daily (fat-free or low-fat; unflavored or flavored)
  • Milk variety (offer two choices)
  • Unflavored milk is always available
  • Flavored milk is optional

• 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
Vegetable Component in NSLP

• Daily minimum requirement
• Weekly variety requirement (5 subgroups):
  • Red/orange (carrots, tomatoes, sweet potatoes)
  • Dark green (romaine, spinach, broccoli)
  • Legumes/beans/peas (kidney beans, chickpeas)
  • Starchy (white potatoes, corn, green peas)
  • “Other” (cucumbers, celery, mushrooms)
• Schools are to offer the amount specified in the meal pattern for each group.
• Students are to select at least ½ cup of vegetables (or fruit) under OVS
Fruit Component in NSLP

• Daily and weekly requirement
• School are to offer the amount of fruit specified in the meal pattern for each group.
• Students are to select at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable) under OVS.
Grains in the NSLP

• Daily and weekly minimum requirement

• May be offered as one item (rice), or as two or more different menu items (e.g., breading on a main dish item and a bun).

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

• Students may decline grains under OVS.
Meat/Meat Alternate in NSLP

• Daily and weekly minimum requirements
• May be offered as one item, bundled, or in a mixed dish.
• Operators may offer a variety of options:
  • Lean meats and poultry, eggs, fish
  • Low-fat cheeses, yogurt, beans, nuts and seeds
  • Tofu and soy yogurt
  • Shelf-stable, dried and semi-dried meat, poultry and seafood snacks
• Students may decline M/MA under OVS.
Mixed Component Dishes in NSLP

• Inform point-of-sale staff how a mixed dish contributes to the reimbursable meal.
• Use signs to help students select a mixed dish as part of a reimbursable meal.
• Use Child Nutrition labels, Product Formulation Statements and recipe component calculations to identify component contributions.
NSLP Game: Meal or No Meal?
Sample Lunch Offered (Grades K-5)

5 food items offered

Bun (Whole Grain-Rich): 1 oz. eq. grain
Breaded Chicken Nuggets: 1 oz. eq. meat plus .25 oz. eq. grain
Peaches or Grapes: ½ cup fruit each
Raw Vegetables: ¾ cup fruit
Milk: 1 cup
Meal or No Meal?

Student selection

Breaded Chicken Nuggets: 1 oz. eq. meat plus .25 oz. eq. grain
Grapes: ½ cup fruit
Milk: 1 cup
3 items selected, including ½ cup fruit

Breaded Chicken Nuggets: 1 oz. eq. meat plus .25 oz. eq. grain
Grapes: ½ cup fruit
Milk: 1 cup
Sample Lunch Offered (Grades 6-8)

5 food items offered

Brown Rice: 1 oz. eq. grain
Orange: ½ cup fruit
Cooked Carrots: ¾ cup vegetables
Enchilada: 2 oz. eq. M/MA and 1 oz. eq. grain.
Milk: 1 cup
Meal or No Meal?

Student selection

Cooked Carrots: 3/4 cup vegetables
Enchilada: 2 oz. eq. M/MA and 1 oz. eq. grain
3 components, 3/4 cup vegetables selected

Cooked Carrots: 3/4 cup vegetables
Enchilada: 2 oz. eq. M/MA and 1 oz. eq. grain.
Milk: 1 cup
3 Entrée Choices

Spaghetti with meat sauce: 2 oz. eq. meat; 2 oz. eq. grain
Or
Hummus/Carrots/Bun Combo: 2 oz. eq. MA; 1 cup vegetables; 2 oz. eq. grain
Or
Cheese/Veggie Pizza: 2 oz. eq. grain; 2 oz. eq. MA; ¼ cup vegetable
Meal or No Meal?

Student selection

Spaghetti with meat sauce: 2 oz. eq. meat and 2 oz. eq. grain and 1 cup milk
Not a Reimbursable Meal

½ cup of vegetables missing

Spaghetti with meat sauce: 2 oz. eq. meat;
2 oz. eq. grain;
and
1 cup milk
Meal or no Meal?

Student selection

Side salad: 1 cup of vegetables
Milk: 1 cup
Third component is missing

Side salad: 1 cup of vegetables
Milk: 1 cup

Not a Reimbursable Meal
Meal or No Meal?

**Student selection**

Cheese/Veggie Pizza: 2 oz. eq. grain; 2 oz. eq. MA; ¼ cup vegetable

Milk: 1 cup
Not a Reimbursable Meal

Includes less than ½ cup of vegetables

Cheese/Veggie Pizza: 2 oz. eq. grain; 2 oz. eq. MA; ¼ cup vegetable

Milk: 1 cup
Present Fruits & Vegetables in Several Places

• Have options at the point-of-sale.
• Offer self-serve garden bars.
• Present in ½ cup increments and use signs to communicate required amounts.
Meal or No Meal?

**Student selection**

- Salad Greens: 1 cup equivalent
- Cranberries: ½ cup equivalent
- Milk: 1 cup
Reimbursable Meal

3 components, including ½ cup fruit

- Salad Greens: 1 cup equivalent
- Cranberries: ½ cup equivalent
- Milk: 1 cup
Which one is a Reimbursable Meal?
Resources
• Offer Versus Serve Guidance (SY 2015-16)

Available online
Offer Versus Serve - Lunch Posters

Color Your Lunch Tray!
Choose 3 or more food groups
Pick at least ½ cup fruit and/or vegetable

COLOR is FLAVOR
#5formaxflavor
Choose 3 or more colorful food groups
Take at least ½ cup fruit and/or vegetable

#5formaxflavor
Select at least ½ cup fruit and/or vegetable
Choose at least 1 food group

Coming soon!
Elementary School

Offer versus Serve Breakfast Posters

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 cafetera staff understand OVS, breakfast lines move smoothly, allowing students to make the most of meal time and enjoy the wholesome and appealing foods that 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: 
  - fruit, 
  - grains, and 
  - fluid milk.

- A food item is a specific food offered within the three food components. For example, 2 slices of whole grain-rich 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 Alternates**: A meat/meat alternate 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 requirements) if a reimbursable meal is selected.

Sample OVS breakfast menu:

Variety of milk: Fat free or low-fat (1% or milk)
Slice of whole grain-rich bread (1 oz eq grain)
Whole grain-rich cereal (1 oz eq grain)
Orange slices (1 cup) fruit

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 cafeteria staff understand OVS, lunch lines move smoothly, allowing students to make the most of their lunch break and enjoy the wholesome and appealing foods that are served. It also helps reduce overall food costs.

Lunches 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, grains, fruits, vegetables, and fluid milk.

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

Under OVS, students may select three meal 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 listing of required food components and their minimum quantities that must be offered. Meats/meat alternates and grains are measured in ounce equivalents (oz eq) to consider the amount of food product that 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 alternates, 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 each 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.
Questions?