

Menu Planning

The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 required the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to update school meal nutrition standards to reflect the most current dietary science as outlined in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

These meal patterns and meal requirements help sponsors:

- Increase the availability of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat fluid milk
- Reduce the levels of sodium and saturated fat
- Meet all the nutritional needs of school children within their calorie range requirements
- Serve more nutritious school meals that improve the dietary habits of school children and protect their lifelong health

A single food-based menu planning approach is required for meals served to students. It includes age/grade portion sizes of meats (or meat alternates), milk, fruit, vegetables, and grains. There are minimum requirements of each food group for breakfast, lunch and snacks. There are many resources available to assist you with menu planning.

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For more information on Menu Planning see the [Quick Reference Guide to Menu Planning](#).

After you have reviewed the information contained in the Quick Reference Guide, try the [Apply Your Knowledge](#) self-check.

The School Nutrition Primer can be utilized by food service directors and administrators as a Professional Standards training resource. Reviewing the **Quick Reference Guides** with staff and administering the **Apply Your Knowledge** self-check quiz may count for 15 minute training.

The training topic Menu Planning provides the following Professional Standards:

Key Area: Nutrition (1000)

Key Topic: Menu Planning (1100)

Learning Objective: Plan menus that meet USDA nutrition requirements (1110); Analyze menus for school meal pattern requirements (1150)

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