



State of Arizona  
Department of Education

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**MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** Sponsors of the National School Lunch Program

**FROM:** Mary Szafranski, Deputy Associate Superintendent  
Arizona Department of Education, Health and Nutrition Services

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Arizona Department of Education, School Nutrition Programs

**DATE:** April 3, 2013

**SUBJECT:** Questions & Answers on the School Breakfast Program Meal Pattern in School Year 2013-14

*Original Signed*

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Effective July 1, 2013, all School Food Authorities (SFAs) must follow the updated meal pattern and nutrition requirements for meals offered under the School Breakfast Program (SBP).

Attached are Questions & Answers (QAs) that Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) released in memorandum SP 28-13 on the updated SBP requirements as required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. As the breakfast meal pattern requirements are being phased-in over multiple years, this memorandum provides a brief overview of the breakfast meal pattern for school year (SY) 2013-14 *only*. Please refer to the NSLP/SBP implementation timeline attached to the end of this memo.

Please refer to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) memorandum HNS# 007-13: Child Nutrition Reauthorization 2010 Questions and Answers on Final Rule Nutrition Standards in the NSLP/SBP (Revised 1-25-13) for QAs applicable for both updated breakfast and lunch meal patterns.

Please contact your Child Nutrition Program Specialist at ADE with questions concerning this guidance. Your specialist's contact information can be found on the CNPWeb home page once logged into Common Logon.



## **Overview of Breakfast Meal Pattern in SY 2013-14**

### ***General Requirements***

In SY 2013-14, all schools must use the single food based menu planning approach for breakfast, as required by the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010. Schools are no longer allowed to use the Traditional, Enhanced, Nutrient Standard, or Assisted Nutrient Standard meal patterns for the SBP.

Schools must implement the meal pattern using the established three grade groups (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12). There is overlap between the grade groups, which provides further flexibility for schools that serve more than one grade group at breakfast. Schools would need to plan menus using the grade group K-8 and/or K-12. There is significant overlap in the component requirements between grade groups, with the primary difference being increased minimum grain requirements for older students.

Schools must plan breakfast meals that meet the calorie ranges, on average, over the course of the operating week specific to the adopted grade group. It is important to emphasize that the calorie requirements are average calorie requirements over the course of a week and that the calorie limits do not apply on a per-meal or per-student basis.

All foods offered must contain zero grams of *trans* fat per portion.

ADE will be releasing the SBP New Meal Pattern chart for SY 2013-14, which will be available at: <http://www.azed.gov/health-nutrition/meal-pattern/>.

### ***Definitions***

A *food component* is one of five food groups that comprise reimbursable meals in the National School Lunch Program. These are grains, meat/meat alternates, fruit, vegetable, and milk. For the SBP, there are three required food components: grains, fruit or vegetable, and milk. It is optional to offer meat/meat alternates.

A *food item* is a specific food offered within the three food components. For the purposes of Offer vs. Serve (OVS), a school must offer at least four food items and students may decline only one food item, even if more than four food items are offered.

### ***Food Components for SBP***

#### ***Grains***

- For all grade groups, schools must offer at least 1 ounce equivalent (oz/eq.) of grains each day.
- The minimum weekly offering varies by grade group and the number of days a school operates. For a 5-day week: 7 oz/eq. for grades K-5, 8 oz/eq. for grades 6-8, and 9 oz/eq. for grades 9-12.
- *Half* of grains offered must be whole grain-rich in SY 2013-14.



### *Optional Meat/Meat Alternate*

- There is no separate requirement to offer meat/meat alternates in the new SBP meal pattern.
- If schools choose to plan a menu with a meat/meat alternate:
  - The meat/meat alternate must be offered in addition to the minimum daily grains requirement. The meat/meat alternate cannot substitute for the grains component. In other words, a daily menu must always include at least 1 oz/eq. of grains. If a meat/meat alternate is offered, it is offered in addition to the grains component.
  - Example:
    1. Allowable planned SBP meal: Bagel (2 oz/eq.), Orange Wedges (1 cup), Milk Varieties.
    2. Allowable planned SBP meal: Bagel (2 oz/eq.), Yogurt (1 oz/eq.), Orange Wedges (1 cup), Milk Varieties.
    3. **Non-Allowable** planned SBP meal: Yogurt (1 oz/eq.), Orange Wedges (1 cup), Milk Varieties. (\*Non-allowable since this menu never offered the daily minimum of 1 oz/eq. grain.)
- Since there is no daily or weekly meat/meat Alternate requirement for SBP, SFAs have the flexibility to credit a meat/meat Alternate:
  - As a grains component: serving 1 oz/eq. of meat/meat alternate may credit as 1 oz/eq. of grains. A school would choose this if they are having difficulty meeting their weekly grain minimum.
  - As extra food: a school may offer a meat/meat alternate as an “extra food” and not credit it toward any component (i.e. grain minimums/maximums).

### *Juice/Fruit/Vegetable*

- Schools must offer at least ½ cup of fruits and/or vegetables, or full strength fruit juice or vegetable juice to all grade groups.
- In SY 2013-14, there is no change to the existing Juice/Fruit/Vegetable meal component following in the Traditional breakfast meal pattern and the Enhanced breakfast meal pattern).
- Vegetables and fruits may be offered interchangeably; and for SY 2013-14, there are no substitution requirements and no vegetable subgroup requirements.
- There are no limitations on juice in SY 2013-14 for SBP.
- Students are **not** required to take fruit or vegetable under OVS in SY 2013-14.

### *Fluid Milk*

- Schools must offer only fat-free (unflavored or flavored) or low-fat 1% (unflavored) milk.
- For all grade groups, schools must offer at least 1 cup of milk daily.
- A variety of milk, or at least two options, must be offered. Variety can be in flavor and/or fat content.



## *Offer vs. Serve (OVS)*

Under OVS, for SY 2013-14, a student must be offered at least four food items and may decline only one food item. The food items selected may be from any of the required components and must be served in at least the minimum daily portion.

As noted above, for the SBP in SY 2013-14, students are not required to take a minimum ½ cup of fruit or vegetables for OVS.

## **Additional Information**

Because aspects of the SBP meal pattern are being phased in over multiple years, this guidance reflects only those requirements in effect for SY 2013-14. Additional guidance will be provided for SY 2014-15 and beyond, when all of the SBP requirements are in effect.

## **The School Breakfast Program (SBP) in SY 2013-14**

### *General Questions*

#### **Are all SFAs required to follow a food-based meal pattern to plan breakfasts in SY 2013-14?**

Yes, the new SBP food-based meal pattern, which requires the fruits/vegetables, grains, and milk food components, is required for all schools beginning in SY 2013-14. The fruit requirement (1 cup) takes effect beginning in SY 2014-15.

### *Grains*

#### **How much of the grains component must a school offer at breakfast in SY 2013-14?**

Under the SBP new meal pattern, schools must offer at least 1 ounce equivalent (oz/eq.) of grains daily to children in all grades. The total amount of grains offered over the week must meet the minimum weekly requirement established for each grade group.

#### **Can menu planners still offer traditional grits when the whole grain-rich requirement goes into effect for breakfast in SY 2013-14?**

Yes. In SY 2013-14, half of the grains offered must be whole grain-rich. During this transitional period, while trying to encourage students to accept whole grain-rich foods, schools can continue to offer traditional grits, as long as other grains offered are whole grain-rich to meet the whole grain rich regulation. Schools may also offer whole grain-rich grits, which are commercially available.



## **May schools offer a meat/meat alternate in the SBP in SY 2013-14?**

Yes. Schools will continue to have the ability to offer a meat/meat alternate at breakfast, even though the new SBP meal pattern does not require a meat/meat alternate component. A meat/meat alternate can be offered at breakfast as long as a minimum of at least 1 oz/eq. of grain is also offered daily. Schools that wish to offer a meat/meat alternate have two options for incorporating meat/meat alternates into their menu. These options are as follows:

- Schools may offer a meat/meat alternate in addition to offering at least 1 oz/eq. of grains daily. Under this flexible option, the meat/meat alternate offered would count toward the weekly grains requirement and the dietary specifications. The operator receives credit for the meat/meat alternate under a required food component (grains).
- Alternately, schools may serve a meat/meat alternate as an extra food and not count it toward the weekly grains requirement. The extra meat/meat alternate must fit within the weekly dietary specifications (calories, saturated and *trans* fats, and eventually sodium), and the operator must continue to offer a sufficient amount of grains daily to meet the weekly grains requirement. Under this option, the meat/meat alternate does not contribute to the grains component in the SBP meal pattern.

The above options allow menu planning flexibility, while promoting the consumption of whole grain-rich foods consistent with the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

## **Does a large grain food item (2 oz/eq. muffin) count as more than one item at breakfast?**

Yes. Beginning in SY 2013-14, 1 oz/eq. is the minimum required amount a child must be offered daily, for all grade groups, and counts as one item. Therefore, when a school offers a 2 oz/eq. grain at breakfast, it counts as two items. For purposes of OVS, a large grain item also counts as two of the four items that must be offered. For example, it is acceptable to offer a large grain item (2 oz/eq. muffin), fruit, and milk. A student that selects the 2 oz/eq. muffin and the fruit would have a reimbursable meal.

## **Does a combination food consisting of 1 oz/eq. grains and 1 oz/eq. meat/meat alternate (such as a breakfast sandwich) count as one or two items for purposes of OVS?**

Menu planners have two options related to how to count a combination food consisting of meat/meat alternate and grains, such as an egg sandwich.

- One option is to count the combination food (e.g. breakfast sandwich) as two items under the grains component. It provides at least 1 oz/eq. of grains (the minimum daily requirement for the grains component) plus an additional 1 oz/eq. of meat/meat alternate, which is counted in place of grains. As noted above, a 2 oz/eq. grain is considered 2 items for purposes of OVS. Therefore, it is acceptable under OVS to offer a combination food that counts as 2 grain items, plus the full required amount of fruit and milk. In this scenario, the



student may not decline the sandwich under OVS as it would exceed the maximum number of items that may be declined.

- The second option for the menu planner is to not count the meat/meat alternate in the combination food toward the grains component. In this case, the meat/meat alternate is an “extra” food and does not count as an item for purposes of OVS. The 1 oz/eq. of grain in the combination food counts as one grain item. Therefore, the breakfast sandwich as a whole in this scenario counts as one grain item. Three additional items (including fruit/vegetable and milk) must be offered for OVS, and the student may decline the sandwich since it is only 1 item.

### *Fruits/Vegetables*

#### **How much fruit must a school offer at breakfast in SY 2013-14?**

In SY 2013-14 only, schools will continue to offer at least ½ cup of fruit daily to children in grades K-12. The 1 cup daily minimum fruit requirement takes effect in SY 2014-15.

#### **Is a student required to take fruit at breakfast in SY 2013-14?**

In SY 2013-14, the existing fruit/vegetable component remains in place and is unchanged. As noted above, schools are required to offer at least ½ cup of fruit, vegetable, or juice to students in all grade levels. However, students are not required to select this component for OVS purposes since the OVS provision is not yet in effect. Under OVS in SY 2013-14, students may decline any one food item, including the fruit/vegetable component to serve a reimbursable meal.

#### **Is there a limit on the amount of juice that can be offered for breakfast in SY 2013-14?**

In SY 2013-14, the existing fruit/vegetable component remains in place and is unchanged. Therefore, there are no limitations on how much juice can be offered to meet the fruit/vegetable component. However, it is recommended that if juice is offered, schools also offer whole fruit options during the week, to assist students in transitioning to the limit on juice offerings effective in SY 2014-15.

### *Offer vs. Serve (OVS)*

#### **How is Offer vs. Serve (OVS) implemented in the SBP in SY 2013-14?**

OVS remains optional for all age/grade groups in the SBP, and schools implementing OVS must continue to offer at least four breakfast items in the amounts specified by the meal pattern. In SY 2013-14, schools will continue to allow students to decline one food item from *any* component at breakfast.



**May a school implementing OVS offer two different 1 oz/eq. grain items at breakfast, and allow students to take two of the same grain items and count them as two items for purposes of OVS?**

Yes, this is acceptable if the menu planner chooses to do so. For example, a menu may offer 1 cup milk and ½ cup fruit, plus two grains: cereal (1 oz/eq.) and toast (1 oz/eq.). The student could select the fruit and two pieces of toast and this would count as the three items required for a reimbursable meal under OVS. The menu planner has discretion whether or not to allow students to select duplicate items.

**Can pre-bagged meals be offered when breakfast is offered in the classroom and OVS is in place?**

Yes. If a school participates in OVS at breakfast and offers meals where some or all of the components are bundled together, the operator should attempt to offer choices (such as a fruit basket) aside from the pre-bagged items. However, there is no requirement that all possible combinations of choices be made available to the student.

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