

4 — MEAL SERVICE

This section addresses the meal service requirements for the NSLP and SBP, including offer versus serve (OVS), lunch periods, family-style meal service, and water availability.

Overview of OVS

OVS is a concept that applies to menu planning and the determination of reimbursable school meals in the NSLP and SBP. It allows students to decline a certain number of food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) in the meal and select the foods they prefer to eat. OVS is designed to reduce food cost and waste. It also allows menu planners the flexibility to address student participation and selection trends to determine what and how much food to prepare.



OVS must be implemented at lunch in senior high schools but is optional for all other grades. OVS is optional for all grades at breakfast and for the SSO. OVS is not allowed for the ASP. Table 4-1 summarizes the OVS requirements.

Table 4-1. Overview of OVS Requirements

Criteria	Lunch	Breakfast
Implementation	Mandatory in senior high schools and optional for all other grade levels	Optional for all grade levels
Reimbursable Meals	Must offer five components (milk, fruits, vegetables, grains and meat/meat alternates) *	Must offer at least four food items from three components (milk, fruits and grains) **
Required Number of Student Selections	Students must select at least three components including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other food components	Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruits (or vegetable substitutions, if offered) and the minimum daily serving of two other food items
Pricing	Priced as a unit (same price regardless of number of food components chosen)	Priced as a unit (same price regardless of number of food items chosen)
Extra Foods	Not credited for OVS	Not credited for OVS
<p>* A food component is one of the five food groups that comprise the reimbursable lunch (milk, fruits, vegetables, grains, and meat/meat alternates) and one of the three food groups that comprise the reimbursable breakfast (milk, fruits and grains).</p> <p>** A food item is a specific food offered within the food components.</p>		

OVS is implemented differently for lunch and breakfast. Some OVS requirements apply to both lunch and breakfast, including the procedures for offering choices within components, pre-plated and prepackaged meals, food bars, a la carte sales, and extra foods. These requirements are summarized on the following pages.

OFFERING CHOICES WITHIN COMPONENTS

SFAs must plan lunches and breakfasts that meet all meal pattern requirements and provide access to the required types and amounts of food for all students. In addition, menus should reflect student preferences and, as much as possible, offer choices within components.

When schools offer choices within components, the menu planner must indicate what choices or combination of choices students may select for a reimbursable meal. The HHFKA requires signage near or at the beginning of the serving line and prior to the POS to prevent unintentional purchases of a la carte items and help students choose a reimbursable meal. For more information, see “Meal Identification Signage” in [section 3](#).

For example, for grades 9-12 at lunch, menu planners may choose to offer the minimum daily fruit requirement (1 cup) as a variety of ½-cup fruit selections and students can choose two servings. The cafeteria signage must reflect this menu planning decision and indicate that students may select up to two ½-cup servings of fruit with each meal. In this example, the school is implementing OVS because students may choose to either decline the fruits component entirely or take one or two ½-cup servings from the fruits offered. This provides a variety of food choices and shows students how to select a reimbursable lunch.

Offering choices within components does not necessarily constitute OVS. Schools are encouraged to give students various options of entrees and other menu items such as fruits and vegetables, and are required to offer a variety of milk choices. If students are required to select at least one of every component, the school is not implementing OVS. OVS allows students to decline some food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) entirely.

PRE-PLATED MEALS

Pre-plated meals offer all food components or food items in the minimum required quantities for each grade group in an entirely or partially pre-served manner. Pre-plated meals must include at least the daily minimum quantities required under the applicable meal pattern. This type of meal service is often used by schools and institutions that have logistical limitations for their meal service. Examples may include facility or space restrictions or situations where children are unable to select the foods offered. If senior high schools only offer pre-plated meals for the NSLP, OVS must be implemented for all or some components unless the CSDE has approved the school not to implement OVS.

SFAs that use pre-plated meals are not required to change their meal service systems to accommodate OVS. However, pre-plated meals must offer all required food components or food items and quantities for each grade group including a variety of milk choices. They must also meet the daily and weekly meal pattern requirements. SFAs are encouraged to modify their meal service systems to include OVS opportunities whenever possible, e.g., allowing students a choice of different fruits and vegetables. Schools are required to offer a variety of milk choices. For more information, see “Milk Variety Requirement” in [section 2](#).

PREPACKAGED MEALS

Prepackaged meals such as “grab-and-go” or bagged meals are similar to pre-plated meals. At the senior high school level, prepackaged meals are only allowed if the meal service system also has cafeteria lines that allow OVS. If senior high schools only offer pre-plated meals for the NSLP, OVS must be implemented for all or some components unless the CSDE has approved the school not to implement OVS. Prepackaged meals are allowed at all other grade levels.

Like pre-plated meals, SFAs that use prepackaged meals are encouraged to offer some choices and the option to decline some food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast), such as fruit or milk. OVS is not required (even at the senior high level) if prepackaged meals are offered as part of breakfast in the classroom, field trips or for students leaving the campus for work study.

FOOD BARS

SFAs are encouraged to use food bars and salad bars in the meal service to offer a wider variety of vegetables and fruits, and lower plate waste. Food bars can be set up in a variety of ways. One option is providing pre-portioned and prepackaged food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) that are “grab-and-go” to accommodate a high volume of students in a short period of time. Pre-portioning is an acceptable method to ensure that students select an appropriate amount from food bars.

Food bars are permitted with OVS since they enhance the choices available, which may assist students with selecting those foods they will consume. To allow students and cashiers to easily identify reimbursable meals from food bars, menu planners must:

- clearly identify the food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) provided on the food bars and the minimum serving size for each food component or food item; and
- indicate which foods and combinations of foods students may select for a reimbursable meal with OVS.



Cafeteria signage must reflect this information. Cashiers must be trained and informed daily, if needed, on what constitutes a reimbursable meal at the POS. For more information, see “Meal Identification Signage” in [section 3](#).

Food bars should be located before the POS. If a school is not able to position the food bar in a location prior to the POS, the SFA may request approval from the CSDE for an alternative system. The alternative system must ensure that all students who use the food bar select food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) to meet the meal pattern and OVS requirements. If the food bar is located after the POS, the SFA should provide staff to monitor meal selections and ensure that students take the food components in the required serving sizes that were credited at the POS.

The SFA must submit a written request to the CSDE and receive approval before using any food bars that are positioned after the POS. For more information, see “Salad Bars” in [section 2](#)). For additional guidance on food bars and salad bars, see [USDA Memo SP 31-2013, *Salad Bars in the National School Lunch Program*](#).

OVS AND A LA CARTE SALES

In addition to other a la carte foods, foods offered as part of reimbursable meals may also be sold a la carte. Students and cashiers need to know which foods are considered food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) for reimbursable meals with OVS. Adequate training for staff and appropriate signage for students are critical to communicate this information.

If a student does not select the required amount or number of food components or food items in the applicable portions, the meal is not reimbursable. In this case, SFAs may charge a la carte prices for each item selected by the student. To avoid issues at check-out, SFAs are expected to conduct training for cashiers and serving line staff to help students select the required servings of food components for reimbursable lunches and food items for reimbursable breakfasts. For more information, see “Professional Standards Training” in [section 3](#).

The HHFKA requires signage near or at the beginning of the serving line and prior to the POS to prevent unintentional purchases of a la carte items and help students choose a reimbursable meal. For more information, see “Meal Identification Signage” in [section 3](#).

OVS AND EXTRA FOODS

Extra foods are foods served in addition to the minimum meal pattern requirements. They include:

- creditable foods from the meal pattern components, e.g., additional servings of grains, fruits, vegetables, meat/meat alternates and milk; and
- noncreditable foods that do not credit toward any meal pattern component.



Schools may offer noncreditable foods as a complement to reimbursable meals, e.g., potato chips, pudding, ice cream, maple syrup, cream cheese, bacon, and condiments such as salad dressing, ketchup, and mustard. If students select noncreditable foods in addition to the meal, they cannot credit toward the minimum number of food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) required for a reimbursable meal under OVS. For more information on noncreditable foods, see “Extra or Additional Foods” in [section 3](#) and [appendix F](#).

All extra foods (creditable and noncreditable) offered to students with reimbursable meals must be counted toward the weekly dietary specifications. Extra foods must contain zero trans fat and their inclusion cannot cause the menu to exceed the average weekly limits for calories, saturated fats, and sodium. For more information, see “Dietary Specifications” in [section 3](#) and [section 5](#).

OVS at Lunch

At lunch, OVS must be implemented in senior high schools but is optional for all other grades. OVS is also optional for the SSFP.

OVS applies only to the daily lunch meal pattern requirements. The menu planner determines the daily serving size to meet the required weekly amounts for each component. Schools must always offer all five food components in at least the minimum required amounts for a reimbursable lunch. The definitions below apply only to OVS at lunch.

- A **food component** is one of the five food groups that comprise the reimbursable lunch, including milk, fruits, vegetables, grains and meat/meat alternates.
- A **food item** is a specific food offered within the five food components. It may contain one or more food components or more than one serving of the same component. For example, a hamburger patty on a whole-grain bun is one food item that contains two food components (meat/meat alternates and grains). A selection of three different ½-cup servings of fruit such as peaches, applesauce and pears contains three food items from one food component (fruits).



OVS at lunch requires students to take at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.

OVS LUNCH REQUIREMENTS

For a lunch to be reimbursable under OVS, schools must meet the criteria below.

- Meals must be planned to meet the meal pattern components and provide the minimum required amounts of food for all students. All five food components must be offered to all students including milk, fruits, vegetables, grains, and meat/meat alternates.
- Except for fluid milk, the food components may be offered in more than one food item. Meat/meat alternates may only be offered in one or two food items, i.e., a main dish or a main dish and one other food item. For more information, see “[Offering Food Components as More Than One Food Item](#)” in this section and “Main Dish Requirement for Lunch” in [section 2](#).
- The serving sizes for all food components must be at least the minimum daily requirement for each grade group specified in the meal pattern. Larger amounts may be served if the menu does not exceed the weekly limits for calories, saturated fats, and sodium.

- Meals must be priced as a unit, i.e., students pay the same price regardless of whether they take three, four, or five food components. SFAs must establish one price for a complete reimbursable meal in the paid meal category and one price for a complete reimbursable meal in the reduced-price meal category. SFAs may set different unit prices for various combinations of foods offered. For example, if students are offered reimbursable meals with a variety of entrees, such as a hamburger, chef's salad, lasagna, and turkey sandwich, the SFA may set four unit prices depending on which entree is selected. However, all students including those eligible for free and reduced-price meals must be allowed to select any reimbursable meal. Meals with a higher unit price must be available at no cost for all free-eligible students and at no more than 40 cents for all reduced-eligible students.
- Students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other food components.
- Students may decline any one or two of the other required food components except for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. Students may take smaller portions of the declined food components. Amounts less than the minimum daily serving do not credit toward the reimbursable meal.
- The menu planner may allow students to select more than the minimum daily serving of a component. Student selections of additional or multiple servings credit as only one component toward the reimbursable meal.

Table 4-2 summarizes the daily meal pattern requirements for lunch and the number of food components that students can decline under OVS.

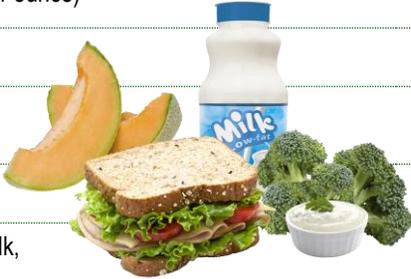
Table 4-2. OVS Requirements at Lunch (All Grades)	
<p>SCHOOL MUST OFFER FIVE COMPONENTS *</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One serving of milk ** • One serving of fruits • One serving of vegetables • One serving of WGR grains • One serving of meat/meat alternates 	<p>STUDENT MAY DECLINE</p> <p>One or two food components but must take at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables</p>
<p>* The serving size must be at least the minimum daily required quantities for each grade group specified in the NSLP meal pattern. The menu planner determines the daily serving size to meet the required weekly amounts for each component.</p> <p>** SFAs must offer at least two different varieties (fat content and/or flavor) of low-fat (1%) unflavored or fat-free unflavored or flavored milk. Whole, reduced-fat (2%) and flavored low-fat milk cannot be served.</p>	

OFFERING EACH FOOD COMPONENT AS ONE FOOD ITEM

Menu planners can choose to offer the minimum daily serving of each food component as one food item. Table 4-3 shows OVS examples of this menu planning approach for grades K-5 and 6-8. Table 4-4 on the next page shows OVS examples for grades 9-12.

Table 4-3. Offering Each Component as One Food Item				
GRADES K-5 AND 6-8				
Planned Lunch Menu			Meal Pattern Components	
Turkey (1 ounce) and low-fat cheese (1 ounce)			Meat/Meat Alternates (M/MA), 2 ounce equivalents	
Whole-wheat bread, 2 ounces			Grains (G), 2 ounce equivalents	
Broccoli florets, ¼ cup, with low-fat yogurt dip			Vegetables (V), ¼ cup	
Cantaloupe wedges, ½ cup			Fruits (F), ½ cup	
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk, or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup			Milk (M), 1 cup	
				
Students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.				
Student Selects	Food Items	Food Components (Minimum Daily Serving)	Plus at least ½ cup of F or V	Reimbursable Meal?
		MUST BE AT LEAST 2	MUST BE "YES"	
Turkey and cheese sandwich (M/MA, G) Milk (M)	2	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Turkey and cheese sandwich (M/MA, G) Cantaloupe wedges (F)	2	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and F).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (M/MA, G) Broccoli florets (V)	2	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and V).
Broccoli florets (V) Cantaloupe wedges (F) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (V, F, and M).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (M/MA, G) Broccoli florets (V) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four full components (M/MA, G, V, and M).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (M/MA, G) Cantaloupe wedges (F) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four full components (M/MA, G, F, and M).

Table 4-4. Offering Each Component as One Food Item

GRADES 9-12				
Planned Lunch Menu		Meal Pattern Components		
Turkey (1 ounce) and low-fat cheese (1 ounce)		M/MA, 2 ounce equivalents		
Whole-wheat bread, 2 ounces		G, 2 ounce equivalents		
Broccoli florets, 1 cup, with low-fat yogurt dip		V, 1 cup		
Cantaloupe wedges, 1 cup		F, 1 cup		
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk, or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
				
Students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.				
Student Selects	Food Items	Full Food Components (Minimum Daily Serving)	Plus at least ½ cup of F or V	Reimbursable Meal?
		MUST BE AT LEAST 2	MUST BE "YES"	
Turkey and cheese sandwich (M/MA, G) Milk (M)	2	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Turkey and cheese sandwich (M/MA, G) Cantaloupe wedges (F)	2	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and F).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (M/MA, G) Broccoli florets (V)	2	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and V).
Broccoli florets (V) Cantaloupe chunks (F) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (V, F, and M).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (M/MA, G) Broccoli florets (V) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four full components (M/MA, G, V, and M).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (M/MA, G) Cantaloupe wedges (F) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four full components (M/MA, G, F, and M).

OFFERING FOOD COMPONENTS AS MORE THAN ONE FOOD ITEM

Menu planners can choose to offer the minimum daily serving of fruits, vegetables and grains as more than one food item. The minimum daily serving of meat/meat alternates must be offered as only one food item (main dish) or two food items (main dish and one other food item). For more information, see “Main Dish Requirement for Lunch” in [section 2](#). The minimum daily serving of fluid milk must be offered as only one food item.

Components can be offered as more than one food item only when:

- each food item meets the minimum creditable serving size ($\frac{1}{4}$ ounce equivalent for grains and meat/meat alternates and $\frac{1}{8}$ cup for fruits and vegetables); and
- the combined items provide the full component (minimum daily serving) for each grade group.

To credit as a food component under OVS, students must select at least the daily minimum required by the meal pattern, except for fruits and vegetables. The OVS requirement for fruits and vegetables is at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.



Student selections of less than the minimum daily serving do not credit as a component for OVS, unless they are combined with additional servings from the same component to meet the minimum requirement. For example:

- students in grades K-5 and 6-8 could select $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of sliced pears and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of applesauce to meet the minimum daily $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving for the fruits component; and
- students in grades 9-12 could select $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of low-fat yogurt and 1 ounce of low-fat cheese to meet the minimum daily 1-ounce equivalent serving for the meat/meat alternates component.

If the menu offers the minimum daily serving of a meal component as two separate food items, students must select both items to credit as one component. Menu planners should consider the serving size of menu items and plan lunch menus so that it is easy for students to select reimbursable meals and easy for food service staff to identify reimbursable meals. The SFA must ensure clear communication with students and staff about the lunch meal pattern requirements and OVS by:

- posting cafeteria signage in all schools that clearly communicates the meal components for all lunch menu choices and indicates what students are allowed to select (see “Meal Identification Signage” in [section 3](#)); and
- providing adequate training for school food service staff on the lunch meal pattern components, including how to credit food items and recognize reimbursable meals.

For information on offering the fruits component and vegetables component as more than one item, see “[Fruits and Vegetables with OVS at Lunch](#)” in this section. For information on offering the grains component as more than one item, see “[Grains with OVS at Lunch](#)” in this section. For information on offering the meat/meat alternates component as more than one item, see “[Meat/Meat Alternates with OVS at Lunch](#)” in this section.

Table 4-5 shows OVS examples for grades 9-12 with a lunch menu that offers the minimum daily serving of meat/meat alternates and grains as two food items.

- The menu provides the minimum daily 2 ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternates as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of yogurt and 1 ounce of low-fat Swiss cheese cubes. Since each food item provides half of the daily meat/meat alternates component (half M/MA), one item alone cannot credit as the full component. Students must take both items to credit as the meat/meat alternates component for OVS.
- The menu provides the minimum daily 2 ounce equivalents of grains as two packages of whole-grain crackers that each provide 1 ounce equivalent of grains. Since each package provides half of the daily grains component (half G), one package alone cannot credit as the full component. Students must take both items to credit as the grains component for OVS.

When menus offer the minimum daily serving of grains or meat/meat alternates as two food items, it can be more difficult for students to select the minimum amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. Menu planners may want to consider other menu planning approaches that encourage student selections of reimbursable meals, such as:

- offering combination entrees that provide the minimum daily serving of both grains and meat/meat alternates;
- offering the minimum daily grains and meat/meat alternates components as one food item instead of two;
- offering the grains or meat/meat alternates components as two food items that are each the minimum daily serving size; and
- packaging food items together so that students must take both.

For more information, see “[Menu Planning Tips for OVS at Lunch](#)” at the end of this section.

Table 4-5. Offering Minimum Daily Grains and Meat/Meat Alternates as Two Food Items

GRADES 9-12

Planned Lunch Menu	Meal Pattern Components
Low-fat fruit yogurt, ½ cup (1 ounce equivalent) Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes, 1 ounce (1 ounce equivalent)	M/MA, 2 ounce equivalents
Whole-grain crackers, two packages (1 ounce equivalent each)	G, 2 ounce equivalents
Spinach salad, 2 cups (<i>Raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served</i>)	V, 1 cup
Orange wedges, 1 cup	F, 1 cup
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk, or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup



Students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.

Student Selects	Food Items	Full Food Components (Minimum Daily Serving)	Plus at least ½ cup of F or V	Reimbursable Meal?
		MUST BE AT LEAST 2	MUST BE “YES”	
Yogurt (half M/MA) * Cheese (half M/MA) * Crackers, one package (half G) * Orange wedges (F)	4	2	No **	No. The selected meal contains only two full components (M/MA and F). It is missing at least ½ cup of vegetables or another full component.
Yogurt (half M/MA) * Spinach salad (V) Orange Wedges (F)	3	2	No **	No. The selected meal contains only two full components (V and F). It is missing at least ½ cup of vegetables or another full component.
Yogurt (half M/MA) * Crackers (G) Milk (M)	3	2	No	No. The selected meal contains two full components (G and M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Spinach salad (V) Orange wedges (F) Crackers (G)	3	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (V, F, and G).
Crackers (G) Orange wedges (F) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (G, F, and M).
Yogurt (half M/MA) * Cheese (half M/MA) * Crackers, one package (half G) * Orange wedges (F) Milk (M)	5	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, F, and M).

* Student selections of less than the minimum daily serving do not credit as a component for OVS, unless they are combined with additional servings from the same component to meet the minimum requirement.

**Student selections of the minimum daily serving of fruits and vegetables credit once as either the full component or the minimum ½ cup requirement for OVS, but not both in the same meal.

Milk with OVS at Lunch

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the milk component at lunch. For more information on the meal pattern requirements for milk, see “Milk” in [section 2](#).

CREDITING MILK ITEMS

One cup (8 fluid ounces) of fluid milk must be offered daily for all grades at lunch. Schools must offer a variety (at least two different choices) of fat content and/or flavor of milk. For more information, see “Milk Variety Requirement” under “Milk” in [section 2](#).

Students must select at least 1 cup of fluid milk to credit as the milk component for OVS. Fluid milk credits as only one food component, regardless of how much milk is served or selected. Students are not required to select the milk component for a reimbursable meal.

USDA regulations require the NSLP, ASP, and SBP to make plain potable water available to children at no cost during the meal service. The water must be available without restriction in the location where meals are served. However, water is not a meal pattern component and is not part of the reimbursable meal. SFAs cannot promote or offer water or any other beverage as an alternative selection to fluid milk throughout the food service area. For more information, see “[Water Availability](#)” in this section.



FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Fruits and Vegetables with OVS at Lunch

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the fruits component and vegetables component at lunch. For more information on the meal pattern requirements for fruits and vegetables, see “Fruits” and “Vegetables” in [section 2](#).

PLANNED AND SELECTED SERVINGS OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

The planned serving size for fruits and vegetables is not always the same as the serving size that students must select for a reimbursable meal. Table 4-6 summarizes the daily fruit and vegetable requirements for menu planning and OVS at lunch.

Grade Group	MENU PLANNING	OVS
	School Must Plan and Offer	Student Must Select
K-5 and 6-8	½ cup of fruits and ¾ cup vegetables	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables
9-12	1 cup of fruits and 1 cup of vegetables	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables

Schools must always plan and offer all students the minimum required serving size of fruits and vegetables for each grade group, as specified in the lunch meal pattern. However, students are not required to select the full planned portion of fruits and vegetables. For a reimbursable meal under OVS, students must select the minimum daily serving of at least two components and at least one of the following:

- ½ cup of one individual fruit;
- ½ cup of mixed fruits, e.g., fruit salad;
- ½ cup of one individual vegetable;
- ½ cup of mixed vegetables, e.g., peas and carrots;
- ½ cup combination of fruits and vegetables, e.g., ¼ cup of fruit and ¼ cup of vegetable; or
- ½ cup of mixed fruits and vegetables, e.g., carrot-pineapple-raisin salad.



Dried fruit and raw leafy greens credit toward the OVS requirements based on their meal pattern crediting volume. Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served, e.g., a student selection of ¼ cup of dried fruit credits as ½ cup of fruit for OVS. Raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served, e.g., a student selection of 1 cup of raw leafy greens credits as ½ cup of vegetables for OVS. For more information, see “Fruits” and “Vegetables” in [section 2](#).

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

CREDITING STUDENT FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SELECTIONS

Whether a student's selection of fruits or vegetables credits as the full component or the minimum ½-cup serving depends on the amount the student selects and the minimum daily serving size for each grade group.

- Student selections of the minimum daily serving of either fruits or vegetables credit as one component for OVS. The selection can credit once as either the full component or the minimum ½-cup serving, but not both in the same meal.
- Student selections of more than the minimum daily serving for fruits credit as only one component and student selections of more than the minimum daily serving for vegetables credit as only one component. For more information, see “[Student Selections of Multiple Fruits or Vegetables](#)” in this section.
- Student selections of at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables meet the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup and credit as one of the three required components for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select the minimum daily serving size of two other components.
- Student selections of less than ½ cup of fruits or vegetables cannot credit toward the OVS requirements, unless they are combined with additional servings from either the fruits or vegetables component to meet the minimum requirement.
- Meals without at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables are not reimbursable. Schools may charge a la carte prices for the selected foods. For more information, see “[OVS and A La Carte Sales](#)” in “Overview of OVS.” To encourage student selections of reimbursable meals at the POS, food service staff should allow students to return and select additional fruits or vegetables from the serving line or have selections available at the POS, e.g., a basket of assorted whole fruits or bags of cut vegetables.



Tables 4-7 and 4-8 show examples of how to credit student fruit and vegetable selections with OVS at lunch.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Table 4-7. Crediting Student Fruit Selections with OVS at Lunch

Grades	Minimum Daily Requirement (Full Component)	Student Selects	Credits as Full Component?	Credits as ½ cup for OVS?	Additional Foods Needed for Reimbursable Meal
K-5 and 6-8	½ cup	½ cup	Yes *	Yes *	At least two other components, one of which could be ½ cup of vegetables
9-12	1 cup	½ cup	No	Yes	At least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of vegetables

* Student selections of the minimum daily serving of fruits credit once as either the full component or the minimum ½ cup requirement for OVS, but not both in the same meal.

Table 4-8. Crediting Student Vegetable Selections with OVS at Lunch

Grades	Minimum Daily Requirement (Full Component)	Student Selects	Credits as Full Component?	Credits as ½ cup for OVS?	Additional Foods Needed for Reimbursable Meal
K-5	¾ cup	½ cup	No	Yes	At least two other components, one of which could be a ½ cup of fruit
6-8	¾ cup	½ cup	No	Yes	At least two other components, one of which could be a ½ cup of fruit
9-12	1 cup	½ cup	No	Yes	At least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of fruit

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

STUDENT SELECTIONS OF MULTIPLE FRUITS OR VEGETABLES

If the SFA allows students to select more than the minimum daily serving of fruits or vegetables, the selection credits as only one component for OVS. For example, for grades 9-12, a student selection of 1 cup of fruit salad or 1 ½ cups of fruit salad both credit as one component for OVS.



Table 4-9 shows some examples of how to credit student selections of multiple servings of fruits and vegetables for OVS at lunch.

Grades	Minimum Daily Requirement	Student Selects	Number of Components	Additional Foods Needed for Reimbursable Meal
K-5 and 6-8	Fruits: ½ cup	Two ½-cup servings of fruit salad (1 cup)	1	At least two other components, one of which could be a ½ cup of vegetable
K-5 and 6-8	Vegetables: ¾ cup	Two ½-cup servings of corn (1 cup)	1	At least two other components, one of which could be a ½ cup of fruit
9-12	Fruits: 1 cup	1 ½ cups of fruit salad	1	At least two other components, one of which could be a ½ cup of vegetable
9-12	Vegetables: 1 cup	3 cups of salad	1	At least two other components, one of which could be a ½ cup of fruit

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

OFFERING MINIMUM DAILY FRUITS AS TWO FOOD ITEMS WITH EQUAL SERVINGS

When a lunch menu offers the minimum daily fruits requirement as two separate food items with equal serving sizes, the full component includes both items. Students must select both to credit as one component for OVS. Student selections of amounts less than the minimum daily serving do not credit as the full fruits component for OVS at lunch. However, a selection of at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit credits toward the OVS requirements.

Table 4-10 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu offers the minimum daily fruits requirement as two food items with equal serving sizes. Whether a student's selection credits as the fruits component for OVS depends on the minimum daily serving for each grade group.



- **Grades K-5 and 6-8:** A lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 provides the minimum daily $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits from $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of strawberries and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of oranges. The strawberries or oranges alone cannot credit as the full fruits component because each serving is less than the minimum daily requirement. Students must take **both** servings to credit as the full fruits component and meet the OVS requirement for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables. For a reimbursable meal:
 - students who select both fruit servings (full component) must also select at least two other components, one of which could be $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables; and
 - students who select only the strawberries or oranges must also select at least $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of vegetables and the minimum daily serving of two other components.

When menus offer the minimum daily serving of fruits as two food items, it can be more difficult for elementary and middle school students to select the minimum amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. A better menu planning approach is offering all fruits in $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings so that any student selection contains at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit for OVS.

- **Grades 9-12:** A lunch menu for grades 9-12 provides the minimum daily 1 cup of fruits from $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of strawberries and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of oranges. The strawberries or oranges alone cannot credit as the full fruits component because each serving is less than the minimum daily requirement. Students must take **both** servings to credit as the full fruits component, but each $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup selection meets the OVS requirement for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables. For a reimbursable meal:
 - students who select both fruit servings (full component) must also select at least two other components, one of which could be $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables; and
 - students who select only the strawberries or oranges must also select the minimum daily serving of at least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of vegetables.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Table 4-10. Offering Minimum Daily Fruits as Two Food Items with Equal Servings

GRADES K-5 AND 6-8			
PLANNED FRUITS COMPONENT		LUNCH MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (½ cup)	
Strawberries, ¼ cup		¼ cup	
Oranges, ¼ cup		¼ cup	
Student Selects	Cups	Credits as at least ½ cup of fruit for OVS?	Credits as full fruits component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF ½ CUP
Strawberries Oranges	½	Yes	Yes. The selected ½-cup serving is the SAME as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least two other components, one of which could be ½ cup of vegetables.
Strawberries	¼ *	No	No. The selected ¼-cup serving is LESS than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ¼ cup of vegetables and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
Oranges	¼ *	No	No. The selected ¼-cup serving is LESS than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ¼ cup of vegetables and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
GRADES 9-12			
PLANNED FRUITS COMPONENT		LUNCH MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (1 cup)	
Strawberries, ½ cup		½ cup	
Oranges, ½ cup		½ cup	
Student Selects	Cups	Credits as at least ½ cup of fruit for OVS?	Credits as full fruits component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 1 CUP
Strawberries Oranges	1	Yes	Yes. The selected 1-cup serving is the SAME as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least two other components, one of which could be ½ cup of vegetables.
Strawberries	½	Yes	No. The selected ½-cup serving is LESS than the minimum daily requirement but meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.
Oranges	½	Yes	No. The selected ½-cup serving is LESS than the minimum daily requirement but meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.
* Student selections of less than ½ cup do not credit as a component for OVS, unless they are combined with additional servings from the fruits or vegetables components to meet the minimum requirement. To encourage student selections of reimbursable meals, offer all fruits in ½-cup servings.			

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

OFFERING MINIMUM DAILY VEGETABLES AS TWO FOOD ITEMS

When a lunch menu offers the minimum daily vegetables requirement as two separate food items with equal serving sizes, the full component includes both items. Students must select both to credit as one component for OVS. Student selections of amounts less than the minimum daily serving do not credit as the full vegetables component for OVS at lunch. However, a selection of at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables credits toward the OVS requirements.

Table 4-11 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu offers the minimum daily vegetables requirement as two food items with equal serving sizes. Whether a student's choice credits as the vegetables component for OVS depends on the minimum daily serving for each grade group.



- **Grades K-5 and 6-8:** A lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 provides the minimum daily $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of vegetables from $\frac{3}{8}$ cup of carrot sticks and $\frac{3}{8}$ cup of green peas. The carrots or peas alone cannot credit as the full vegetables component because each serving is less than the minimum daily requirement. Students must take **both** servings to credit as the full vegetables component and meet the OVS requirement for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables. For a reimbursable meal:
 - students who select both vegetable servings (full component) must also select at least two other components, one of which could be $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit; and
 - students who select only the carrots or peas must also select at least $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of fruit and the minimum daily serving of two other components.

When menus offer the minimum daily serving of vegetables as two food items, it can be more difficult for elementary and middle school students to select the minimum amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. A better menu planning approach is offering all vegetables in $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings so that any student selection contains at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables for OVS.

- **Grades 9-12:** A lunch menu for grades 9-12 provides the minimum daily 1 cup of vegetables from $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of carrot sticks and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of green peas. The carrots or peas alone cannot credit as the full vegetables component because each serving is less than the minimum daily requirement. Students must take both servings to credit as the full vegetables component, but each $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup selection meets the OVS requirement for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables. For a reimbursable meal:
 - students who select both vegetable servings (full component) must also select at least two other components, one of which could be $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit; and
 - students who select only the carrots or peas must also select the minimum daily serving of at least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of fruit.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Table 4-11. Offering Minimum Daily Vegetables as Two Food Items with Equal Servings

GRADES K-5 AND 6-8			
PLANNED VEGETABLES COMPONENT		LUNCH MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION ($\frac{3}{8}$ cup)	
Carrots, $\frac{3}{8}$ cup		$\frac{3}{8}$ cup	
Green peas, $\frac{3}{8}$ cup		$\frac{3}{8}$ cup	
Student Selects	Cups	Credits as at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit for OVS?	Credits as full vegetables component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF $\frac{3}{4}$ CUP
Carrot sticks Green peas	$\frac{3}{4}$	Yes	Yes. The selected $\frac{3}{4}$ -cup serving is the SAME as the minimum daily serving. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least two other components, one of which could be $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit.
Carrot sticks	$\frac{3}{8}$ *	No	No. The selected $\frac{3}{8}$ -cup serving is LESS than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of fruit and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
Green peas	$\frac{3}{8}$ *	No	No. The selected $\frac{3}{8}$ -cup serving is LESS than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of fruit and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
GRADES 9-12			
PLANNED VEGETABLES COMPONENT		LUNCH MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (1 CUP)	
Carrots, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup		$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	
Green peas, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup		$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	
Student Selects	Cups	Credits as at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit for OVS?	Credits as full vegetables component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 1 CUP
Carrot sticks Green peas	1	Yes	Yes. The selected 1-cup serving is the SAME as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least two other components, one of which could be $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit.
Carrot sticks	$\frac{1}{2}$	Yes	No. The selected $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving is LESS than the minimum daily requirement but meets the OVS requirement for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.
Green peas	$\frac{1}{2}$	Yes	No. The selected $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving is LESS than the minimum daily requirement but meets the OVS requirement for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.
* Student selections of less than $\frac{1}{2}$ cup do not credit as a component for OVS, unless they are combined with additional servings from the fruits or vegetables components to meet the minimum requirement. To encourage student selections of reimbursable meals, offer all vegetables in $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings.			

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Table 4-12 shows OVS examples for grades K-5 and 6-8 when the lunch menu offers the minimum daily serving of vegetables and fruits as two food items with equal serving sizes. These examples assume that the menu planner has obtained a CN label or PFS to document the pizza's meal pattern contribution of 2 ounce equivalents of grains, 1 ½ ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternates, and ⅜ cup of vegetables.

- The vegetables component includes ⅜ cup of tomato sauce and vegetables combined from the vegetable pizza and ⅜ cup of coleslaw. Since each item provides only half of the daily vegetables component (half V), one item alone cannot credit as the full component. Students must take both items to credit as the full vegetables component for OVS.
- The fruits component includes ¼ cup of green grapes and ¼ cup of applesauce. Since each item provides only half of the daily fruits component (half F), one item alone cannot credit as the full component. Students must take both items to credit as the full fruits component for OVS.

When menus offer the minimum daily serving of vegetables and fruits as two food items, it can be more difficult for elementary and middle school students to select the minimum amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. A better menu planning approach is offering the coleslaw, green grapes, and applesauce in ½-cup servings, so that any student selection contains at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables for OVS.



Table 4-13 shows OVS examples for grades 9-12 when the lunch menu offers the minimum daily serving of vegetables and fruits as two food items with equal serving sizes. These examples assume that the menu planner has obtained a CN label or PFS to document the pizza's meal pattern contribution of 3 ounce equivalents of grains, 2 ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternates and ½ cup of vegetables.

- The vegetables component includes ½ cup of tomato sauce and vegetables combined from the pizza and ½ cup of coleslaw. Since each item provides only half of the daily vegetables component (half V), one item alone cannot credit as the full component. Students must take both items to credit as the full vegetables component for OVS. However, each ½-cup selection of vegetables meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.
- The fruits component includes ½ cup of green grapes and ½ cup of applesauce. Since each item provides only half of the daily fruits component (half F), one item alone cannot credit as the full component. Students must take both items to credit as the full fruits component for OVS. However, each ½-cup selection of fruits meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.

For more information, see “[Student Selections of Only Fruits, Vegetables and One Other Component](#)” in this section.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Table 4-12. Offering Minimum Daily Fruits and Vegetables as Two Food Items with Equal Serving Sizes

GRADES K-5 AND 6-8				
Planned Lunch Menu		Meal Pattern Components		
Cheese and vegetable pizza, 1 slice (1 ½ ounces of low-fat mozzarella cheese)		M/MA, 1 ½ ounce equivalents		
WGR pizza crust, 2 ounces		G, 2 ounce equivalents		
Coleslaw, ⅔ cup Tomato sauce and vegetables on pizza, ⅔ cup		V, ¾ cup		
Green grapes, ¼ cup Applesauce, ¼ cup		F, ½ cup		
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk, or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
				
Students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.				
Student Selects	Food Items	Full Food Components (Minimum Daily Serving)	Plus at least ½ cup of F or V	Reimbursable Meal?
		MUST BE AT LEAST 2	MUST BE “YES”	
Pizza (M/MA, G, half V *)	1	2	No	No. The selected meal contains two full components (M/MA and G) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Applesauce (half F) * Green grapes (half F) * Milk (M)	3	2	No**	No. The selected meal contains only two full components (F and M). It is missing at least ½ cup of vegetables or another full component.
Pizza (M/MA, G, half V) * Green grapes (half F) *	2	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (M/MA and G) and ⅔ cup of V and F combined (⅔ cup of vegetables on pizza and ¼ cup of green grapes).
Pizza (M/MA, G, half V) * Coleslaw (half V) *	2	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G and V).
Pizza (M/MA, G, half V) * Milk (M)	2	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Pizza (M/MA, G, half V) * Green grapes (half F) * Coleslaw (half V) *	3	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and V) and ½ cup of F.
<p>* Student selections of less than ½ cup do not credit as a component for OVS, unless they are combined with additional servings of fruits or vegetables to meet the minimum requirement. To encourage student selections of reimbursable meals, offer all fruits and vegetables in ½-cup servings.</p> <p>**Student selections of the minimum daily serving of fruits and vegetables credit once as either the full component or the minimum ½ cup requirement for OVS, but not both in the same meal.</p>				

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Table 4-13. Offering Minimum Daily Fruits and Vegetables as Two Food Items with Equal Serving Sizes

GRADES 9-12				
Planned Lunch Menu		Meal Pattern Components		
Cheese and vegetable pizza, 1 slice (2 ounces of low-fat mozzarella cheese)		M/MA, 2 ounce equivalents		
WGR pizza crust, 3 ounces		G, 3 ounce equivalents		
Coleslaw, ½ cup Tomato sauce and vegetables on pizza, ½ cup		V, 1 cup		
Green grapes, ½ cup Applesauce, ½ cup		F, 1 cup		
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk, or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
Students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.				
Student Selects	Food Items	Full Food Components (Minimum Daily Serving)	Plus at least ½ cup of F or V	Reimbursable Meal?
		MUST BE AT LEAST 2	MUST BE “YES”	
Pizza (M/MA, G, half V) *	1	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (M/MA and G) and ½ cup of V.
Applesauce (half F) * Green grapes (half F) * Milk (M)	3	2	No**	No. The selected meal contains only two full components (F and M). It is missing at least ½ cup of vegetables or another full component.
Pizza (M/MA, G, half V) * Green grapes (half F) *	2	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (M/MA and G) and 1 cup of V and F combined
Pizza (M/MA, G, half V) * Coleslaw (half V) *	2	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G and V).
Pizza (M/MA, G, half V) * Milk (M)	2	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and M) and ½ cup of V.
Pizza (M/MA, G, half V) * Green grapes (half F) * Coleslaw (half V) *	3	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and V) and ½ cup of F.
* Student selections of ½ cup of fruits or vegetables do not credit as the full 1-cup component, but they meet the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. **Student selections of the minimum daily 1-cup serving of fruits or vegetables credit once as either the full component or the minimum ½ cup requirement for OVS, but not both in the same meal.				



FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Table 4-14 shows OVS examples for grades K-5 and 6-8 when the lunch menu offers the minimum daily requirement for vegetables as two food items with unequal serving sizes. The vegetables component includes ¼ cup of lettuce and tomato combined, one-third of the daily vegetables component (one-third V), and ½ cup of carrot sticks, two-thirds of the daily vegetables component (two-thirds V).

Table 4-14. Offering Minimum Daily Vegetables as Two Food Items with Unequal Servings

GRADES K-5 AND 6-8				
Planned Lunch Menu		Meal Pattern Components		
Cheeseburger, 1 ½ ounces of cooked beef, ½ ounce of cheese		M/MA, 2 ounce equivalents		
Whole-grain bun, 2 ounces		G, 2 ounce equivalents		
Lettuce and tomato, ¼ cup Carrot sticks, ½ cup		V, ¾ cup		
Green apple, ½ cup		F, ½ cup		
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk, or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
				
Students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.				
Student Selects	Food Items	Full Food Components (Minimum Daily Serving)	Plus at least ½ cup of F or V	Reimbursable Meal?
		MUST BE AT LEAST 2	MUST BE "YES"	
Cheeseburger on bun (M/MA, G) Carrot sticks (two-thirds V) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and M) and ½ cup of V.
Lettuce and tomato (one-third V) * Carrot sticks (two-thirds V) Milk (M)	3	2	No **	No. The selected meal contains only two full food components (V and M).
Carrot sticks (two-thirds V) Apple (F) Milk (M)	3	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (F and M) and ½ cup of V.
Cheeseburger on bun (M/MA, G) Lettuce and tomato (one-third V) * Low-fat milk (M)	3	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Lettuce and tomato (one-third V) * Carrot sticks (two-thirds V) Apple (F) Milk (M)	4	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (V, F and M).
<p>* Student selections of less than ½ cup do not credit as a component for OVS, unless they are combined with additional servings of fruits or vegetables to meet the minimum requirement. To encourage student selections of reimbursable meals, offer all fruits and vegetables in ½-cup servings.</p> <p>**Student selections of the minimum daily serving of fruits and vegetables credit once as either the full component or the minimum ½ cup requirement for OVS, but not both in the same meal.</p>				

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

OFFERING MORE THAN MINIMUM DAILY VEGETABLES AS TWO FOOD ITEMS

Table 4-15 shows OVS examples for grades 9-12 with a lunch menu that offers more than the minimum daily serving of the vegetables components as two food items with unequal serving sizes. These examples assume that the menu planner has a standardized recipe to document the meat sauce's meal pattern contribution of 2 ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternates and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of vegetables. Whether a student's choice credits as a full component for OVS depends on the minimum daily requirement.

- **Vegetables:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 1 cup of vegetables daily for grades 9-12. The planned lunch menu provides $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups of vegetables from $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of tomato sauce in the meat sauce and 2 cups of salad. The salad provides the full vegetables component. (Raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served.) The meat sauce provides one-quarter of the vegetables component (one-quarter V). The meat sauce alone cannot credit as the vegetables component because it is less than the minimum daily serving. For a reimbursable meal:
 - students who select both the meat sauce and salad (more than the full component) or the salad alone (full component) must also select at least two other components, one of which could be $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit; and
 - students who select only the meat sauce ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup of vegetables) must also select at least $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of fruit and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
- **Fruits:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 1 cup of fruit daily for grades 9-12. The planned lunch menu provides 1 cup of fruit from two $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving of fruit salad. Student can choose either one or two servings. Each serving provides half of the daily fruits component (half F). One serving alone does not credit as the full fruits component, but meets the OVS requirement for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables. For a reimbursable meal:
 - students who select both servings of fruit salad (full component) must also select at least two other components, one of which could be $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables; and
 - students who select one serving of fruit salad (half F) must also select the minimum daily serving of two other components



FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Table 4-15. Offering More than Minimum Daily Vegetables and Fruits as Two Food Items with Unequal Servings

GRADES 9-12				
Planned Lunch Menu		Meal Pattern Components		
WGR pasta, 1 cup (2 ounce equivalents)				
Meat sauce, 2 ounces of cooked hamburger				
Tossed garden salad, 2 cups (<i>Raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served</i>) Tomato sauce in meat sauce, ¼ cup				
Fruit salad, two ½-cup servings				
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk, or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup				
<p>Students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.</p>				
Student Selects	Food Items	Full Food Components (Minimum Daily Serving)	Plus at least ½ cup of F or V	Reimbursable Meal?
		MUST BE AT LEAST 2	MUST BE "YES"	
WGR pasta (G) Fruit salad, one serving (half F) * Milk (M)	3	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (G and M) and includes ½ cup of F.
Salad (V) Fruit salad, one serving (half F) * Milk (M)	3	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (V and M) and includes ½ cup of F.
WGR pasta (G) Meat sauce (M/MA, one-quarter V) * Milk (M)	3	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three full components (G, M/MA, and M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
WGR pasta (G) Meat sauce (M/MA, one-quarter V) * Fruit salad, one serving (half F) *	3	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (G and M/MA) and includes ¾ cup of F and V combined.
WGR pasta (G) Salad (V) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (G, V and M).
Salad (V) Fruit salad, one serving (half F) * Milk (M)	3	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (V and M) and includes ½ cup of F.
<p>* Student selections of less than ½ cup do not credit as a component for OVS, unless they are combined with additional servings of fruits or vegetables to meet the minimum requirement. To encourage student selections of reimbursable meals, offer all fruits and vegetables in ½-cup servings.</p>				

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

SELECTION OF ONLY FRUITS, VEGETABLES AND ONE OTHER COMPONENT

With OVS at lunch, students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components. If a student selects only three components and two of these three components are fruits and vegetables, whether the meal is reimbursable depends on the serving size of the chosen food items for each grade group.

**Grades K-5 and 6-8**

For grades K-5 and 6-8, the daily lunch meal pattern requires $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of vegetables for both grade groups. If an elementary or middle school student selects only three components and two are fruits and vegetables, the student must select the full required serving size of either fruits or vegetables in order for both to credit as components for OVS. For example, an elementary student who selects $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit (full component), $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetable (less than full component) and one other full component has a reimbursable meal.

Table 4-16 shows OVS examples for grades K-5 and 6-8 when students select only fruits, vegetables and one other component.

- **Vegetables:** The lunch menu offers $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of broccoli and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of corn, which provides $\frac{1}{4}$ cup more vegetables than the minimum daily requirement. Each $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving provides two-thirds (two-thirds V) of the $\frac{3}{4}$ -cup minimum daily vegetables component. The broccoli or corn alone do not credit as the full vegetables component, but each $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving meets the OVS requirement for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables.
- **Fruits:** The lunch menu offers $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of red grapes. Each $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving provides the full fruits component and meets the OVS requirement for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables.

The scenarios below show examples of required meal selections for a reimbursable meal when students in grades K-5 or 6-8 select only three components from the lunch menu in table 4-16, and two of these selections are fruits and vegetables.

- Student who select $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of broccoli (less than the full $\frac{3}{4}$ -cup component) and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of grapes (full component) must also select the minimum daily serving of one other component for a reimbursable meal.
- Student who select $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of broccoli and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of corn (more than the full $\frac{3}{4}$ -cup component) and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of grapes (full component) must also select the minimum daily serving of one other component for a reimbursable meal.

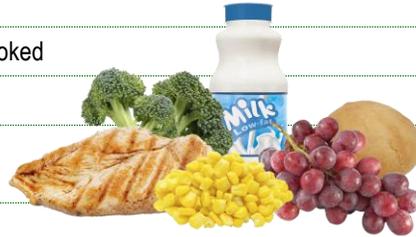


FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Table 4-16. Student Selections of Only Fruits, Vegetables and One Other Component

GRADES K-5 AND 6-8

Planned Lunch Menu	Meal Pattern Components
Grilled chicken, 1 ½ ounces cooked	M/MA, 1 ½ ounce equivalents
Whole-grain roll, 2 ounces	G, 2 ounce equivalents
Broccoli, ½ cup Corn, ½ cup	V, 1 cup
Red grapes, ½ cup	F, ½ cup
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk, or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup



Students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.

Student Selects	Food Items	Full Food Components (Minimum Daily Serving)	Plus at least ½ cup of F or V	Reimbursable Meal?
		MUST BE AT LEAST 2	MUST BE "YES"	
Broccoli (two-thirds V) * Grapes (F) Milk (M)	3	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (F and M) and ½ cup of V.
Broccoli (two-thirds V) * Grapes (F) Chicken (M/MA)	3	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (F and M/MA) and ½ cup of V.
Broccoli (two-thirds V) * Grapes (F) Roll (G)	3	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (F and G) and ½ cup of V.
Corn (two-thirds V) * Grapes (F) Milk (M)	3	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (F and M) and ½ cup of V.
Corn (two-thirds V) * Grapes (F) Chicken (M/MA)	3	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (F and M/MA) and ½ cup of V.
Corn (two-thirds V) * Grapes (F) Roll (G)	3	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (F and G) and ½ cup of V.

* Student selections of ½ cup of vegetables do not credit as the full component for grades K-5 and 6-8 but they meet the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Grades 9-12

For grades 9-12, the daily lunch meal pattern requires 1 cup of fruits and 1 cup of vegetables.

If a high school student selects only three components and two are fruits and vegetables, the student must select the full required serving size for either fruits or vegetables in order for both to credit as full components for OVS. For

example, a high school student who selects $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables and one other full component does not have a reimbursable meal. Either the fruits or vegetables selection must be 1 cup (minimum daily serving) to credit as the full component.



Table 4-17 shows OVS examples for grades 9-12 when students select only fruits, vegetables and one other component.

- **Vegetables:** The lunch menu offers $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of broccoli and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of corn to meet the minimum daily 1-cup serving for the vegetables component. Each $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving of vegetable provides half (half V) of the minimum daily vegetables component. The broccoli or corn alone do not credit as the full vegetables component, but each $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving meets the OVS requirement for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables.
- **Fruits:** The lunch menu includes two $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings of red grapes to meet the required 1-cup serving for the fruits component. Each $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving provides half (half F) of the daily fruits component. One $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving of red grapes does not credit as the full fruits component, but meets the OVS requirement for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables.

The scenarios below show examples of required meal selections for a reimbursable meal when high school students select only three components from the lunch menu in table 4-17, and two are fruits and vegetables.

- Students who select $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of corn (less than the full component) and 1 cup of red grapes (full component) must also select the minimum daily serving of one other full component for a reimbursable meal.
- Students who select $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of broccoli and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of corn (full 1-cup component) and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit (less than full component) must also select the minimum daily serving of one other full component for a reimbursable meal.

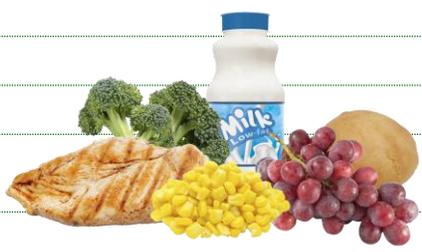


FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Table 4-17. Student Selections of Only Fruits, Vegetables and One Other Component

GRADES 9-12

Planned Lunch Menu	Meal Pattern Components
Grilled chicken, 2 ounces cooked	M/MA, 2 ounce equivalents
Whole-grain roll, 2 ounces	G, 2 ounce equivalents
Broccoli, ½ cup Corn, ½ cup	V, 1 cup
Red grapes, two ½-cup servings	F, 1 cup
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk, or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup



Students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.

Student Selects	Food Items	Full Food Components (Minimum Daily Serving)	Plus at least ½ cup of F or V	Reimbursable Meal?
		MUST BE AT LEAST 2	MUST BE "YES"	
Broccoli (half V) * Grapes, one serving (half F) * Milk (M)	3	1	Yes	No. While the selected meal includes 1 cup of F and V combined, it contains only one full component (M).
Broccoli (half V) * Grapes, one serving (half F) * Chicken (M/MA)	3	1	Yes	No. While the selected meal includes 1 cup of F and V combined, it contains only one full component (M/MA).
Broccoli (half V) * Grapes, one serving (half F) * Roll (G)	3	1	Yes	No. While the selected meal includes 1 cup of F and V combined, it contains only one full component (G).
Corn (half V) * Grapes, two servings (F) Milk (M)	4	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal includes two full components (F and M) and ½ cup of V.
Corn (half V) * Grapes, two servings (F) Chicken (M/MA)	4	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (F and M/MA) and ½ cup of V.
Corn (half V) * Grapes, two servings (F) Roll (G)	4	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (F and G) and ½ cup of V.

* Student selections of ½ cup of fruits or vegetables do not credit as the full component for grades 9-12 but they meet the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.

GRAINS

Grains with OVS at Lunch

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the grains component at lunch. For more information on the meal pattern requirements for grains, see “Grains” in [section 2](#).

A menu item must provide a minimum of ¼ ounce equivalent of grains to credit toward the grains component. The rest of the minimum daily serving for each grade group must be met by adding other grains.

- The grains component can be offered as one or more individual food items such as a whole-grain bread stick, WGR roll, whole-corn tortilla, and brown rice.
- Grains can also be part of a combination food such as an entree with grains and meat/meat alternates, e.g., hamburger on a WGR bun, turkey sandwich on a whole-wheat roll, lasagna made with WGR noodles, and pizza made with WGR crust. For more information, see “Combination Entrees” in [section 2](#).

To credit as the grains component for OVS, the amount selected by the student must be at least the minimum daily requirement for the grade group.



GRAINS

OFFERING MINIMUM DAILY GRAINS AS TWO FOOD ITEMS WITH EQUAL SERVINGS

When a lunch menu offers the minimum daily grains requirement as two separate food items with equal servings, the full component includes both items and students must select both items to credit as one component for OVS. Student selections of less than the minimum daily serving do not credit as a food component for OVS at lunch.

Table 4-18 shows OVS examples when the lunch menu offers the minimum daily grains requirement as two food items with equal serving sizes. With this menu planning approach, students in all grade groups must select both food items to credit as the grains component for OVS.

- **Grades K-5 and 6-8:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 1 ounce equivalent of daily grains for both grade groups. The planned lunch menu provides 1 ounce equivalent of grains from $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of brown rice ($\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalent) and a $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce whole-grain roll ($\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalent). The rice or roll alone cannot credit as the grains component because each serving is less than the minimum daily requirement. Students must take **both** servings to credit as the full grains component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
- **Grades 9-12:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 2 ounce equivalents of daily grains for grades 9-12. The planned lunch menu provides 2 ounce equivalents of grains from $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of brown rice (1 ounce equivalent) and a 1-ounce whole-grain roll (1 ounce equivalent). The rice or roll alone cannot credit as the grains component because each serving is less than the minimum daily requirement. Students must take **both** servings to credit as the full grains component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.

When the menu offers the minimum daily grains requirement for any grade group as two food items with equal serving sizes, it can be more difficult for students to select the amount required to credit as the full component for reimbursable meals. A better menu planning approach is offering all grains in at least the minimum daily serving so that any student selection credits as a full component for OVS.



GRAINS

Table 4-18. Offering Minimum Daily Grains as Two Food Items with Equal Servings

GRADES K-5 AND 6-8			
PLANNED GRAINS COMPONENT		MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (1 ounce equivalent)	
Brown rice, ¼ cup		½ ounce equivalent	
Whole-grain roll, ½ ounce		½ ounce equivalent	
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Grains Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 1 OUNCE EQUIVALENT
Brown rice Whole-grain roll	1	1	Yes. The selected 1 ounce equivalent is the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Brown rice	½ *	0	No. The selected ½ ounce equivalent is less than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
Whole-grain roll	½ *	0	No. The selected ½ ounce equivalent is less than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
GRADES 9-12			
PLANNED GRAINS COMPONENT		MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (2 ounce equivalents)	
Brown rice, ½ cup		1 ounce equivalent	
Whole-grain roll, 1 ounce		1 ounce equivalent	
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Grains Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 2 OUNCE EQUIVALENTS
Brown rice Whole-grain roll	2	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents are the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Brown rice	1 *	0	No. The selected 1 ounce equivalent is less than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
Whole-grain roll	1 *	0	No. The selected 1 ounce equivalent is less than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
* Student selections of less than the minimum daily grains serving do not credit as a component for OVS.			

GRAINS

OFFERING TWO FOOD ITEMS THAT ARE EACH THE MINIMUM DAILY GRAINS

When a lunch menu offers the grains component as two separate food items and each one provides the minimum daily serving, students can select either food item to credit as the full component for OVS. Student selections of more than the minimum daily serving credit as only one component for OVS at lunch.

Table 4-19 shows OVS examples when the lunch menu offers the grains component as two food items that are each at least the minimum daily serving.

- **Grades K-5 and 6-8:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 1 ounce equivalent of daily grains for both grade groups. The planned lunch menu provides 2 ounce equivalents of grains from $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of WGR spaghetti (1 ounce equivalent) and a 1-ounce WGR roll (1 ounce equivalent). Students may take the spaghetti and roll together or either one alone to credit as the grains component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
- **Grades 9-12:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 2 ounce equivalents of daily grains for grades 9-12. The planned lunch menu provides 4 ounce equivalents of grains from 1 cup of WGR spaghetti (2 ounce equivalents) and a 2-ounce WGR roll (2 ounce equivalents). Students may take the spaghetti and roll together or either one alone to credit as the grains component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.

With this menu planning approach, students in all grade groups can select either food item to credit as the grains component for OVS. This makes it is easier for students to select the minimum amount required to credit as a full component for reimbursable meals.



GRAINS

Table 4-19. Offering Two Grains Items Each Providing Minimum Daily Serving

GRADES K-5 AND 6-8			
PLANNED GRAINS COMPONENT		MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (2 ounce equivalents)	
WGR spaghetti, ½ cup		1 ounce equivalent	
Whole-grain roll, 1 ounce		1 ounce equivalent	
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Grains Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 1 OUNCE EQUIVALENT
WGR spaghetti WGR roll	2 *	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents are more than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
WGR spaghetti	1	1	Yes. The selected 1 ounce equivalent is the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
WGR roll	1	1	Yes. The selected 1 ounce equivalent is the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
GRADES 9-12			
PLANNED GRAINS COMPONENT		MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (4 ounce equivalents)	
Whole-wheat spaghetti, 1 cup		2 ounce equivalent	
Whole-grain roll, 2 ounce		2 ounce equivalent	
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Grains Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 2 OUNCE EQUIVALENTS
WGR spaghetti WGR roll	4 *	1	Yes. The selected 4 ounce equivalents are more than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
WGR spaghetti	2	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents are the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
WGR roll	2	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents are the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
* Student selections of more than the minimum daily grains serving credit as only one component for OVS.			

GRAINS

OFFERING MORE THAN MINIMUM DAILY GRAINS AS TWO FOOD ITEMS WITH UNEQUAL SERVINGS

When a lunch menu offers more than the minimum daily grains requirement as two separate food items with unequal serving sizes, only the food item that meets the minimum daily serving can credit as one component for OVS.

- Student selections of less than the minimum daily serving do not credit as a food component for OVS at lunch.
- Student selections of more than the minimum daily serving credit as only one component for OVS at lunch.



Table 4-20 shows OVS examples when the lunch menu offers more than the minimum daily grains component as two food items with unequal serving sizes. Whether a student's choice credits as the grains component for OVS depends on the minimum daily requirement for each grade group.

- **Grades K-5 and 6-8:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 1 ounce equivalent of daily grains for both grade groups. The planned lunch menu provides 1 ½ ounce equivalents of grains from ½ cup of WGR ziti (1 ounce equivalent) and ½ ounce of WGR garlic bread (½ ounce equivalent). The garlic bread alone cannot credit as the grains component because it is less than the minimum daily serving. Students may take either the ziti and garlic bread together or the ziti alone to credit as the full grains component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
- **Grades 9-12:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 2 ounce equivalents of daily grains for grades 9-12. The planned lunch menu provides 3 ounce equivalents of grains from 1 cup of WGR ziti (2 ounce equivalents) and 1 ounce of WGR garlic bread (1 ounce equivalent). The garlic bread alone cannot credit as the grains component because it is less than the minimum daily serving. Students may take either the ziti and garlic bread together or the ziti alone to credit as the full grains component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.

When the menu offers the minimum daily grains requirement for any grade group as two food items with unequal serving sizes, it can be more difficult for students to select the full amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. A better menu planning approach is offering all grains in at least the minimum daily serving so that any student selection credits as a full component for OVS.

GRAINS

**Table 4-20. Offering More than Minimum Daily Grains
as Two Food Items with Unequal Servings**

GRADES K-5 AND 6-8			
PLANNED GRAINS COMPONENT			MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (2 ounce equivalents)
WGR ziti, ½ cup			1 ounce equivalent
WGR garlic bread, ½ ounce			½ ounce equivalent
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Grains Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 1 OUNCE EQUIVALENT
WGR ziti WGR garlic bread	1 ½ *	1	Yes. The selected 1 ½ ounce equivalents are more than the minimum daily serving. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
WGR ziti	1	1	Yes. The selected 1 ounce equivalent is the same as the minimum daily serving. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
WGR garlic bread	½ **	0	No. The selected ½ ounce equivalent is less than the minimum daily serving. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
GRADES 9-12			
PLANNED GRAINS COMPONENT			MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (3 ounce equivalents)
WGR ziti, 1 cup			2 ounce equivalents
WGR garlic bread, 1 ounce			1 ounce equivalent
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Grains Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 2 OUNCE EQUIVALENTS
WGR ziti WGR garlic bread	3 *	1	Yes. The selected 3 ounce equivalents are more than the minimum daily serving. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
WGR ziti	2	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents are the same as the minimum daily serving. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
WGR garlic bread	1 **	0	No. The selected 1 ounce equivalent is less than the minimum daily serving. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
* Student selections of more than the minimum daily grains serving credit as only one component for OVS.			
** Student selections of less than the minimum daily grains serving do not credit as a component for OVS.			

GRAINS



MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

Meat/Meat Alternates with OVS at Lunch

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the meat/meat alternates component at lunch. For more information on the meal pattern requirements for meat/meat alternates, see “Meat/Meat Alternates” in [section 2](#).

The minimum daily serving of meat/meat alternates can be offered as only one or two food items. The meat/meat alternates component must be provided as a main dish or a main dish and one other food item.

A menu item must provide a minimum of $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce equivalent of cooked lean meat or equivalent to credit toward the meat/meat alternates component. The rest of the minimum daily serving for each grade group must be met by adding other meat/meat alternates. For more information, see “Main Dish Requirement for Lunch” in [section 2](#).

- Menu planners can offer the meat/meat alternates component as a combination food such as an entree with grains and meat/meat alternates, e.g., hamburger on a WGR bun, turkey sandwich on a whole-wheat roll, made with WGR noodles and pizza made with WGR crust.
- The meat/meat alternates component can also be offered as **one food item** such as grilled chicken or yogurt. For more information on combination entrees, see “Combination Entrees” in [section 2](#).

To credit as the meat/meat alternates component for OVS, the amount selected by the student must be at least the minimum daily requirement for the grade group.



MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

OFFERING MINIMUM DAILY MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES AS TWO FOOD ITEMS WITH EQUAL SERVINGS

When a lunch menu offers the minimum daily meat/meat alternates requirement as two separate food items with equal servings, the full component includes both items and students must select both items to credit as one component for OVS. Student selections of less than the minimum daily serving do not credit as a food component for OVS at lunch.

Table 4-21 shows OVS examples when the lunch menu offers the minimum daily meat/meat alternates requirement as two food items with equal serving sizes. With this menu planning approach, students in all grade groups must select **both** food items to credit as the meat/meat alternates component for OVS.

- **Grades K-5 and 6-8:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 1 ounce equivalent of daily meat/meat alternates for both grade groups. The planned lunch menu provides 1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternates from $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of low-fat yogurt ($\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalent) and a $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce low-fat cheese stick ($\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalent). The yogurt or cheese stick alone cannot credit as the full meat/meat alternates component because each serving is less than the minimum daily requirement. Students must take both servings to credit as the meat/meat alternates component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
- **Grades 9-12:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 2 ounce equivalents of daily meat/meat alternates for grades 9-12. The planned lunch menu provides 2 ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternates from $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of low-fat yogurt (1 ounce equivalent) and a 1-ounce low-fat cheese stick (1 ounce equivalent). The yogurt or cheese stick alone cannot credit as the full meat/meat alternates component because each serving is less than the minimum daily requirement. Students must take both servings to credit as the meat/meat alternates component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.

When the menu offers the minimum daily meat/meat alternates requirement for any grade group as two separate food items with equal serving sizes, it can be more difficult for students to select the full amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. A better menu planning approach is offering all meat/meat alternates in at least the minimum daily serving so that any student selection credits as a full component for OVS.



MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

Table 4-21. Offering Minimum Daily Meat/Meat Alternates as Two Food Items with Equal Servings

GRADES K-5 AND 6-8			
PLANNED MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES COMPONENT		MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (1 ounce equivalent)	
Yogurt, ¼ cup		½ ounce equivalent	
Low-fat cheese stick, ½ ounce		½ ounce equivalent	
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Meat/Meat Alternate Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 1 OUNCE EQUIVALENT
Low-fat yogurt Low-fat cheese stick	1	1	Yes. The selected 1 ounce equivalent is the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Low-fat yogurt	½ *	0	No. The selected ½ ounce equivalent is less than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
Low-fat cheese stick	½ *	0	No. The selected ½ ounce equivalent is less than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
GRADES 9-12			
PLANNED MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES COMPONENT		MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (2 ounce equivalents)	
Yogurt, ½ cup		1 ounce equivalent	
Low-fat cheese stick, 1 ounce		1 ounce equivalent	
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Meat/Meat Alternate Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 2 OUNCE EQUIVALENTS
Low-fat yogurt Low-fat cheese stick	2	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents are the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Low-fat yogurt	1 *	0	No. The selected 1 ounce equivalent is less than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
Low-fat cheese stick	1 *	0	No. The selected 1 ounce equivalent is less than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
* Student selections of less than the minimum daily serving do not credit as a component for OVS.			

MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

OFFERING TWO MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES ITEMS EACH PROVIDING MINIMUM DAILY SERVING

When a lunch menu offers the meat/meat alternates component as two separate food items that are each at least the minimum daily serving, students can select either one to credit as the full component for OVS. Student selections of more than the minimum daily serving credit as only one component for OVS at lunch.

Table 4-22 shows OVS examples when the lunch menu offers the meat/meat alternates component as two food items that are each at least the minimum daily serving.

- **Grades K-5 and 6-8:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 1 ounce equivalent of daily meat/meat alternates for both grade groups. The planned lunch menu provides 2 ounce equivalents of meat alternates from ½ cup of low-fat yogurt (1 ounce equivalent) and 1 ounce of low-fat Swiss cheese cubes (1 ounce equivalent). Students may take the yogurt and cheese together or either one alone to credit as the meat/meat alternates component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
- **Grades 9-12:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 2 ounce equivalents of daily meat/meat alternates for grades 9-12. The planned lunch menu provides 4 ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternates from 1 cup of low-fat yogurt (2 ounce equivalents) and 2 ounces of low-fat Swiss cheese cubes (2 ounce equivalents). Students may take the yogurt and cheese together or either one alone to credit as the meat/meat alternates component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.

With this menu planning approach, students in all grade groups can select **either food item** to credit as the meat/meat alternates component for OVS. This makes it easier for students to select the minimum amount required to credit as a full component for reimbursable meals.



MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

Table 4-22. Offering Two Meat/Meat Alternates Items Each Providing Minimum Daily Serving

GRADES K-5 AND 6-8			
PLANNED MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES COMPONENT		MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (2 ounce equivalents)	
Yogurt, ½ cup		1 ounce equivalent	
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes, 1 ounce		1 ounce equivalent	
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Meat/Meat Alternate Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 1 OUNCE EQUIVALENT
Low-fat yogurt Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	2 *	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents are more than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Low-fat yogurt	1	1	Yes. The selected 1 ounce equivalent is the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	1	1	Yes. The selected 1 ounce equivalent is the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
GRADES 9-12			
PLANNED MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES COMPONENT		MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (4 ounce equivalents)	
Yogurt, 1 cup		2 ounce equivalents	
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes, 2 ounces		2 ounce equivalents	
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Meat/Meat Alternate Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 2 OUNCE EQUIVALENTS
Low-fat yogurt Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	4 *	1	Yes. The selected 4 ounce equivalents are more than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Low-fat yogurt	2	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents are the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Low-fat Swiss cheese Cubes	2	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents are the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
* Student selections of more than the minimum daily serving size credit as only one component for OVS.			

MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

OFFERING MORE THAN MINIMUM DAILY MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES AS TWO FOOD ITEMS WITH UNEQUAL SERVINGS

When a lunch menu offers more than the minimum daily meat/meat alternates serving as two separate food items with unequal serving sizes, only the food item that meets the minimum daily serving can credit as one component for OVS. Student selections of less than the minimum daily serving cannot credit as a food component for OVS at lunch. Student selections of more than the minimum daily serving credit as only one component for OVS at lunch.



Table 4-23 shows OVS examples with a lunch menu that offers more than the minimum daily meat/meat alternates component as two food items with unequal serving sizes. Whether a student's choice credits as the meat/meat alternates component for OVS depends on the minimum daily serving requirement for each grade group.

- **Grades K-5 and 6-8:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 1 ounce equivalent of daily meat/meat alternates for both grade groups. The planned lunch menu provides 2 ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternates from $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of bean soup (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalents) and $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce of low-fat cheese cubes ($\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalent). The cheese cubes alone cannot credit as the full meat/meat alternates component because they are less than the minimum daily serving. Students may take either the bean soup and cheese cubes together or the bean soup alone to credit as the meat/meat alternates component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
- **Grades 9-12:** The lunch meal pattern requires at least 2 ounce equivalents of daily meat/meat alternates for grades 9-12. The planned lunch menu provides 3 ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternates from 1 cup of bean soup (2 ounce equivalents) and 1 ounce of low-fat cheese cubes (1 ounce equivalent). The cheese cubes alone cannot credit as the full meat/meat alternates component because they are less than the minimum daily serving. Students may take either the bean soup and cheese cubes together or the bean soup alone to credit as the meat/meat alternates component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.

When the menu offers the minimum daily meat/meat alternates requirement for any grade group as two food items with unequal serving sizes, it can be more difficult for students to select the full amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. A better menu planning approach is offering all meat/meat alternates in at least the minimum daily serving so that any student selection credits as a full component for OVS. Alternatively, when feasible, package both meat/meat alternates together so students must take both.

MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

Table 4-23. Offering More than Minimum Daily Meat/Meat Alternates as Two Food Items with Unequal Servings

GRADES K-5 AND 6-8			
PLANNED MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES COMPONENT		MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (2 ounce equivalents)	
Bean soup, ¾ cup		1 ½ ounce equivalents	
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes, ½ ounce		½ ounce equivalent	
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Meat/Meat Alternate Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 1 OUNCE EQUIVALENT
Bean soup Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	2 *	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents are more than the minimum daily serving. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Bean soup	1 ½ *	1	Yes. The selected 1 ½ ounce equivalents are more than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	½ **	0	No. The selected ½ ounce equivalent is less than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
GRADES 9-12			
PLANNED MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES COMPONENT		MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION (3 ounce equivalents)	
Bean soup, 1 cup		2 ounce equivalents	
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes, 1 ounce		1 ounce equivalent	
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Meat/Meat Alternate Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 2 OUNCE EQUIVALENTS
Bean soup Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	3 *	1	Yes. The selected 3 ounce equivalents are more than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Bean soup	2	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents are the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	1 **	0	No. The selected 1 ounce equivalent is less than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
* Student selections of more than the minimum daily serving credit as only one component for OVS.			
** Student selections of less than the minimum daily serving do not credit as a component for OVS.			

MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

OFFERING ENTREE CHOICES WITH DIFFERENT SERVING SIZES

The meat/meat alternates component may be offered in a main dish or in a main dish and one other food item. If the lunch menu offers a variety of daily entrees with different serving sizes, only the choices that meet the minimum daily requirement can credit as the full meat/meat alternates component for OVS. For more information, see “Main Dish Requirement for Lunch” in [section 2](#).

Tables 4-24 (grades K-5 and 6-8) and 4-25 (grades 9-12) show OVS examples when the lunch menu allows students to choose from four different entree selections. For this menu, each entree choice provides at least 2 ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternate including:

- beef stew with 3 ounces of cooked beef (3 ounce equivalents);
- roast chicken with 2 ounces of cooked chicken (2 ounce equivalents);
- peanut butter sandwich with 3 tablespoons of peanut butter (1 ½ ounce equivalents) on 2 ounces of whole-grain bread (2 ounce equivalents) served with a ¾-ounce low-fat cheese wedge (¾ ounce equivalent); and
- chickpea salad with ¼ cup of chickpeas (1 ounce equivalent) served with ½ cup of yogurt (1 ounce equivalent).



Two entrees (beef stew and roast chicken) provide the meat/meat alternates component in one food item (main dish). The other two entrees (peanut butter sandwich with cheese stick, and salad with chickpeas and yogurt) split the meat/meat alternates component into two food items (main dish and side item).

The lunch meal pattern requires at least 1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternates for grade K-5 and 6-8, and at least 2 ounce equivalents for grades 9-12. Since each entree choice provides at least the minimum daily requirement for all grade groups, students can select any entree to credit as the meat/meat alternates component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.

If a student selects only one of the two items from the split entrees (peanut butter sandwich with cheese wedge and chickpea salad with yogurt), some choices cannot credit as the meat/meat alternates component because they are less than the minimum daily serving. For example, the peanut butter sandwich alone credits as the meat/meat alternates and grains components for grades K-5 and 6-8 (see table 4-22), but credits only as the grains component for grades 9-12 (see table 4-23). When the lunch menu offers different size choices from a meal pattern component, menu planners must consider how the offerings affect reimbursable meals under OVS.

MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

Table 4-24. Offering Different Size Entree Choices

GRADES K-5 AND 6-8			
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Meat/Meat Alternate Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 1 OUNCE EQUIVALENT
Beef stew (3 ounces of cooked beef)	3 *	1	Yes. The selected 3 ounce equivalents is more than the minimum daily serving. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Roast chicken (2 ounces cooked)	2 *	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents is more than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Peanut butter sandwich (1 ½ ounce equivalents) Low-fat cheese wedge (¾ ounce equivalent)	2 ¼ *	1	Yes. The selected 2 ¼ ounce equivalents is more than the minimum daily requirement. The whole-grain bread (2 ounce equivalents) credits as a full component because it is more than the minimum daily grains requirement. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. The peanut butter sandwich alone (1 ½ ounce equivalents) credits as the meat/meat alternates component because it is more than the minimum daily requirement. The whole-grain bread (2 ounce equivalents) credits as a full component because it is more than the minimum daily grains requirement. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. The cheese wedge alone (¾ ounce equivalent) does not credit as the meat/meat alternates component because it is less than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
Chickpea salad (1 ounce equivalent) Yogurt (1 ounce equivalent)	2 *	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents is more than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component. Students could select either the entree salad with chickpeas (1 ounce equivalent) or yogurt (1 ounce equivalent) alone to credit as the full component because each choice is the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
* Student selections of more than the minimum daily serving credit as only one component for OVS. The minimum daily serving of the meat/meat alternates component cannot be offered as more than two food items. For more information, see “Main Dish Requirement for Lunch” in section 2 .			

MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

Table 4-25. Offering Different Size Entree Choices

GRADES 9-12			
Student Selects	Ounce Equivalents	OVS Contribution (Full Component)	Credits as Full Meat/Meat Alternate Component? MUST BE MINIMUM DAILY SERVING OF 2 OUNCE EQUIVALENTS
Beef stew (3 ounces of cooked beef)	3 *	1	Yes. The selected 3 ounce equivalents is more than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Roast chicken (2 ounces cooked)	2 *	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents is the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
Peanut butter sandwich (1 ½ ounce equivalents) Low-fat cheese wedge (¾ ounce equivalent)	2 ¼ *	1	Yes. The selected 2 ¼ ounce equivalents is more than the minimum daily requirement. The whole-grain bread (2 ounce equivalents) credits as a full component because it is the same than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. The peanut butter sandwich alone (1 ½ ounce equivalents) does not credit as the meat/meat alternates component because it is less than the minimum daily requirement. The whole-grain bread (2 ounce equivalents) credits as a full component because it is the same than the minimum daily grains requirement. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component. The cheese wedge alone (¾ ounce equivalent) does not credit as the meat/meat alternates component because it is less than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
Chickpea salad (1 ounce equivalent) Yogurt (1 ounce equivalent)	2 *	1	Yes. The selected 2 ounce equivalents is the same as the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component. The entree salad with chickpeas (1 ounce equivalent) or yogurt alone (1 ounce equivalent) cannot credit as the meat/meat alternates component because each choice is less than the minimum daily requirement. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other components.
* Student selections of more than the minimum daily serving credit as only one component for OVS. The minimum daily serving of the meat/meat alternates component cannot be offered as more than two food items. For more information, see “Main Dish Requirement for Lunch” in section 2 .			

Menu Planning Tips for OVS at Lunch

Menu planners decide how to offer the food components for OVS at lunch. These menu planning decisions determine the choices students can select for reimbursable meals. Menu planners can increase the likelihood that students will select reimbursable meals by using strategies that encourage students to take at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components. The following guidelines help simplify the menu planning process and make it easier for students to select reimbursable meals and for food service staff to identify reimbursable lunches with OVS.

- Offer combination entrees that provide the minimum daily serving of both grains and meat/meat alternates. Students who choose the entree have already selected two full components and only need to select $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables for a reimbursable meal. For more information, see “Combination Entrees” in [section 2](#).
- Offer the minimum daily grains and meat/meat alternates components as one food item instead of two. For example, offer a 2-ounce equivalent WGR muffin instead of two 1-ounce equivalent WGR mini-muffins. This makes it easier for students to select the full component. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
- When offering the daily grains or meat/meat alternates components as two food items, provide each food item in the minimum daily serving size. Students can select either food item to credit as the full component for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other component.
- When offering the minimum daily serving size of grains or meat/meat alternates as two separate food items, package both food items together so that students must take both. For example, a salad plate meal for grades 9-12 includes a 1-ounce low-fat cheese stick and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of low-fat yogurt. Package these food items together instead of offering each one separately.
- Offer all grades a variety of vegetables in $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup portions and allow students to select up to two servings. This makes it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables. This menu planning approach provides an additional $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of daily vegetables for grades K-5 and 6-8. Schools can serve larger amounts of any component if meals do not exceed the weekly limits for calories, saturated fats, and sodium. For more information, see “Dietary Specifications” in [section 3](#) and [section 5](#).



- Offer all grades a variety of fruits in $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup portions. Allow students in grades K-5 and 6-8 to select at least one serving and students in grades 9-12 to select at least two servings. This makes it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement to select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables.
- Check that lunch menus and signage clearly communicate all menu choices and what students must selection for reimbursable meals. For more information, see “Meal Identification Signage” in [section 3](#).
- Provide OVS training for school food service staff. Food service staff must be able to understand and identify:
 - the required meal pattern components for lunch;
 - how food items credit for each meal on the lunch menu; and
 - what constitutes a reimbursable meal at the POS.



For more information on menu planning for lunch, see [section 2](#) and [section 3](#), and the CSDE’s handout, *Menu Planning for the National School Lunch Program*.

SAMPLE LUNCH MENUS

The menu and cafeteria signage must clearly communicate what students can select from each component for a reimbursable lunch, based on the planned daily lunch menu for each grade group. For more information, see “Meal Identification Signage” in [section 3](#).

Sample lunch menus 1 through 4 show how menu planners could communicate the OVS requirements to students. To demonstrate how menu planning choices affect OVS, each menu offers the same food items but changes the amounts that students can select from each component.

Each example is for one day’s menu and includes choices within each component. Each component provides at least the minimum daily serving. All entrees include both the grains and meat/meat alternates component. To meet the weekly minimums, menu planners must provide additional servings of grains and meat/meat alternates on some days over the week.



Sample Lunch Menu 1 for Grades K-5 and 6-8

Table 4-26 shows a daily lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 that allows students to select one choice from each component. All menu items offer each component in at least the minimum daily serving size for both grade groups. The menu planner chose to offer all entrees as combination foods that provide at least the minimum daily serving of both grains and meat/meat alternates.

This menu clearly communicates that students can select all choices but must select at least one serving of fruits or vegetables and two other components.

- A ½-cup selection of fruit provides the full fruits component and also meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.
- A ¾-cup selection of vegetables provides the full vegetables component and also meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.



Table 4-26. Sample Lunch Menu 1

GRADES K-5 AND 6-8

Each lunch includes five components:
Milk, Fruits, Vegetables, Grains and Meat/Meat Alternates.
 Choose **AT LEAST** one fruit or vegetable and two other components.
 For best nutrition, take all choices!

CHOOSE AT LEAST ONE SERVING			
MILK	FRUITS	VEGETABLES	MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES AND GRAINS *
CHOOSE ONE	CHOOSE ONE	CHOOSE ONE	CHOOSE ONE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-fat (1%) ■ Fat-free plain ■ Fat-free chocolate ■ Fat-free strawberry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Raisins ■ Blueberries ■ Green grapes ■ Pineapple chunks ■ Sliced peaches ■ Banana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Carrot sticks ■ Broccoli florets ■ Garden salad ■ Seasoned corn ■ Roasted potatoes ■ Green beans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hamburger on whole-wheat bun ■ Turkey whole-grain wrap ■ Baked chicken with WGR corn bread ■ Southwest chili with whole-grain roll

Table 4-27 shows OVS examples with student selections for sample lunch menu 1.

Table 4-27. OVS Examples for Sample Lunch Menu 1

Planned Lunch Menu for Grades K-5 and 6-8			Meal Pattern Components	
MILK <i>Choose one</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low-fat plain Fat-free plain, chocolate or strawberry 		M, 1 cup	
FRUITS <i>Choose one</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raisins, ¼ cup * Blueberries, ½ cup Green grapes, ½ cup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pineapple chunks, ½ cup Sliced peaches, ½ cup Banana, ½ cup 	F, ½ cup	
VEGETABLES <i>Choose one</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carrot sticks, ¾ cup Broccoli florets, ¾ cup Garden salad, 1 ½ cups * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seasoned corn, ¾ cup Roasted potatoes, ¾ cup Green beans, ¾ cup 	V, ¾ cup	
MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES AND GRAINS <i>Choose one</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hamburger (2 ounces cooked) on whole-wheat bun (2 ounces) Turkey (2 ounces) in whole-grain wrap (2 ounces) Baked chicken (2 ounces cooked) with WGR corn bread (2.4 ounces) Southwest chili (½ cup beans) with whole-grain roll (2 ounces) 		G, 2 ounce equivalents M/MA, 2 ounce equivalents	
Students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.				
Student Selects	Food Items	Full Food Components (Minimum Daily Serving)	Plus at least ½ cup of F or V	Reimbursable Meal?
		MUST BE AT LEAST 2	MUST BE “YES”	
Hamburger on whole-wheat bun (M/MA, G) Pineapple chunks (F)	2	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and F).
Hamburger on whole-wheat bun (M/MA, G) Milk (M)	2	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Carrot sticks (V) Banana (F) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (V, F, and M).
Baked chicken (M/MA) Corn bread (G) Roasted potatoes (V)	3	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and V).
Baked chicken (M/MA) Green grapes (F) Broccoli florets (V)	3	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, F, and V).
Baked chicken (M/MA) Raisins (F) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, F, and M) and includes ½ cup of F.
Southwest chili (M/MA) Whole-grain roll (G) Milk (M)	3	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Turkey wrap (M/MA and G) Garden salad (V) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four full components (M/MA, G, V, and M).
* Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served and raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served.				

Sample Lunch Menu 2 for Grades K-5 and 6-8

Table 4-28 shows a daily lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 that allows students to select one choice from the milk, fruits, grains and meat/meat alternates components and two choices from the vegetables component. The menu planner offers all vegetables in 1/2-cup servings to make it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement for fruits and vegetables.

- A 1/2-cup selection of fruits provides the full fruits component and also meets the OVS requirement for at least 1/2 cup of fruits or vegetables.
- A 1/2-cup selection of vegetables does not provide the full vegetables component but meets the OVS requirement for at least 1/2 cup of fruits or vegetables.



This menu provides 1/4 cup more vegetables than the minimum daily requirement for grades K-5 and 6-8. Lunches can include additional servings of any meal pattern component if the menu does not exceed the weekly limits for calories, saturated fats, and sodium. For more information, see “Dietary Specifications” in section 3 and section 5.

This menu clearly communicates that students can select all choices but must select at least 1/2 cup of fruits or vegetables and two other components. Students can select two different vegetables or two servings of the same vegetable because the menu is planned to allow any two choices from the vegetables component. Student selections of two 1/2-cup vegetable servings credit as only one component for OVS at lunch. For more information, see “Student Selections of Multiple Fruits or Vegetables” in the “Fruits and Vegetables” section.

Table 4-28. Sample Lunch Menu 2			
GRADES K-5 AND 6-8			
<p>Each lunch includes five components: Milk, Fruits, Vegetables, Grains and Meat/Meat Alternates. Choose AT LEAST one fruit or vegetable and two other components. For best nutrition, take all choices!</p>			
<p>MILK</p> <p>CHOOSE ONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-fat (1%) ■ Fat-free plain ■ Fat-free chocolate ■ Fat-free strawberry 	<p>CHOOSE AT LEAST ONE SERVING (1/2 CUP)</p> <p>FRUITS</p> <p>CHOOSE ONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Raisins ■ Blueberries ■ Green grapes ■ Pineapple chunks ■ Sliced peaches ■ Banana 	<p>VEGETABLES</p> <p>CHOOSE UP TO TWO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Carrot sticks ■ Broccoli florets ■ Garden salad ■ Seasoned corn ■ Roasted potatoes ■ Green beans 	<p>MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES AND GRAINS *</p> <p>CHOOSE ONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hamburger on whole-wheat bun ■ Turkey whole-grain wrap ■ Baked chicken with WGR corn bread ■ Southwest chili with whole-grain roll

Sample Lunch Menu 3 for Grades K-5 and 6-8

Table 4-29 shows a daily lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 that allows students to select one choice from the milk, grains and meat/meat alternates components, two choices from the fruits component and two choices from the vegetables component. The menu planner offers all fruits and vegetables in ½-cup servings to make it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement for fruits and vegetables.

- A ½-cup selection of fruits provides the full fruits component and also meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.
- A ½-cup selection of vegetables does not provide the full vegetables component but meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.

This menu provides ½ cup more fruits and ¼ cup more vegetables than the minimum daily requirement for grades K-5 and 6-8. Lunches can include additional servings of any meal pattern component if the menu does not exceed the weekly limits for calories, saturated fats, and sodium. For more information, see “Dietary Specifications” in [section 3](#) and [section 5](#).

This menu clearly communicates that students can select all choices but must select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and two other components. Students can select two different fruits or two servings of the same fruit, and two different vegetables or two servings of the **same** vegetable because the menu is planned to allow any two choices from the fruits component and any two choices from the vegetables component. Student selections of two ½-cup fruit servings or two ½-cup vegetable servings each credit as only one component (minimum daily serving) for OVS at lunch. For more information, see “[Student Selections of Multiple Fruits or Vegetables](#)” in the “Fruits and Vegetables” section.

Table 4-29. Sample Lunch Menu 3			
GRADES K-5 AND 6-8			
<p>Each lunch includes five components: Milk, Fruits, Vegetables, Grains and Meat/Meat Alternates.</p> <p>Choose AT LEAST one fruit or vegetable and two other components.</p> <p>For best nutrition, take all choices!</p>			
<p>MILK</p> <p>CHOOSE ONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-fat (1%) ■ Fat-free plain ■ Fat-free chocolate ■ Fat-free strawberry 	<p>CHOOSE AT LEAST ONE SERVING (½ CUP)</p> <p>FRUITS</p> <p>CHOOSE UP TO TWO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Raisins ■ Blueberries ■ Green grapes ■ Pineapple chunks ■ Sliced peaches ■ Banana 	<p>VEGETABLES</p> <p>CHOOSE UP TO TWO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Carrot sticks ■ Broccoli florets ■ Garden salad ■ Seasoned corn ■ Roasted potatoes ■ Green beans 	<p>MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES AND GRAINS *</p> <p>CHOOSE ONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hamburger on whole-wheat bun ■ Turkey whole-grain wrap ■ Baked chicken with WGR corn bread ■ Southwest chili with whole-grain roll

Sample Lunch Menu 4 for Grades 9-12

Table 4-30 shows a daily lunch menu for grades 9-12 that allows students to select one choice from the milk, grains and meat/meat alternates components, two choices from the fruits component and two choices from the vegetables component. The menu planner offers all fruits and vegetables in ½-cup servings to make it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement to select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.

- A ½-cup selection of fruit provides only half of the fruits component (half F). It cannot credit as the full fruits component but meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.
- A ½-cup selection of vegetable provides only half of the vegetables component (half V). It cannot credit as the full vegetables component but meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.

This menu clearly communicates that students can select all choices but must select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and two other components. Students can select two different fruits or two servings of the same fruit, and two different vegetables or two servings of the same vegetable because the menu is planned to allow any two choices from the fruits component and any two choices from the vegetables component. Student selections of two ½-cup fruit servings or two ½-cup vegetable servings credit as only one component (minimum daily serving) for OVS at lunch. For more information, see “[Student Selections of Multiple Fruits or Vegetables](#)” in the “Fruits and Vegetables” section.

Table 4-30. Sample Lunch Menu 4			
GRADES 9-12			
<p>Each lunch includes five components: Milk, Fruits, Vegetables, Grains and Meat/Meat Alternates.</p> <p>Choose AT LEAST one fruit or vegetable and two other components.</p> <p>For best nutrition, take all choices!</p>			
CHOOSE AT LEAST ONE SERVING (½ CUP)			
<p>MILK</p> <p>CHOOSE ONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-fat (1%) ■ Fat-free plain ■ Fat-free chocolate ■ Fat-free strawberry 	<p>FRUITS</p> <p>CHOOSE UP TO TWO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Raisins ■ Blueberries ■ Green grapes ■ Pineapple chunks ■ Sliced peaches ■ Banana 	<p>VEGETABLES</p> <p>CHOOSE UP TO TWO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Carrot sticks ■ Broccoli florets ■ Garden salad ■ Seasoned corn ■ Roasted potatoes ■ Green beans 	<p>MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES AND GRAINS *</p> <p>CHOOSE ONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hamburger on whole-wheat bun ■ Turkey whole-grain wrap ■ Baked chicken with WGR corn bread ■ Southwest chili with whole-grain roll

Table 4-31 shows OVS examples with student selections for sample lunch menu 4.

Table 4-31. OVS Examples for Sample Lunch Menu 4

Planned Lunch Menu for Grades 9-12		Meal Pattern Components		
MILK <i>Choose one</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low-fat plain Fat-free plain, chocolate or strawberry 	M, 1 cup		
FRUITS <i>Choose up to two</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raisins, ¼ cup * Blueberries, ½ cup Green grapes, ½ cup Pineapple chunks, ½ cup Sliced peaches, ½ cup Banana, ½ cup 	F, 1 cup		
VEGETABLES <i>Choose up to two</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carrot sticks, ½ cup Broccoli florets, ½ cup Garden salad, 2 cups * Seasoned corn, ½ cup Roasted potatoes, ½ cup Green beans, ½ cup 	V, 1 cup		
MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES AND GRAINS <i>Choose one</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hamburger (2 ounces cooked) on whole-wheat bun (2 ounces) Turkey (2 ounces) in whole-grain wrap (2 ounces) Baked chicken (2 ounces cooked) with WGR corn bread (2.4 ounces) Southwest chili (½ cup beans) with whole-grain roll (2 ounces) 	G, 2 ounce equivalents M/MA, 2 ounce equivalents		
<p>Students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.</p>				
Student Selects	Food Items	Full Food Components (Minimum Daily Serving)	Plus at least ½ cup of F or V	Reimbursable Meal?
		MUST BE AT LEAST 2	MUST BE "YES"	
Baked chicken (M/MA) Peaches (half F) ** Spinach salad (half V) **	3	1	Yes	No. While the selected meal contains 1 cup of F and V combined, it contains only one full component (M/MA).
Turkey wrap (M/MA and G) Garden salad (half V) ** Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and M) and includes ½ cup of V.
Southwest chili (M/MA) Whole-grain roll (G) Milk (1 M)	3	3	No	No. While the selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, G, and M), it is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Green beans (half V) ** Seasoned corn (half V) ** Blueberries (half F) ** Milk (1 M)	4	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (V and M) and includes ½ cup of F.
Southwest chili (M/MA) Carrot sticks (half V) ** Carrot sticks (half V) ** Milk (1 M)	4	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three full components (M/MA, V, and M).
Baked chicken (M/MA) Corn bread (G) Green grapes (half F) ** Roasted potatoes (half V) **	4	2	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains two full components (M/MA and G) and includes 1 cup of F and V combined.
<p>* Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served and raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served. ** Student selections of ½ cup of fruits or vegetables do not credit as the full component, but they meet the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. One cup of fruits or vegetables credits once as either the full component or the minimum ½ cup requirement for OVS, but not both in the same meal.</p>				



OVS at Breakfast

At breakfast, OVS is optional for all grades. OVS applies only to the daily breakfast meal pattern requirements. Menu planners determine the daily serving size of each food item to meet the required weekly amounts for each food component.

The OVS requirements for breakfast are different from the OVS requirements for lunch. OVS at breakfast requires a minimum number of food items instead of food components. The definitions below apply only to OVS at breakfast.

- A **food component** is one of the three food groups that comprise reimbursable breakfasts, including grains (with optional meat/meat alternate substitutions), fruits (with optional vegetable substitutions) and milk.
- A **food item** is a specific food offered within the three food components. It may contain one or more food components or more than one serving of the same component. For example, a 2-ounce whole-grain bagel is one food component (grains) that contains two food items (two grains). For more information, see “[Food Items at Breakfast](#)” in this section.



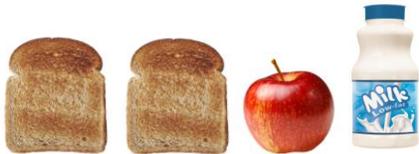
Without OVS, schools must offer at least three food items from the three food components and students must select all three. To implement the OVS option at breakfast, schools must offer a minimum of four food items from the three food components. For a reimbursable meal, students must select at least ½ cup of fruits (or vegetable substitutions, if offered) and two other food items. Students must select at least the daily minimum required by the meal pattern, except for the fruits component (including vegetable substitutions). Table 4-32 summarizes the breakfast meal pattern requirements with and without OVS.

Table 4-32. Daily Breakfast Meal Pattern Requirements	
Without OVS (Minimum of Three Food Items)	With OVS (Minimum of Four Food Items)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Milk 2. Fruits (or optional vegetable substitutions) 3. Grains 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Milk 2. Fruits (or optional vegetable substitutions) 3. Grains 4. Additional food item from either fruits (including optional vegetable substitutions) or grains (including meat/meat alternate substitutions)
Student cannot decline any food items.	Student must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitutions, if offered).

OVS BREAKFAST REQUIREMENTS

For a breakfast to be reimbursable under OVS, schools must meet the criteria below.

- Meals must be planned to include at least four food items from the three food components (milk, fruits, and grains). Schools can choose to substitute meat/meat alternates in place of grains after offering the minimum daily grains requirement of 1 ounce equivalent. For more information, see “[Meat/Meat Alternate Substitutions](#)” in this section. Schools can choose to substitute vegetables for fruits if certain requirements are met. For more information, see “[Vegetables at Breakfast](#)” in [section 2](#).
- All planned food items must be offered to all students. Table 4-33 shows examples of acceptable menu planning options for breakfast. The four food items can include two servings of grains, either two of the same grain or two different grains (Menu A) or two servings of fruit (including vegetable substitutions), either two of the same fruit or two different fruits (Menu B), but cannot include two servings of milk.

Table 4-33. Examples of Acceptable Food Items for Breakfast	
Plan a MINIMUM OF FOUR Food Items *	
MENU A	MENU B
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grains 2. Grains (or meat/meat alternate substitutions) 3. Fruits 4. Milk 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grains 2. Fruits (or vegetable substitutions) 3. Fruits (or vegetable substitutions) 4. Milk 
* The four food items cannot include two servings of milk.	

- The planned serving sizes for all food items must equal at least the minimum daily required quantities in the SBP meal pattern.
- Meals must be priced as a unit, i.e., students pay the same price regardless of whether they take three or more food items. SFAs must establish one price for a complete reimbursable meal in the paid meal category and one price for a complete reimbursable meal in the reduced-price meal category. SFAs may set different unit prices for various combinations of foods offered. However, all students including those eligible for free and reduced-price meals must be allowed to select any reimbursable meal. Meals with a higher unit price must be available at no cost for all free-eligible students and no more than 30 cents for all reduced-eligible students.

- Students must select at least ½ cup of fruits (or vegetable substitutions, if offered) and the minimum required serving of at least two other food items.
- Students may take a smaller portion of declined food items; however, they do not credit toward the reimbursable meal.

Table 4-34 summarizes the OVS requirements for all grade groups at breakfast.

Table 4-34. OVS Requirements at Breakfast	
Must Offer at Least Four Food Items from Three Food Components ¹	Student Must Select
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Milk (1 cup) ² 2. Fruits or optional vegetable substitutions (1 cup) ^{3,4} 3. Grains (1 ounce equivalent) ⁵ 4. Additional item from either fruits (including vegetable substitutions) or grains (including meat/meat alternate substitutions) ^{6,7} 	<p>At least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).</p>
<p>¹ Serving sizes must equal at least the minimum daily required quantities for each grade group specified in the SBP meal pattern. The menu planner determines the daily serving size to meet the required weekly amounts for each component.</p> <p>² Schools must offer at least two different varieties (fat content and/or flavor) of low-fat (1%) unflavored or fat-free unflavored or flavored milk. Whole, reduced-fat (2%) and flavored low-fat milk cannot be served. For more information, see “Milk Variety Requirement” in section 2.</p> <p>³ Fruit and vegetable juice (including vegetable/fruit juice blends) must be pasteurized 100 percent full-strength juice. Fruit juice together with vegetable juice cannot exceed half of the weekly fruit offerings. This includes juice that is fresh, frozen, or made from concentrate, frozen juice pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits or vegetables in fruit or vegetable smoothies, and juice from canned fruit served in 100 percent juice, unless the canned fruit is drained. For more information, see “Weekly Juice Limits at Breakfast” in section 3.</p> <p>⁴ Vegetables may be substituted for fruits but the first two cups per week must be from the dark green, red/orange, beans and peas (legumes), or “other” vegetable subgroups. Starchy vegetables may be offered on any day if the weekly menu includes at least two cups of nonstarchy vegetables. For more information, see “Vegetables at Breakfast” in section 2.</p> <p>⁵ All grains must be WGR. For more information, see “WGR Requirement” in section 2.</p> <p>⁶ The fourth planned food item cannot be another serving of milk.</p> <p>⁷ Schools may substitute 1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternates for 1 ounce equivalent of grains after offering the minimum daily grains requirement. For more information, see “Meat/Meat Alternate Substitutions” in this section. Meat/meat alternate substitutions credit toward the minimum weekly grains.</p>	



Table 4-35 shows sample breakfast menus that meet the OVS menu planning requirements for all grade groups. Each menu contains at least four food items from the three breakfast components (milk, fruits and grains).

Table 4-35. Sample Acceptable Breakfast Menus for OVS			
Planned Menu Items	Meal Pattern Components	Number of Food Items	Total Food Items
Whole-grain corn muffin, 2 ½ ounces	Grains, 2 ounce equivalents	2 G	5
Orange juice, ½ cup *	Fruits, ½ cup	1 F	
Strawberries, ½ cup *	Fruits, ½ cup	1 F	
Choice of milk, 1 cup	Milk, 1 cup	1 M	
Whole-grain granola cereal, ¼ cup	Grains, 1 ounce equivalent	1 G	4
Vanilla yogurt, ½ cup **	Grains (M/MA substitution), 1 ounce equivalent	1 G	
Fruit salad, 1 cup *	Fruits, 1 cup	1 F	
Choice of milk, 1 cup	Milk, 1 cup	1 M	
Whole-grain mini pancakes, 2 ½ ounces	Grains, 2 ounce equivalents	2 G	5
Choice of juice, ½ cup *	Fruits, ½ cup	1 F	
Peaches, ½ cup *	Fruits, ½ cup	1 F	
Choice of milk, 1 cup	Milk, 1 cup	1 M	
Whole-grain toast, 1 ounce	Grains, 1 ounce equivalent	1 G	7
Cheese omelet, 1 egg and 1 ounce cheese **	Grains (M/MA substitution), 3 ounce equivalents	3 G	
Strawberries, 1 cup *	Fruits, 1 cup	2 F	
Choice of milk, 1 cup	Milk, 1 cup	1 M	
Whole-grain cereal flakes, 1 cup	Grains, 1 ounce equivalent	1 G	5
Whole-grain blueberry muffin, 2 ounces	Grains, 1 ounce equivalent	1 G	
Apple and orange wedges, 1 cup *	Fruits, 1 cup	2 F	
Choice of milk, 1 cup	Milk, 1 cup	1 M	
Oatmeal, ½ cup	Grains, 1 ounce equivalent	1 G	4
Blueberries, ½ cup *	Fruits, ½ cup	1 F	
Banana, one 150 count *	Fruits, ½ cup	1 F	
Choice of milk, 1 cup	Milk, 1 cup	1 M	

* Menu planners can choose to credit each ½-cup serving of fruit as one food item (two food items total). Menu planners can choose to credit 1 cup of the same fruit as either one food item or two food items. For more information, see “[Crediting Fruit Items](#)” in this section.

** Menu planners can choose to credit a serving of meat/meat alternate as a grain substitution or extra food. For more information, see “[Meat/Meat Alternate Substitutions](#)” in this section.

FOOD ITEMS AT BREAKFAST

Food items at breakfast credit differently from food items at lunch. A food item is a specific food offered within the three food components for breakfast. It may contain one or more food components or more than one serving of the same component. The examples below show how some menu offerings credit as food items at breakfast.

Example 1 – Whole-grain Bagel

A 2-ounce whole-grain bagel (2 ounce equivalents) contains one food component (grains) that provides two food items (two grains) for OVS at breakfast. Menu planners could also choose to credit the bagel as one food item. For more information, see [“Offering Grains as One or More Food Items”](#) under “Grains with OVS at Breakfast” in this section.



Example 2 – Variety of Assorted Fruit Choices

A variety of assorted fruit choices with four separate ½-cup servings of apples, oranges, blueberries, and red grapes is one food component (fruits) that contains four food items (four fruits) for OVS at breakfast. Menu planners can choose to credit two separate ½-cup servings of fruit as two food items for breakfast. For more information, see [“Crediting Fruit Items”](#) in this section.



Example 3 – School-made Fruit and Milk Smoothie

A school-made smoothie made with ½ cup of pureed fruit and 1 cup of milk contains two food components (milk and fruit) that provide two food items for OVS. Pureed fruit in smoothies credits only as juice and must be counted toward the weekly juice limit. When menus offer smoothies made with milk, schools must also offer a variety of fluid milk on the serving line. For more information, see [“Fruit Smoothies”](#) and [“Milk Variety Requirement”](#) in [section 2](#).



Example 4 – School-made Yogurt Parfait

A school-made parfait made with ½ cup of low-fat yogurt, ½ cup of fresh sliced fruit, and ¼ cup of whole-grain granola contains two food components (grains and fruit) that provide three food items for OVS. The two grains include one meat/meat alternate substitution (low-fat yogurt).



OFFERING BREAKFAST COMPONENTS IN MORE THAN ONE FOOD ITEM

Menu planners can choose to offer the minimum daily serving of the fruits component (including vegetable substitutions) and the grains component (including meat/meat alternate substitutions) as more than one food item. Fluid milk can only be offered as one food item.

Components can be offered as more than one food item only when:

- each food item meets the minimum creditable serving size ($\frac{1}{4}$ ounce equivalent for grains including meat/meat alternate substitutions and $\frac{1}{8}$ cup for fruits); and
- the combined items provide the minimum daily requirement (1 ounce equivalent of grains including meat/meat alternate substitutions and 1 cup of fruits).

To credit as a food item for OVS, students must select at least the minimum daily amount required by the meal pattern, except for the fruits component (including vegetable substitutions). The OVS requirement for the fruits component is at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.

The SFA must ensure clear communication with students and staff about the breakfast meal pattern requirements and OVS by:

- posting cafeteria signage in all schools that clearly communicates the meal components for all breakfast menu choices and indicates what students are allowed to select (see “Meal Identification Signage” in [section 3](#)); and
- providing adequate training for school food service staff on the breakfast meal pattern components, including how to credit food items and recognize reimbursable meals.

Menu planners should consider the serving size of menu items and plan breakfast menus so that it is easy for students to select reimbursable meals and easy for food service staff to identify reimbursable meals. To implement OVS, breakfast menus must always include at least four food items from the three food components in at least the minimum daily serving (see [table 4-32](#)).

For more information on offering the fruits component as more than one item, see “Fruits and Vegetables with OVS at Breakfast” in this section. For more information on offering the grains component as more than one item, see “Grains with OVS at Breakfast” in this section.



MILK

Milk with OVS at Breakfast

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the milk component at breakfast. For more information on the meal pattern requirements for milk, see “Milk” in [section 2](#).

CREDITING MILK ITEMS

One cup (8 fluid ounces) of fluid milk must be offered daily for all grades at breakfast. Schools must offer a variety (at least two different choices) of fat content and/or flavor of milk, including low-fat (1%), fat-free or fat-free flavored. Milk can be used as a beverage, on cereal, or both. Fluid milk credits as only one food item, regardless of how much milk is served.



OVS requires a minimum of four food items, which can include two servings of grains or two servings of fruits, but cannot include two servings of milk (see [table 4-32](#)). Students must select at least one cup of fluid milk to credit as one food item for OVS. A selection of more than one serving of milk credits as only one food item for OVS. Students can choose to decline the milk component.

USDA regulations require the NSLP, ASP and SBP to make plain potable water available to children at no cost during the meal service. The water must be available without restriction in the location where meals are served. However, water is not a meal pattern component and is not part of the reimbursable meal. SFAs cannot promote or offer water or any other beverage as an alternative selection to fluid milk throughout the food service area. For more information, see “[Water Availability](#)” in this section.

Milk in Fruit/Vegetable Smoothies

When breakfast menus include smoothies made with milk, the milk must be low-fat (1%) unflavored, fat-free unflavored or fat-free flavored. Schools must also offer the fluid milk component on the serving line to meet the requirement for a variety of milk options in the SBP. For more information, see “Milk Variety Requirement” under “Milk” in [section 2](#).



Table 4-36 shows OVS examples and student selections for a breakfast menu with four food items, including a smoothie made from $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pureed fruit and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of milk. The pureed fruit credits only as juice and provides one food item (one fruit). The milk credits as an extra food because it is less than the minimum daily serving of 1 cup. Smoothies made with at least 1 cup of milk and at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit or juice can credit as two food items (one milk and one fruit) at breakfast. For more information on crediting smoothies, see “Fruit Smoothies” in [section 2](#).

MILK

Table 4-36. Offering Smoothies Made with Fruit and Milk

	Planned Breakfast Menu	Meal Pattern Components	Food Items
GRAINS	WGR corn muffin, 2 ½ ounces	G, 2 ounce equivalents	2 G
FRUITS	Kiwi, ½ cup Strawberry smoothie	F, ½ cup *	1 F
	½ cup of low-fat milk ½ cup of pureed strawberries	Extra F, ½ cup **	0 1 F
MILK	Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE "YES"	
Smoothie (1 F)	1	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only one food item (1 F).
Smoothie (1 F) Milk (1 M)	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 F and 1 M).
Smoothie (1 F) Corn muffin (2 G)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 F and 2 G).
Smoothie (1 F) Corn muffin (2 G) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (1 F, 2 G and 1 M).
<p>* Menu planners can choose to credit a ½-cup serving of fruit as one food item. For more information, see “Crediting Fruit Items” in this section.</p> <p>** Pureed fruit credits only as juice. It and must be counted with all other juices toward the weekly juice limit. For more information, see “Fruit Juice” in section 2.</p>			



FRUITS

Fruits with OVS at Breakfast

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the fruits component at breakfast, including optional vegetable substitutions. For more information on the meal pattern requirements for fruits, see “Fruits” in [section 2](#). For more information on the vegetables component, see “Vegetables” in [section 2](#).

CREDITING FRUIT ITEMS

Menu planners can choose to offer the minimum daily serving of the fruits component as more than one food item. At breakfast, ½ cup of fruit credits as one food item for OVS and 1 cup of fruit can credit as either one or two food items. This provision does not apply to fruit servings offered at lunch.

Menu planners can choose whether to credit 1 cup of fruit as either one or two food items at breakfast only. This practice is at the discretion of the menu planner and must be clearly communicated to staff and students to minimize confusion and ensure students are selecting reimbursable meals. The USDA allows schools to make these decisions for maximum flexibility in menu planning.

Tables 4-37 and 4-38 show how these menu planning decisions affect student selections for reimbursable breakfasts with OVS. For both examples, the planned breakfast includes:

- two grains (1 ounce equivalent each) from two WGR mini-blueberry muffins (2 ounce equivalents);
- 1 cup of blueberries (credited by the menu planner as either one or two fruits); and
- one milk (choice of 1 cup of fat-free unflavored or flavored milk or low-fat unflavored milk).

If the menu planner credits 1 cup of blueberries as two food items (two fruits), students can select the blueberries and milk for a reimbursable meal (see table 4-37). This selection includes three food items including two fruits and one milk.

Table 4-37. Offering One Cup of Fruit as Two Items	
<p>PLANNED Breakfast Menu</p>  <p>2 ounce equivalents (2 G)</p> <p>1 cup (2 F)</p> <p>1 cup (1 M)</p>	<p>Student SELECTS</p>  <p>2 F</p> <p>1 M</p>
<p>Reimbursable Meal? YES</p>	

FRUITS

If the menu planner credits 1 cup of blueberries as one food item (one fruit), students cannot select the blueberries and milk for a reimbursable meal because this meal includes only two food items (see table 4-38). For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least one mini-muffin (1 ounce equivalent).

Table 4-38. Offering One Cup of Fruit as One Item		
PLANNED Breakfast Menu	Student SELECTS	
 2 ounce equivalents (2 G)	 1 cup (1 F)	 1 cup (1 M)
	 1 F	 1 M
Reimbursable Meal? NO		

To encourage selection of reimbursable meals, it is generally advantageous for menu planners to credit 1 cup of fruit as two food items. However, there may be some situations when menu planners might want to credit 1 cup of fruit as only one food item. One example is when schools serve whole apples as part of assorted daily fresh whole fruit choices at breakfast, such as apples, bananas, and oranges.



The *Food Buying Guide* indicates that one 125-138 count apple credits as 1 cup of fruit. However, one banana (150 count) and one orange (138 count) each credit as ½ cup of fruit. When implementing OVS, it might be confusing to staff and students to credit one apple as two fruits (two food items), while one banana and one orange each credit as one fruit (one food item). In this situation, menu planners could choose to simplify OVS for students and staff by crediting all fresh fruit choices at breakfast as one fruit (one food item).

The simplest method of helping students choose the required ½-cup serving of fruits (or vegetable substitutions) for a reimbursable breakfast with OVS is to offer all fruits (and vegetable substitutions) in ½-cup portions and allow students to choose any two.

SMOOTHIES CONTAINING FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Smoothies made from any combination of pureed fruits and vegetables, 100 percent juice (including vegetable/fruit juice blends) and milk credit as two food items for OVS at breakfast if they contain at least 1 cup of milk and at least ½ cup pureed fruits, pureed vegetables or any combination of 100 percent fruit or vegetables juice. Pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies credit only as juice and must be counted toward the weekly juice limit. Students who select the smoothie must also select at least one other food item for a reimbursable meal.

FRUITS

Yogurt and soy yogurt credit as a meat alternate (grain substitution) in school-made smoothies at breakfast only. For example, a smoothie made with ½ cup of pureed fruit, ½ cup of low-fat yogurt and ½ cup of low-fat milk credits as two food items (one fruit and one grain from the meat/meat alternate substitution). The milk credits as an extra food because it is less than the minimum daily serving of 1 cup. For more information on meat/meat alternate substitutions for the grains component, see “[Meat/Meat Alternate Substitutions](#)” under “Grains with OVS at Breakfast” in this section. For more information on crediting smoothies, see “Fruit Smoothies” in [section 2](#).

ASSORTED JUICE CHOICES

Fruit juice together with vegetable juice (including fruit and vegetable juice blends) cannot exceed half of the weekly fruits offered at breakfast. When the daily breakfast menu offers 1 cup of fruits (the minimum required amount), students cannot select more than ½ cup of juice.



When breakfast menus allow students to select two ½-cup servings from a variety of daily fruit and juice choices, students can select either two fruits or one fruit and one juice. Students cannot select two servings of juice because this would exceed the weekly juice limit. Each school’s breakfast menu and cafeteria signage must clearly communicate the amount of juice that student can select with each meal.

If the breakfast menu offers more than 1 cup of fruits daily, the maximum amount of juice that students can select also increases. For example, if the daily breakfast menu offers a variety of four ½-cup fruit choices (2 cups total) and students can select all four choices, they can also select up to 1 cup (8 fluid ounces) of juice daily.

Table 4-39 shows sample language for assorted fruit and juice choices with OVS when the breakfast menu offers the minimum daily serving (1 cup) of fruits and allows students to select two ½-cup servings. For more information, see “Fruit Juice” in [section 2](#) and “Weekly Juice Limits at Breakfast” in [section 3](#)

Table 4-39. Sample Language for Assorted Fruit and Juice Choices

FRUITS	FRUITS
CHOOSE TWO FRUITS OR ONE FRUIT AND ONE JUICE	CHOOSE UP TO TWO FRUITS (NO MORE THAN ONE JUICE)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fresh fruit ■ Canned fruit * ■ 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice ■ Fresh vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fresh fruit ■ Canned fruit * ■ 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice ■ Fresh vegetables
<p>* In this example, the canned fruit in 100 percent juice is drained. If canned fruit is not drained, the juice counts toward the weekly juice limit. For more information, see “Weekly Juice Limits at Breakfast” in section 3.</p>	

FRUITS

DUPLICATE FRUIT SELECTIONS

The breakfast meal pattern requires at least 1 cup of fruit daily for all grades. If the menu planner offers a variety of different ½-cup servings of fruits (or optional vegetable substitutions), students must be allowed to select up to two choices. Students can select two of the same fruit (duplicate selections) or two different fruits to credit as two food items for OVS. To credit as one food item for OVS, students must select at least ½ cup of fruit.

If the daily breakfast menu offers a variety of ½-cup juice choices, students cannot select more than one juice to comply with the weekly juice limit. The menu signage must clearly communicate this requirement. For more information, see “[Assorted Juice Choices](#)” on the previous page.

Table 4-40 shows OVS examples with a breakfast menu that allows duplicate fruit selections. The menu offers five food items including:

- two grain items from two 1-ounce WGR pancakes (2 ounce equivalents);
- two fruit items from two ½-cup servings of fruits (1 cup); and
- one milk item (1 cup) from a choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk.



Since this menu is planned to allow any two fruit choices, students can select two ½-cup servings of the same fruit (two servings of blueberries or two servings of strawberries) or two ½-cup servings of different fruits (one serving of blueberries and one serving of strawberries). Each ½-cup serving of fruit credits as one food item (one fruit) for OVS. The examples below show some student selections that contain three food items and credit as reimbursable breakfasts.



When breakfast menus allow duplicate fruit choices, the school’s meal identification signage must clearly instruct students on how much food to select daily from each component for a reimbursable meal, based on the planned serving sizes for each menu item. For this example, the menu indicates that students can select up to two ½-cup servings of fruit with each breakfast (see table 4-40). For more information, see “Meal Identification Signage” in [section 3](#).

FRUITS

Table 4-40. Offering Duplicate Fruit Selections

	Planned Breakfast Menu	Meal Pattern Components	Food Items
GRAINS	WGR pancakes, 2.4 ounces	G, 2 ounce equivalents	2 G
FRUITS <i>Choose up to two</i>	Strawberries, ½ cup Blueberries, ½ cup Watermelon, ½ cup Cinnamon applesauce, ½ cup	F, 1 cup	2 F
MILK	Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE "YES"	
Pancakes (2 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Pancakes (2 G) Blueberries (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 F).
Strawberries (1 F) Blueberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 M).
Pancakes (2 G) Watermelon (1 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Pancakes (2 G) Blueberries (1 F) Strawberries (1 F)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (2 G and 2 F).
Pancakes (2 G) Cinnamon applesauce (1 F) Cinnamon applesauce (1 F)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (2 G and 2 F). Student can select two servings of the same fruit because the menu is planned to allow any two fruit choices.
Pancakes (2 G) Strawberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Pancakes (2 G) Blueberries (1 F) Strawberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	5	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains five food items (2 G, 2 F and 1 M).

FRUITS

DRIED FRUIT

Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served. Menu planners can choose to credit $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of dried fruit as two food items for OVS at breakfast. For more information, see “Dried Fruit” in [section 2](#) and “[Crediting Fruit Items](#)” in this section.

Table 4-41 shows a sample breakfast menu with dried fruit. The menu includes four foods that provide five food items. Students who select the raisins (two fruits) must select one other food item for a reimbursable breakfast.

Table 4-41. Offering One Fruit Providing Two Food Items			
Planned Breakfast Menu		Meal Pattern Components	Food Items
Whole-grain banana muffin, 2 ounces		G, 1 ounce equivalent	1 G
Whole-grain granola cereal, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup		G, 1 ounce equivalent	1 G
Raisins, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup		F, 1 cup	2 F
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup		Milk, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE “YES”	
Raisins (2 F) Banana muffin (1 G)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 G).
Raisins (2 F) Cereal (1 G)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 G).
Raisins (2 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 M).
Cereal (1 G) Banana muffin (1 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 M) but is missing at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit.
Cereal (1 G) Raisins (2 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (1 G, 2 F and 1 M).
Banana muffin (1 G) Raisins (2 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (1 G, 2 F and 1 M).
Cereal (1 G) Banana muffin (1 G) Raisins (2 F)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (2 G and 2 F).

GRAINS

Grains with OVS at Breakfast

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the grains component at breakfast, including meat/meat alternate substitutions. For more information on the meal pattern requirements for grains and meat/meat alternates, see “Grains” and “Meat/Meat Alternates” in [section 2](#).

CREDITING GRAINS FOR OVS VERSUS THE MEAL PATTERN

At breakfast, the crediting of grains as food items for OVS is different from the crediting of grains for menu planning purposes.

- **Meal Pattern:** When crediting grain products toward the WGR requirement and the minimum daily and weekly servings for the breakfast meal pattern, menu planners must round down the total amount of ounce equivalents to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce equivalent. For more information, see “Serving Sizes for Grains” in [section 2](#).
- **OVS:** When crediting grain products as food items for OVS, menu planners must round down the total amount of ounce equivalents to the nearest whole number of ounce equivalents. For more information, see “Multiple Servings of Grains” on the next page.

For example, a WGR product that contains 1.9 ounce equivalents of grains credits as $1\frac{3}{4}$ ounce equivalents of grains toward the daily and weekly meal pattern requirements. However, this product credits as only one food item for OVS. Table 4-42 shows some examples of crediting grains for OVS and the meal pattern. These examples assume that the menu planner has obtained a PFS to documents each product’s grain contribution.

Table 4-42. Crediting Grains for OVS and the Meal Pattern

Planned Grains Component	Product Weight (Ounces)	USDA Serving Size (Ounce Equivalents Chart)		Meal Pattern Contribution (OUNCE EQUIVALENTS)	OVS Contribution (FOOD ITEMS)
		Group	Required Weight (Ounces)		
Whole-grain bagel	2	B	1	2	2 *
Whole-grain roll	1.49	B	1	1.25	1
WGR pancakes	2.75	C	1.2	2.25	2 *
WGR corn muffin	2	C	1.2	1.5	1
WGR apple muffin	2	D	2	1	1
WGR French toast	4	E	2.4	1.5	1

* For OVS at breakfast, menu planners can choose to credit a 2-ounce equivalent grain product as one or two food items. For more information, see “[Multiple Servings of Grains](#)” in this section.

GRAINS

MULTIPLE SERVINGS OF GRAINS

Products that provide more than 1 ounce equivalent of grains or meat/meat alternate substitutions can credit as more than one food item for OVS at breakfast if the additional amount of grains or meat/meat alternates provides a minimum of 1 ounce equivalent. For example:

- a WGR muffin or bagel containing 2 ounce equivalents of grains can credit as two food items (two grains);
- a WGR muffin or bagel containing 3 ounce equivalents of grains can credit as three food items (three grains); and
- an omelet containing 2 ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternate substitutions can credit as two food items (two grains).



Amounts less than 1 full ounce equivalent do not credit as a food item for OVS. When crediting grains and meat/meat alternates as food items for OVS, menu planners must round down to the nearest whole number of ounce equivalents. For example, a WGR muffin that contains 1 ½ ounce equivalents of grains credits as only one food item (one grain) for OVS. Table 4-43 shows examples of how to credit grains and meat/meat alternate substitutions as food items for OVS at breakfast.

Table 4-43. Crediting Grains for OVS at Breakfast

Contribution of Grain or Meat/Meat Alternate Substitution	Daily and Weekly Meal Pattern Contribution	Number of Food Items (Grains) for OVS
¼ ounce equivalent	¼ ounce equivalent	0
½ ounce equivalent	½ ounce equivalent	0
1 ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	1
1 ½ ounce equivalents	1 ½ ounce equivalents	1
1 ¾ ounce equivalents	1 ¾ ounce equivalents	1
2 ounce equivalents	2 ounce equivalents	2
2 ½ ounce equivalents	2 ½ ounce equivalents	2
2 ¾ ounce equivalents	2 ¾ ounce equivalents	2
3 ounce equivalents	3 ounce equivalents	3

Menu planners have the option to offer grains with multiple servings as fewer food items for OVS. For more information, see “Offering Grains as One or More Food Items” on the next page.

GRAINS

OFFERING GRAINS AS ONE OR MORE FOOD ITEMS

Menu planners can choose to credit grain products with 2 ounce equivalents of grains as one or two food items, and grain products with 3 ounce equivalents of grains as one, two or three food items. These decisions are at the discretion of the menu planner and apply only to breakfast menus. The USDA allows SFAs to make these decisions for maximum flexibility in menu planning. This option does not apply to grain servings offered at lunch.

The crediting information for grains at breakfast must be clearly communicated to staff and students to minimize confusion and ensure that students are selecting reimbursable meals. Tables 4-44 and 4-45 show how these menu planning decisions affect the number of other food items that students must select for a reimbursable breakfast with OVS. For both examples, the planned breakfast includes:

- one 4-ounce WGR blueberry muffin (2 ounce equivalents), credited by the menu planner as either one or two grain items;
- two fruit items from ½ cup of strawberries and ½ cup of orange juice (1 cup); and
- one milk item (1 cup) from a choice of low-fat, fat-free or fat-free flavored milk.

If the menu planner credits the 4-ounce muffin as two food items (two grains), students can select the muffin and ½ cup of fruit for a reimbursable breakfast (see table 4-44). This student selection contains three food items including two grains and one fruit.

Table 4-44. Offering 2 Ounce Equivalents of Grains as Two Food Items					
PLANNED Breakfast Menu				Student SELECTS	
					
2 oz eq (2 G)	½ cup (1 F)	½ cup (1 F)	1 cup (1 M)	2 G	1 F
Reimbursable Meal? YES					

GRAINS

If the menu planner credits the 4-ounce muffin as one food item (one grain), students cannot select the muffin and ½ cup of fruit for a reimbursable meal because this meal includes only two food items (see table 4-45). For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least one additional food item (juice or milk).

Table 4-45. Offering 2 Ounce Equivalents of Grains as One Food Item			
PLANNED Breakfast Menu		Student SELECTS	
			
2 oz eq (1 G)	½ cup (1 F)	½ cup (1 F)	1 cup (1 M)
			
		1 G	1 F
Reimbursable Meal? no			

Regardless of how menu planners decide to credit grains for OVS, all grains must count toward the minimum daily and weekly grains and the dietary specifications. If breakfasts regularly include larger servings of grains, it might be difficult for menus to comply with the weekly limits for calories, saturated fats, and sodium. For more information, see “Dietary Specifications” in [section 3](#) and [section 5](#).

Menu planning decisions regarding how to credit grains at breakfast must be clearly communicated to staff and students to minimize confusion and ensure that students are selecting reimbursable meals.

GRAINS

Table 4-46 shows a breakfast menu with a 2-ounce whole-grain bagel (2 ounce equivalents) planned to credit as two food items. Students who select the bagel must also select at least ½ cup of fruit for a reimbursable breakfast.

Table 4-46. Offering One Food Providing Two Grain Items			
Planned Breakfast Menu	Meal Pattern Components		Food Items
Whole-grain bagel, 2 ounces	G, 2 ounce equivalents		2 G
Orange, ½ cup	F, ½ cup		1 F
Banana, ½ cup	F, ½ cup		1 F
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup		1 M
			
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE "YES"	
Orange (1 F) Milk (1 M)	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 F and 1 M).
Bagel (2 G) Orange (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 F).
Bagel (2 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Orange (1 F) Banana (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 M).
Bagel (2 G) Orange (1 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Bagel (2 G) Orange (1 F) Banana (1 F) Milk (1 M)	5	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains five food items (2 G, 2 F and 1 M).

GRAINS

OFFERING MINIMUM DAILY GRAINS AS TWO FOODS WITH EQUAL SERVINGS

When a breakfast menu offers the minimum daily grains requirement (1 ounce equivalent) as two separate foods with equal serving sizes, students must take both to credit as one food item for OVS. Student selections of less than the minimum daily serving do not credit as a food component for OVS at breakfast.

Table 4-47 shows an example of OVS when the breakfast menu offers the minimum daily grains requirement as two food items with equal serving sizes. The planned breakfast menu provides the minimum daily 1 ounce equivalent of grains from two 1-ounce WGR blueberry mini-muffins ($\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalent each).

- Since each muffin provides half of the daily grains component (half G), one muffin alone cannot credit as a grain item. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit and the minimum daily serving of at least two other food items.
- Students must take both muffins to credit as one food item (minimum daily serving) for OVS. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit and the minimum daily serving of at least one other food item.

Table 4-47. Offering Minimum Daily Serving as Two Equal Food Items

Planned Grains Component	Student Selects	Meal Pattern Contribution (OUNCE EQUIVALENTS)	OVS Contribution (FOOD ITEMS)	Additional Food Items Needed for Reimbursable Breakfast
1 ounce equivalent WGR 1-ounce blueberry mini-muffins, two (1 ounce equivalent) * 	Two muffins	1	1	At least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other food item
	One muffin	$\frac{1}{2}$ **	0	At least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other food items
<p>* Blueberry muffins are in group D of the USDA's ounce equivalents chart (appendix E). Group D requires 2 ounces of a grain product to provide 1 ounce equivalent of grains.</p> <p>** Student selections of amounts less than 1 full ounce equivalent of grains do not credit as a food item for OVS. For more information, see "Multiple Servings of Grains" in this section.</p>				

GRAINS

Table 4-48 shows OVS examples with a breakfast menu that offers 1 ounce equivalent of grains from two ½-ounce equivalent blueberry mini-muffins. When the menu offers the minimum daily grains requirement as two food items with equal serving sizes, it can be more difficult for students to select the amount required to credit as one food item for reimbursable breakfasts. A better menu planning approach is offering all grains in at least the minimum daily serving so that any student selection credits as at least one food item for OVS.

Table 4-48. Offering Minimum Daily Grains as Two Equal Food Items

Planned Breakfast Menu		Meal Pattern Components	Food Items
WGR 1-ounce blueberry mini-muffins, two		G, 1 ounce equivalent	
Orange juice, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	
Strawberries, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE "YES"	
Mini-muffins, two (1 G) Orange juice (1 F) Strawberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (1 G, 2 F and 1 M).
Mini-muffins, two (1 G) Milk (1 M)	2	No	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G and 1 M) and is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Mini-muffins, one (half G) * Strawberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 F and 1 M).
Mini-muffins, two (1 G) Orange juice (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Mini-muffins, two (1 G) Orange juice (1 F) Strawberries (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G and 2 F).
Orange juice (1 F) Strawberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 M).
* Student selections of amounts less than 1 full ounce equivalent of grains do not credit as a food item for OVS. For more information, see “Multiple Servings of Grains” in this section.			

GRAINS

OFFERING TWO FOODS EACH PROVIDING MINIMUM DAILY GRAINS

When a breakfast menu offers the grains component as two food items that are each the minimum daily serving (1 ounce equivalent), students can select either one to credit as one grain item for OVS. The same concept applies to meat/meat alternates offered as grain substitutions. Table 4-49 shows OVS examples with this menu planning approach.

Table 4-49. Offering Two Equal Food Items Each Providing Minimum Daily Serving

Planned Grains Component	Student Selects	Meal Pattern Contribution (OUNCE EQUIVALENTS)	OVS Contribution (FOOD ITEMS)	Additional Food Items Needed for Reimbursable Breakfast
BREAKFAST 1				
2 ounce equivalents Oatmeal, ½ cup (1 ounce equivalent) WGR corn muffin, 2 ounces (1 ounce equivalent) 	Oatmeal	2	2	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables
	WGR corn muffin	1	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other food item
	Oatmeal	1	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other food item
BREAKFAST 2				
2 ounce equivalents Oatmeal, ½ cup (1 ounce equivalent) Low-fat yogurt, ½ cup (1 ounce equivalent) * 	Oatmeal	2	2	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables
	Low-fat yogurt	1	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other food item
	Oatmeal	1	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other food item
* This food item is a meat/meat alternate planned as a grain substitution. For more information, see “ Meat/Meat Alternate Substitutions ” in this section.				

GRAINS

OFFERING MORE THAN MINIMUM DAILY GRAINS AS TWO FOODS WITH UNEQUAL SERVINGS

When a breakfast menu offers more than the minimum daily grains serving (1 ounce equivalent) as two foods with unequal serving sizes, only the food that meets the minimum daily serving can credit as one food item for OVS. Student selections of less than the minimum daily serving do not credit as a food component for OVS at breakfast. The same concept applies to meat/meat alternates offered as grain substitutions. Table 4-50 shows OVS examples with this menu planning approach.

Table 4-50. Offering More than Minimum Daily Serving as Two Unequal Food Items				
Planned Grains Component	Student Selects	Meal Pattern Contribution (OUNCE EQUIVALENTS)	OVS Contribution (FOOD ITEMS)	Additional Food Items Needed for Reimbursable Breakfast
BREAKFAST 1				
1 ½ ounce equivalents Whole-wheat toast, 1 slice (1 ounce equivalent) Peanut butter, 1 tablespoon (½ ounce equivalent) * 	Toast, 1 slice Peanut butter, 1 tablespoon	1 ½ **	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other food item
	Toast, 1 slice	1	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other food item
	Peanut butter, 1 tablespoon	½ ***	0	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of two other food items
BREAKFAST 2				
3 ounce equivalents Whole-wheat mini bagel, 1 ounce (1 ounce equivalent) Hard-boiled egg, one (2 ounce equivalents) * 	Mini bagel, 1 ounce Egg, one	3	3	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables
	Egg, one	2	2	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables
	Mini bagel, 1 ounce	1	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of one other food item
* These food items are meat/meat alternates planned as grain substitutions. For more information, see “ Meat/Meat Alternate Substitutions ” in this section. ** Menu planners must round down to the nearest whole number of ounce equivalents. For more information, see “ Multiple Servings of Grains ” in this section. *** Amounts less than 1 full ounce equivalent do not credit as a food item for OVS. For more information, see “ Multiple Servings of Grains ” in this section.				

GRAINS

DUPLICATE GRAIN SELECTIONS

Menu planners can choose whether to allow students to select duplicate grain items at breakfast. Schools may offer two or more different grain items of at least 1 ounce equivalent and allow students to take any two grain items. If students select two of the same grain items (duplicate selections), they credit as two food items (grains) for OVS.

Table 4-51 shows OVS examples when a breakfast menu allows students to select duplicate grain items. The menu offers five food items including:

- two different grain items (1 ounce equivalent of whole-grain cereal and 1 ounce equivalent of whole-grain toast);
- two fruit items from $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cantaloupe and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fresh plums (1 cup total); and
- one milk item (1 cup) from a choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk.



Since the breakfast menu is planned to allow any two grain choices, students can select two pieces of toast or two servings of cereal to credit as two food items (grains) for OVS. For a reimbursable breakfast, students must also select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit. The examples below show some student selections that contain three food items and credit as reimbursable breakfasts.



When breakfast menus allow duplicate grain choices, the school's meal identification signage must clearly instruct students on how much food to select daily from each component for a reimbursable meal, based on the planned serving sizes for each grade group. For this example, the cafeteria signage must communicate that students can select either:

- two servings of whole-grain cereal;
- two servings of whole-grain toast; or
- one serving of each.

For more information, see "Meal Identification Signage" in [section 3](#).

GRAINS

Table 4-51. Offering Duplicate Grain Selections

	Planned Breakfast Menu	Meal Pattern Components	Food Items
GRAINS <i>Choose up to two</i>	Whole-grain cereal flakes, 1 cup	G, 1 ounce equivalent	1 G
	Whole-grain toast, 1 ounce	G, 1 ounce equivalent	1 G
FRUITS <i>Choose up to two</i>	Cantaloupe, ½ cup	F, ½ cup	1 F
	Fresh plums, ½ cup	F, ½ cup	1 F
MILK	Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE “YES”	
Cereal (1 G) Cantaloupe (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Toast (1 G) Cantaloupe (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Cereal, two servings (2 G) Cantaloupe (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 F).
Cereal, two servings (2 G) Plum (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 F).
Cereal (1 G) Toast (1 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Cereal (1 G) Toast (1 G) Cantaloupe (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 F).
Plum (1 F) Cantaloupe (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 M).
Toast, two servings (2 G) Plum (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 F).
Toast (1 G) Cantaloupe (1 F)	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G and 1 F).

GRAINS

MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATE SUBSTITUTIONS

The breakfast meal pattern does not require meat/meat alternates. Menu planners can choose to offer a serving of meat/meat alternate in place of the grains component after meeting the minimum daily grains requirement of 1 ounce equivalent. For example, a breakfast menu that includes 1 slice of whole-grain toast (1 ounce equivalent of grains) can also include 1 ounce of low-fat cheese (1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternates).

Meat/meat alternates used as grain substitutions credit on an ounce-per-ounce basis, i.e., 1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternates provides 1 ounce equivalent of grains. The serving sizes of meat/meat alternates required to provide 1 ounce equivalent of grains (one grain item) include:

- 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish (edible portion as served, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, extenders, or other ingredients);
- 1 ounce of cheese (low-fat recommended);
- 2 ounces of cottage or ricotta cheese, cheese food/spread or cheese substitute (low-fat recommended);
- ¼ cup of cooked beans and peas (legumes);
- ½ large egg;
- 2 tablespoons of nut or seed butters;
- 1 ounce of nuts or seeds;
- 2.2 ounces of commercial tofu containing at least 5 grams of protein (see “Commercial Tofu and Tofu Products” in [section 2](#));
- ½ cup of yogurt or soy yogurt; and
- 1 ounce of APP (see “Alternate Protein Products and Vegetable Protein Products” in [section 2](#)).

The menu planner decides whether a meat/meat alternate substitution credits as a food item for OVS. The USDA allows two options for crediting meat/meat alternates at breakfast.

- **Option 1:** Offer a serving of meat/meat alternate as a grain substitution that counts toward the weekly grains requirement. Meat/meat alternates offered in place of grains credit as grain food items for OVS. Tables 4-52 and 4-53 show examples of menu planning and OVS using this option.
- **Option 2:** Offer a serving of meat/meat alternate as an extra food that does not count toward the weekly grains requirement. Meat/meat alternates offered as extras do not credit as food items for OVS. When menu planners use this option, the breakfast menu must include at least four food items in addition to the extra meat/meat alternate item. Tables 4-54 and 4-55 show examples of menu planning and OVS using this option. For more information on extra foods, see “Extra or Additional Foods” in [section 3](#).



GRAINS

To simplify OVS for staff and students, the CSDE strongly recommends consistent crediting of food items at breakfast. Menu planners should choose one option and credit foods the same way for all breakfast menus.

For both options, meat/meat alternates must count toward the weekly dietary specifications. The inclusion of meat/meat alternates cannot cause the breakfast menu to exceed the average weekly limits for calories, saturated fats, and sodium. For more information, see “Dietary Specifications” in [section 3](#) and [section 5](#).

OFFERING MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES AS ONE OR MORE FOOD ITEMS

Menu planners can choose to credit breakfast foods with 2 ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternates as 1 ounce equivalent of grain substitution and 1 ounce equivalent of extra food. For example, an egg omelet made with one egg contains 2 ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternates. The menu planner can choose to credit the omelet as any of the following:

- 2 ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternate substitutions (two food items);
- 1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternate substitution (one food item) and 1 ounce equivalent of extra food; or
- 2 ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternates as extra foods (zero food items).

These decisions are at the discretion of the menu planner and apply only to breakfast menus. This option does not apply to meat/meat alternate servings offered at lunch.

The USDA allows schools to make these decisions for maximum flexibility in menu planning. This information must be clearly communicated to staff and students to minimize confusion and ensure that students are selecting reimbursable meals.

When menu planners consider how to credit meat/meat alternates as grain substitutions, keep in mind that breakfast menus must include at least four food items and students must select at least three food items for a reimbursable meal, including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).

The SFA must ensure that school food service personnel receive appropriate training on how to identify reimbursable meals under OVS. Menu planners must clearly communicate with school food service staff regarding to credit breakfast meat/meat alternates for OVS. The cafeteria must also have appropriate signage that clearly communicates the breakfast meal components and what students are allowed to select for a reimbursable meal. For more information, see “Meal Identification Signage” in [section 3](#).



GRAINS

Table 4-52 shows OVS examples for a breakfast menu with five food items, including a meat/meat alternate (low-fat string cheese) as a grain substitution (option 1).

Table 4-52. Example 1 – Offering Meat/Meat Alternate as Grain Substitution			
Planned Breakfast Menu	Meal Pattern Components		Food Items
Whole-wheat bagel, 1-ounce	G, 1 ounce equivalent		
Peanut butter, 1 ounce	G, 1 ounce equivalent (M/MA substitution)		
Red apple slices, ½ cup	F, ½ cup		
Blueberries, ½ cup	F, ½ cup		
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup		
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE “YES”	
Bagel (1 G) Peanut butter, (1 G) Blueberries (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 F and 2 G including 1 M/MA substitution).
Bagel (1 G) Blueberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Bagel (1 G) Peanut butter, (1 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three food items (1 M and 2 G including 1 M/MA substitution) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Peanut butter, (1 G) Red apple slices (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 F, 1 M and 1 G from M/MA substitution).
Bagel (1 G) Red apple slices (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Blueberries (1 F) Red apple slices (1 F) Cheese (1 G)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 G from M/MA substitution).
Blueberries (1 F) Peanut butter, (1 G) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 F, 1 M and 1 G from M/MA substitution).

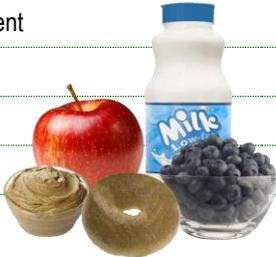
GRAINS

Table 4-53 shows OVS examples for a breakfast menu with seven food items, including two meat/meat alternates (hard-boiled egg) as grain substitutions (option 1).

Table 4-53. Example 2 – Offering Meat/Meat Alternate as Grain Substitution			
Planned Breakfast Menu		Meal Pattern Components	Food Items
Whole-wheat blueberry muffin, 4 ounces		G, 2 ounce equivalents	2 G
Hard-boiled egg, 1 egg		G, 2 ounce equivalents (M/MA substitution)	2 G
Red grapes, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Pineapple tidbits, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	1 M
			
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE “YES”	
Egg (2 G) Muffin (2 G) Pineapple tidbits (1 F)	5	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains five food items (1 F and 4 G including 2 M/MA substitutions).
Egg (2 G) Muffin (2 G) Milk (1 M)	5	No	No. The selected meal contains five food items (1 M and 4 G including 2 M/MA substitutions) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Egg (2 G) Pineapple tidbits (1 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (1 F, 1 M and 2 G from M/MA substitution).
Egg (2 G) Muffin (2 G) Red grapes (1 F)	5	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains five food items (1 F and 4 G including 2 M/MA substitutions).
Egg (2 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three food items (1 M and 2 G from M/MA substitution) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Egg (2 G) Pineapple tidbits (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 F and 2 G from M/MA substitution).
Muffin (2 G) Milk (1 M) Red grapes (1 F)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 1 M and 1 F).

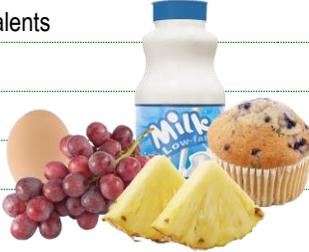
GRAINS

Table 4-54 shows OVS examples for a breakfast menu with four food items, including one meat/meat alternate (peanut butter) as an extra food item (option 2).

Table 4-54. Example 3 – Offering Meat/Meat Alternate as Extra Food			
Planned Breakfast Menu	Meal Pattern Components		Food Items
Whole-wheat bagel, 1-ounce	G, 1 ounce equivalent		1 G
Peanut butter, 1 ounce	None (extra food)		0
Red apple slices, ½ cup	F, ½ cup		1 F
Blueberries, ½ cup	F, ½ cup		1 F
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup		1 M
			
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE “YES”	
Bagel (1 G) Peanut butter (Extra) * Blueberries (1 F)	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G and 1 F).
Bagel (1 G) Blueberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Bagel (1 G) Peanut butter (Extra) * Milk (1 M)	2	No	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G and 1 M) and is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Peanut butter (Extra) * Red apple slices (1 F) Milk (1 M)	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 F and 1 M).
Bagel (1 G) Red apple slices (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Blueberries (1 F) Red apple slices (1 F) Peanut butter (Extra) *	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (2 F).
Blueberries (1 F) Peanut butter (Extra) * Milk (1 M)	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 F and 1 M).
* Meat/meat alternates planned as extra foods do not credit as food items for OVS.			

GRAINS

Table 4-55 shows OVS examples for a breakfast menu with five food items, including two meat/meat alternates (hard-boiled egg) as extra food items (option 2).

Table 4-55. Example 4 – Offering Meat/Meat Alternate as Extra Food			
Planned Breakfast Menu	Meal Pattern Components		Food Items
Whole-wheat blueberry muffin, 4 ounces	G, 2 ounce equivalents		2 G
Hard-boiled egg, 1 egg	None (extra food)		0
Red grapes, ½ cup	F, ½ cup		1 F
Pineapple tidbits, ½ cup	F, ½ cup		1 F
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup		1 M
			
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE “YES”	
Egg (extra) * Muffin (2 G) Pineapple tidbits (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 F).
Egg (extra) * Muffin (2 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Egg (extra) * Pineapple tidbits (1 F) Milk (1 M)	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 F and 1 M).
Egg (extra) * Muffin (2 G) Red grapes (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 F).
Egg (extra) * Milk (1 M)	1	No	No. The selected meal contains only one food item (1 M) and is missing at least ½ cup of fruit.
Egg (extra) * Pineapple tidbits (1 F)	1	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only one food item (1 F).
Muffin (2 G) Milk (1 M) Red grapes (1 F)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 1 M and 1 F).
* Meat/meat alternates planned as extra foods do not credit as food items for OVS.			

GRAINS

COMBINATION BREAKFAST FOODS

Combination breakfast foods frequently contain at least one serving of grains and one serving of meat/meat alternates, e.g., a breakfast burrito with scrambled egg (meat/meat alternates) in a whole-corn tortilla shell (grains) or a breakfast sandwich with ham and cheese (meat/meat alternates) on a whole-wheat English muffin (grains). The two options for crediting meat/meat alternates at breakfast also apply to combination foods. For more information, see “[Meat/Meat Alternate Substitutions](#)” in this section.

Crediting Combination Foods Containing One Grain Item and One Meat/Meat Alternate Item

The two sample breakfast menus below show how menu planners could use each option to credit a breakfast burrito (combination food) that contains 1 ounce equivalent of grains and 1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternates. Table 4-56 shows OVS examples when the menu planner credits the scrambled egg in the breakfast burrito as a grain substitution (option 1). In this example, the burrito credits as two grains (one grain and one meat/meat alternate as a grain substitution) and the menu offers five food items.

Table 4-56. Offering 2-Ounce Equivalent Combination Food as Two Grains

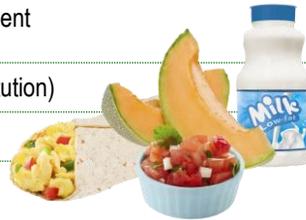
Planned Breakfast Menu		Meal Pattern Components		Food Items
Breakfast burrito with scrambled egg (½ egg) Whole-corn tortilla shell (1 ounce)		G, 1 ounce equivalent (M/MA substitution) G, 1 ounce equivalent		2 G
Garden salsa, ½ cup		F, ½ cup (V substitution)		1 F
Cantaloupe wedges, ½ cup		F, ½ cup		1 F
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).				
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?	
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE “YES”		
Breakfast burrito (2 G) Garden salsa (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 F from V substitution and 2 G including 1 M/MA substitution).	
Breakfast burrito (2 G) Cantaloupe wedges (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 F and 2 G including 1 M/MA substitution).	
Garden salsa (1 F) Cantaloupe wedges (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 M and 2 F including 1 V substitution).	



GRAINS

Table 4-57 shows OVS examples when the menu planner credits the scrambled egg in the breakfast burrito as an extra food that does not credit toward the grains component (option 2). In this example, the burrito credits as one grain and the menu offers four food items.

Table 4-57. Offering 2-Ounce Equivalent Combination Food as One Grain			
Planned Breakfast Menu	Meal Pattern Components		Food Items
Breakfast burrito with scrambled egg (½ egg) Whole-corn tortilla shell (1 ounce)	None (extra food) * G, 1 ounce equivalent		0 1 G
Garden salsa, ½ cup	F, ½ cup (V substitution)		1 F
Cantaloupe wedges, ½ cup	F, ½ cup		1 F
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup		1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE "YES"	
Breakfast burrito (1 G) * Garden salsa (1 F)	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G and 1 F from V substitution).
Breakfast burrito (1 G) * Cantaloupe wedges (1 F)	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G and 1 F).
Garden salsa (1 F) Cantaloupe wedges (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 M and 2 F including 1 V substitution).
Breakfast burrito (1 G) * Garden salsa (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 M and 1 F from V substitution).
Breakfast burrito (1 G) * Cantaloupe wedges (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F and 1 M).
* Meat/meat alternates planned as extra foods do not credit as food items for OVS.			



GRAINS

Crediting Combination Foods Containing Two Grain Items and One Meat/Meat Alternate Item

The sample breakfast menus below show how menu planners could use each option to credit a breakfast sandwich (combination food) that contains 2 ounce equivalents of grains and 1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternate substitution.

Table 4-58 shows OVS examples when the menu planner credits the egg in the breakfast sandwich as a grain substitution (option 1). In this example, the breakfast sandwich credits as three grains (two grains and one meat/meat alternate as a grain substitution) and the menu offers six food items.

Table 4-58. Offering 3-Ounce Equivalent Combination Food as Three Grains

Planned Breakfast Menu		Meal Pattern Components	Food Items
Egg sandwich (½ egg) with ham and cheese (½ ounce total) on Whole-wheat English muffin (2 ounces)		G, 1 ½ ounce equivalents (M/MA substitution) G, 2 ounce equivalent	3 G
Green grapes, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Apple Juice, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	1 M
			
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE "YES"	
Egg sandwich (3 G) Green grapes (1 F) Milk (1 M)	5	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains five food items (1 F, 1 M and 3 G including 1 M/MA substitution).
Egg sandwich (3 G) Milk (1 M)	4	No	No. The selected meal contains four food items (1 M and 3 G including 1 M/MA substitution) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Egg sandwich (3 G) Green grapes (1 F)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (1 F and 3 G including 1 M/MA substitution).
Green grapes (1 F) Apple Juice (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 M).
Egg sandwich (3 G) Apple Juice (1 F)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (1 F and 3 G including 1 M/MA substitution).

GRAINS

Table 4-59 shows OVS examples when the menu planner credits the egg in the breakfast sandwich as an extra food that does not credit toward the grains component (option 2). In this example, the breakfast sandwich credits as two grains and the menu offers five food items.

Table 4-59. Offering 3-Ounce Equivalent Combination Food as Two Grains			
Planned Breakfast Menu	Meal Pattern Components		Food Items
Egg sandwich (½ egg) with ham and cheese (½ ounce total) on Whole-wheat English muffin (2 ounces)	None (extra food) * G, 2 ounce equivalents		0 2 G
Green grapes, ½ cup	F, ½ cup		1 F
Apple Juice, ½ cup	F, ½ cup		1 F
Choice of low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free milk or fat-free flavored milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup		1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE "YES"	
Egg sandwich (2 G) * Green grapes (1 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Egg sandwich (2 G) * Milk (1 M)	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Egg sandwich (2 G) * Green grapes (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 F).
Green grapes (1 F) Apple Juice (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 M).
Egg sandwich (2 G) * Apple Juice (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 F and 2 G).
* Meat/meat alternates planned as extra foods do not credit as food items for OVS.			



GRAINS



Menu Planning Tips for OVS at Breakfast

Menu planners decide how to offer the food components for OVS at breakfast. These menu planning decisions determine the choices students can select for reimbursable meals. Menu planners can increase the likelihood that students will select reimbursable meals by using strategies that encourage students to take at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the minimum daily serving of at least two other components.

The following guidelines help simplify the menu planning process and make it easier for students to select reimbursable meals and easier for food service staff to identify reimbursable lunches with OVS.

- **Be consistent with the crediting of food items.** For example, menu planners can decide to credit meat/meat alternate substitutions as grain items or extra items. Choose one option and credit foods the same way for all menus. For more information, see [“Meat/Meat Alternates Substitutions”](#) in this section.
- **Offer all grades a variety of fruits (and optional vegetable substitutions) in $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup portions.** Allow students to select at least two servings (1 cup total) to meet the minimum daily requirement for the fruits component. This makes it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables.
- **Serve more fruit than juice.** Juice is more calorie dense than whole fruits and vegetables and does not provide the same nutritional benefits. Review breakfast menus for compliance with the weekly juice limit. Provide clear information on menus and signage instructing students on the amount of juice they can select. For more information, see [“Assorted Juice Choices”](#) in this section, “Fruits” in [section 2](#) and [“Weekly Juice Limits at Breakfast”](#) in [section 3](#).
- **Offer all grains in at least the minimum daily requirement (1 ounce equivalent) so any student choice credits as at least one food item.** For example, offer a 1-ounce equivalent serving of grains (one food item) instead of two $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce equivalent servings. For more information, see [“Offering Minimum Daily Grains as Two Foods with Equal Servings”](#) in this section.
- **Offer breakfast foods that provide at least two food items.** Examples include a 2-ounce equivalent whole-grain bagel (two grains) and a yogurt parfait with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of whole-grain granola (one grain), 4 ounces of low-fat yogurt (one grain from meat/meat alternate substitution) and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of sliced fresh fruit (one fruit). Students who select a food with both items



only need ½ cup of fruits (or optional vegetable substitutions) for a reimbursable breakfast. For more information, see “[Offering Grains as One or More Food Items](#)” in this section.

- **Check that breakfast menus and signage clearly communicate all menu choices and what students must selection for reimbursable meals.** For more information, see “Meal Identification Signage” in [section 3](#).
- **Provide OVS training for school food service staff.** Food service staff must be able to understand and identify:
 - the required meal pattern components for breakfast;
 - how food items credit for each meal on the breakfast menu; and
 - what constitutes a reimbursable meal at the POS.

For more information on menu planning for breakfast, see [section 2](#) and [section 3](#), and the CSDE’s handout, *[Menu Planning for the School Breakfast Program](#)*.

SAMPLE BREAKFAST MENUS

The menu and cafeteria signage must clearly communicate how many food items students can select daily from each component for a reimbursable breakfast, based on the planned daily breakfast menu for each grade group. For more information, see “Meal Identification Signage” in [section 3](#).

Sample breakfast menus 1 through 3 show how menu planners could communicate the OVS requirements to students. To demonstrate how menu planning choices affect OVS, each menu offers the same food items but changes the amounts that students can select from each component.

Each example is for one day’s menu and includes choices within each component. Each choice provides at least the minimum daily serving. To meet the weekly minimums, menu planners must provide additional servings of grains on some days over the week.

Each sample breakfast menu could be served to any grade group. However, menu planners must be careful to meet the more restrictive sodium and calorie requirements when using one breakfast menu for grades K-12. For more information, see “Breakfast for Schools with Grades K-12” and “Breakfast for Schools with Grades 6-8 and 9-12” in [section 3](#).



Sample Breakfast Menu 1

Table 4-60 shows a sample breakfast menu that allows students to select four food items including:

- one food item from the grains component (1 ounce equivalent);
- two food items (½ cup each) from the fruits component (1 cup); and
- one food item from the milk component (1 cup).



This menu clearly communicates that students can select all four food items but must select at least ½ cup of fruit and two other food items. Students can select duplicate food items from the fruits component such as two servings of the same fruit (except for juice) or two different fruits because the menu is planned to allow any two choices (food items) from the fruits component.

Table 4-60. Sample Breakfast Menu 1		
<p>Choose AT LEAST THREE of the four food items including at least ONE FRUIT. For best nutrition, CHOOSE ALL FOUR!</p>		
<p>MILK</p>	<p>FRUITS</p>	<p>GRAINS</p>
<p>CHOOSE ONE</p>	<p>CHOOSE UP TO TWO</p>	<p>CHOOSE ONE</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-fat (1%) ■ Fat-free ■ Fat-free chocolate ■ Fat-free strawberry 	<p>Choose two fruits OR one fruit and one juice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fresh cut-up fruit ■ Canned fruit * ■ Whole fruit ■ Dried fruit ■ 100 percent fruit juice * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whole-grain cereals, assorted ■ Oatmeal ■ Whole-grain toast ■ Whole-grain muffins ■ Whole-grain mini bagel ■ Whole-grain mini pancakes
<p>* Menu planners must count all sources of 100 percent juice toward the weekly juice limit, including juice in canned fruit, unless the fruit is drained. For more information, see “Weekly Juice Limits at Breakfast” in section 3.</p>		

Table 4-61 shows OVS examples with student selections for sample breakfast menu 1.

Table 4-61. Examples of OVS for Sample Breakfast Menu 1

Planned Breakfast Menu		Meal Pattern Components	Food Items
MILK <i>Choose one</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-fat unflavored • Fat-free unflavored or flavored 	M, 1 cup	1 M
FRUIT <i>Choose two fruits or one fruit and one juice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh cut-up fruit choices, ½ cup • Whole fruit choices, ½ cup • Canned fruit choices, ½ cup • Dried fruit, ¼ cup • 100 percent fruit juice, assorted, ½ cup 	F, 1 cup	2 F
GRAINS <i>Choose one</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole-grain cereal (1 cup flakes or rounds, 1 ¼ cups puffed and ½ cup granola) • Oatmeal, ½ cup cooked • Whole-grain toast, 1 ounce • Whole-grain muffins, 2 ounces • Whole-grain corn muffin, 1.2 ounces • Whole-grain mini bagel, 1 ounce • Whole-grain pancakes, 1.2 ounces 	G, 1 ounce equivalent	1 G
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE "YES"	
Oatmeal (1 G) Corn muffin (1 G) Canned fruit (1 F)	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G and 1 F). The second G does not count as a food item for OVS because the menu is planned to allow only one G choice.
Toast, 2 slices (2 G) Fruit juice (1 F)	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G and 1 F). The second G does not count as a food item for OVS because the menu is planned to allow only one G choice.
Muffin (1 G) Whole fruit (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (G, 1 F and 1 M).
Bagel (1 G) Fresh cut-up fruit (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Fruit juice (1 F) Canned fruit (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 M).

Sample Breakfast Menu 2

Table 4-62 shows a sample breakfast menu that allows students to select five food items including:

- one food item from the grains component (1 ounce equivalent); and
- one food item from the meat/meat alternates component as a grain substitution (1 ounce equivalent);
- two food items (½ cup each) from the fruits component (1 cup); and
- one food item from the milk component (1 cup).



This menu clearly communicates that students can select all five food items but must select at least ½ cup of fruit and two other food items. Students can select duplicate food items from the fruits component such as two servings of the same fruit (except for juice) or two different fruits because the menu is planned to allow any two choices (food items) from the fruits component.

Students cannot select duplicate food items from the grains component such as two bagels or two yogurts (meat/meat alternate substitutions) because the menu is planned to allow only one choice (food item) from each component.

Table 4-62. Sample Breakfast Menu 2			
<p>Choose AT LEAST THREE of the five food items including at least ONE FRUIT.</p> <p>For best nutrition, CHOOSE ALL FIVE!</p>			
<p>MILK</p>	<p>FRUITS</p>	<p>GRAINS</p>	<p>MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES</p>
<p>CHOOSE ONE</p>	<p>CHOOSE UP TO TWO *</p>	<p>CHOOSE ONE</p>	<p>CHOOSE ONE</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-fat (1%) ■ Fat-free ■ Fat-free chocolate ■ Fat-free strawberry 	<p>Choose two fruits OR one fruit and one juice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fresh cut-up fruit ■ Canned fruit * ■ Whole fruit ■ Dried fruit ■ 100 percent fruit juice * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whole-grain cereals, assorted ■ Oatmeal ■ Whole-grain toast ■ Whole-grain muffins ■ Whole-grain mini bagel ■ Whole-grain mini pancakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-fat yogurt, assorted flavors ■ Peanut butter ■ Low-fat cheese stick
<p>* Menu planners must count all sources of 100 percent juice toward the weekly juice limit, including juice in canned fruit, unless the fruit is drained. For more information, see “Weekly Juice Limits at Breakfast” in section 3.</p>			

Table 4-63 shows OVS examples with student selections for sample breakfast menu 2.

Table 4-63. Examples of OVS for Sample Breakfast Menu 2

Planned Breakfast Menu		Meal Pattern Components	Food Items
MILK <i>Choose one</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-fat unflavored • Fat-free unflavored or flavored 	M, 1 cup	1 M
FRUIT <i>Choose two fruits or one fruit and one juice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh cut-up fruit choices, ½ cup • Whole fruit choices, ½ cup • Canned fruit choices, ½ cup • Dried fruit, ¼ cup • 100 percent fruit juice, assorted, ½ cup 	F, 1 cup	2 F
GRAINS <i>Choose one</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole-grain cereal (1 cup flakes or rounds, 1 ¼ cups puffed and ½ cup granola) • Oatmeal, ½ cup cooked • Whole-grain toast, 1 ounce • Whole-grain muffins, 2 ounces • Whole-grain corn muffin, 1.2 ounces • Whole-grain mini bagel, 1 ounce • Whole-grain pancakes, 1.2 ounces 	G, 1 ounce equivalent	1 G
MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES <i>Choose one</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-fat yogurt, assorted flavors, ½ cup • Low-fat cheese stick, 1 ounce • Peanut butter, 2 tablespoons 	G, 1 ounce equivalent (M/MA substitution)	1 G
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE “YES”	
Yogurt, two servings (2 G) Canned fruit (1 F)	2	Yes	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G from M/MA substitution and 1 F). The second yogurt does not count as a food item for OVS because the menu is planned to allow only one M/MA choice.
Waffles (1 G) Yogurt (1 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three food items (1 M and 2 G including 1 M/MA substitution) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Bagel (1 G) Cheese stick (1 G) Milk (1 M) Fresh fruit (1 F)	4	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains four food items (1 F, 1 M and 2 G including 1 M/MA substitution).
Muffin (1 G) Canned fruit (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Fruit juice (1 F) Yogurt (1 G) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 F, 1 M and 1 G from M/MA substitution).

Sample Breakfast Menu 3

Table 4-64 shows a sample breakfast menu that allows students to select five items including:

- two food items (1 ounce equivalent each) from the grains and meat/meat alternates components combined, including meat/meat alternates as grains substitutions (2 ounce equivalents total);
- two food items (½ cup each) from the fruits component (1 cup); and
- one food item from the milk component (1 cup).



This menu clearly communicates that students can select all five food items but must select at least ½ cup of fruit and two other food items. Students can select duplicate food items from the fruits component such as two servings of the same fruit (except for juice) or two different fruits because the menu is planned to allow any two choices (food items) from the fruits component.

Students can also select duplicate food items from the grains and meat/meat alternates component such as two bagels or two cheese sticks because the menu is planned to allow any two choices (two food items). For more information, see “[Duplicate Grain Selections](#)” in this section.

Table 4-64. Sample Breakfast Menu 3				
<p>Choose AT LEAST THREE of the five food items including at least ONE FRUIT.</p> <p>For best nutrition, CHOOSE ALL FIVE!</p>				
<p>MILK</p> <p>CHOOSE ONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-fat (1%) ■ Fat-free ■ Fat-free chocolate ■ Fat-free strawberry 	<p>FRUITS</p> <p>CHOOSE UP TO TWO *</p> <p>Choose two fruits OR one fruit and one juice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fresh cut-up fruit ■ Canned fruit * ■ Whole fruit ■ Dried fruit ■ 100 percent fruit juice * 	<p>GRAINS AND MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES</p> <p>CHOOSE UP TO TWO</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whole-grain cereals, assorted ■ Oatmeal ■ Whole-grain toast ■ Whole-grain muffins, assorted ■ Whole-grain mini bagel ■ Whole-grain mini pancakes </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-fat yogurt, assorted flavors ■ Peanut butter ■ Low-fat cheese stick </td> </tr> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whole-grain cereals, assorted ■ Oatmeal ■ Whole-grain toast ■ Whole-grain muffins, assorted ■ Whole-grain mini bagel ■ Whole-grain mini pancakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-fat yogurt, assorted flavors ■ Peanut butter ■ Low-fat cheese stick
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whole-grain cereals, assorted ■ Oatmeal ■ Whole-grain toast ■ Whole-grain muffins, assorted ■ Whole-grain mini bagel ■ Whole-grain mini pancakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-fat yogurt, assorted flavors ■ Peanut butter ■ Low-fat cheese stick 			
<p>* Menu planners must count all sources of 100 percent juice toward the weekly juice limit, including juice in canned fruit, unless the fruit is drained. For more information, see “Weekly Juice Limits at Breakfast” in section 3.</p>				

Table 4-65 shows OVS examples with student selections for sample breakfast menu 4.

Table 4-65. Examples of OVS for Sample Breakfast Menu 3

Planned Breakfast Menu		Meal Pattern Components	Food Items
MILK <i>Choose one</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-fat unflavored • Fat-free unflavored or flavored 	M, 1 cup	1 M
FRUIT <i>Choose two fruits or one fruit and one juice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh cut-up fruit choices, ½ cup • Whole fruit choices, ½ cup • Canned fruit choices, ½ cup • Dried fruit, ¼ cup • 100 percent fruit juice, assorted, ½ cup 	F, 1 cup	2 F
GRAINS AND MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES <i>Choose up to two</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole-grain cereal (1 cup flakes or rounds, 1 ¼ cups puffed and ¼ cup granola) • Oatmeal, ½ cup cooked • Whole-grain toast, 1 ounce • Whole-grain muffins, 2 ounces • Whole-grain corn muffin, 1.2 ounces • Whole-grain mini bagel, 1 ounce • Whole-grain pancakes, 1.2 ounces • Low-fat yogurt, assorted flavors, ½ cup • Low-fat cheese stick, 1 ounce • Peanut butter, 2 tablespoons 	G, 2 ounce equivalents	2 G
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student Selects	Food Items	Do the three food items include at least ½ cup of F or V?	Reimbursable Meal?
	MUST BE AT LEAST 3	MUST BE “YES”	
Yogurt, two servings (2 G) Canned fruit (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G from M/MA substitutions and 1 F).
Cheese sticks, two (2 G) Fresh cut-up fruit (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G from M/MA substitutions and 1 F).
Cereal, two servings (2 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	No. The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 M) but is missing at least ½ cup of fruit.
Oatmeal (1 G) Whole fruit (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Muffin (1 G) Whole fruit (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Bagel (1 G) Peanut butter (1 G) Juice (1 F)	3	Yes	Yes. The selected meal contains three food items (1 F and 2 G including 1 M/MA substitution).



Lunch Periods

Lunch periods in Connecticut schools are governed by state and federal regulations. C.G.S. [Section 10-221o](#) mandates that each local and regional board of education requires each school under its jurisdiction to offer all full day students a daily lunch period of not less than 20 minutes. To ensure that all students have a lunch period, the CSDE recommends that schools implement the following procedures prior to the start of student course selections.

- Use computer software to identify student schedules that do not include a lunch period. As the guidance counselor reviews course schedules to ensure that students get requested courses, they also identify those student schedules that do not include a lunch period.
- When students select courses that will result in a schedule without a lunch period, the guidance counselor discusses the schedule with the student. The guidance counselor works with the student to revise the schedule to include a lunch period or allows the student to opt out of lunch if the student does not want to drop any courses.
- In the case of a student who wants to opt out of lunch, the CSDE recommends that the school guidance department develops a written waiver that is signed by the student and a parent/guardian to ensure that everyone understands and agrees with the schedule. This eliminates issues with students unknowingly having a schedule that does not include lunch.



The USDA regulations specify that schools and institutions participating in the NSLP must serve lunches during the time frame of 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. SFAs must submit a written request to the CSDE for a waiver if lunches will be served before or after this time frame. The district must submit the exemption request for the upcoming school year to the CSDE by July 1 of each school year. The CSDE evaluates the circumstances of each request to determine whether it meets one of the following USDA criteria for an exemption from the specified time frame for lunch.

1. The CSDE may grant reasonable variances from the meal service requirements to accommodate special circumstances encountered in schools operating for traditional students at traditional times. For example, if a school has a legitimate need to extend the lunch service to 2:30 p.m. due to capacity concerns or because of extended school hours, an exception would be considered a special circumstance.

2. The CSDE may grant exemptions from the meal service requirements if the school operates for traditional students but at a nontraditional time. For example, a school may need to provide lunch service from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. to accommodate a work-study program that allows high school students to work in the morning and attend high school classes in the later afternoon or evening. Approval of an exemption for this specific circumstance will only be granted if these alternative programs provide students of high school grade or lower an opportunity to obtain the minimum requirements for graduation at a nontraditional time, and it is not possible to serve lunch at a more traditional time.

The written request for a waiver must be submitted to the CSDE by the superintendent and must include the special circumstances at the school that necessitate a change in the time frame for lunch. The CSDE will grant exemptions only if the school's schedule meets one of the two USDA criteria specified above. The CSDE will not grant exemptions for routine scheduling choices such as block schedules.



Family-style Meal Service

Family style is a type of meal service that allows children to serve themselves from common platters of food with assistance from supervising adults. While allowable in the NSLP and SBP, the implementation of family-style meal service may not be practical in most schools. If implemented, meals served family style must follow the procedures below to ensure compliance and be eligible for reimbursement.

- A sufficient amount of prepared food and at least two varieties of milk (low-fat unflavored or fat-free unflavored or flavored milk) must be placed on each table to provide the full required portions of each of the food components for all children at the table and to accommodate the supervising adults.
- Children must initially be offered the full required portion of each meal component. Over the week, offered meals must meet all of the daily and weekly food component/food item requirements, and the weekly dietary specifications. However, since replenishment is immediately available at each table, students may select an initial serving of a food component/food item that is less than the full required minimum quantity. The supervising adult should encourage additional portions and selections to meet the full required minimum serving size as appropriate, provided dietary specifications are not exceeded.
- During the course of the meal, the supervising adults are responsible for actively encouraging each child to accept service of the full required portion (minimum daily serving) for each food component of the USDA meal patterns. For example, if a child initially refuses a food component or does not accept the full required portion, the supervising adults should offer the food component to the child again.
 - **Schools without OVS:** If a school does not implement OVS, children must take the minimum portion size of all five food components at lunch and all three food items at breakfast to count as a reimbursable meal. OVS is required in senior high schools for lunch. OVS is optional for all grades at breakfast.
 - **Schools with OVS:** If a school implements OVS at lunch, children must take at least three of the five food components offered, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full portion (minimum daily serving) of at least two other components. At breakfast, students must select at least ½ cup of fruits (or vegetables, if offered) and the minimum daily serving of at least two other food items. For more information, see “[OVS at Lunch](#)” and “[OVS at Breakfast](#)” in this section.

Schools must plan and offer the required food quantities for each child participating in the meal. These offered amounts must meet the minimum daily and weekly food components and dietary specifications.

- Second meals and second servings cannot be claimed for reimbursement. Schools can claim only one reimbursable breakfast and one reimbursable lunch for each child per day. If a school elects to offer second servings of any part of the reimbursable meal without charging an a la carte price, these foods must count toward the daily and weekly meal pattern components and the weekly dietary specifications. Second servings of any foods must contain zero trans fat and their inclusion cannot cause the menu to exceed the average weekly limits for calories, saturated fats, and sodium. For more information, see “Second Servings” and “Dietary Specifications” in [section 3](#) and [section 5](#).

Family-style meal service must be strictly supervised to ensure that schools serve reimbursable meals and follow adequate daily collection procedures. An adult must be present and monitor the entire process at each table to ensure that students take a reimbursable meal. The adult must track students each day to determine who ate lunch in each meal eligibility category (free, reduced, and paid), without overt identification of the student’s eligibility status.

The CSDE has observed many compliance issues with family-style meal service. Schools must carefully consider whether they can successfully implement family-style meal service so that all meals comply with the USDA requirements. Due to the high level of supervision required during family-style meal service, many schools do not implement this type of meal service.

Schools that choose to implement family-style meal service must submit their current written procedures to the CSDE. These procedures must indicate that:

- reimbursable meals will be monitored at each table by a supervising adult;
- meals will be claimed based on a student’s free, reduced, or paid status; and
- family-style meal service will prevent overt identification.

The procedures must also include written assurances that the SFA will conduct adequate training for the supervising adults to ensure they have a good understanding of the meal pattern components and what constitutes a reimbursable meal.

For additional guidance, see [USDA Memo SP 35-2011](#), *Clarification on the Use of Offer Versus Serve and Family Style Meal Service*. SFAs can contact their assigned CSDE school nutrition consultant for technical assistance. Contact information for school nutrition programs staff is listed under “CSDE Contact Information” in the “[Contents](#)” section of this guide.



Water Availability

The [Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010](#) (Public Law 111-296) requires schools participating in the NSLP to make plain potable water available to children at no cost during the meal service. The water must be available without restriction in the location where meals are served. Water must also be made available for NSLP meals that are served outside of the cafeteria such as meals served in a classroom or during in-school suspension. This includes the ASP and school sites in the SSFP.

The interim final rule for nutrition standards for competitive foods in schools (June 28, 2013) requires that the SBP must also follow these requirements when breakfast is served in the cafeteria. For more information, see [National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School as Required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010](#).

Schools can implement this requirement in a variety of ways, such as:

- offering water pitchers and cups on lunch tables or in an area of the cafeteria that is easily accessible to all children during meals and snacks; and
- providing a water fountain or a faucet that allows students to fill their own bottles or cups with drinking water. The location of the water fountain must be in the foodservice area or immediately adjacent, such as a water fountain that is right outside the door to the foodservice area and accessible to all students during the lunch period.



While water must be made available to students during meal service, water is not a meal pattern component and is not part of the reimbursable meal. Students are not required to take water. Program operators cannot promote or offer water or any other beverage as an alternative selection to fluid milk throughout the food service area.

The USDA does not provide separate funding for this provision and schools cannot claim reimbursement for water. However, reasonable costs associated with providing potable water would be an allowable cost to the nonprofit food service account.

For additional guidance, see [USDA Memo SP 28-2011](#), *Water Availability during NSLP Meal Service* and [USDA Memo SP 49-2016 CACFP-2016](#), *Resources for Making Potable Water Available in Schools and Child Care Facilities*.

Gender Separation Prohibited

In general, the USDA nondiscrimination laws and policies in 7 CFR Parts 15, 15a, and 15b do not permit SFAs participating in the USDA school nutrition programs to separate children on any protected basis during meal service. Federal law prohibits discrimination based on gender at any educational institution receiving federal assistance. The USDA allows only two exceptions to the prohibition on gender-separated meal service.

COEDUCATIONAL SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL-BASED SITES

The USDA recognizes religious exemptions granted by the federal Department of Education (ED) without prior express approval. ED guidelines allow school and school-based sites to apply for an exemption when federal law prohibiting gender separation is inconsistent with the institution's religious tenets. These exemptions apply broadly to operations, including the meal service at a given site, such as a faith-based school. Additionally, ED guidelines specifically allow for the approval of gender-separate instruction at public primary and secondary non-vocational schools that could take a variety of forms. Since the general rule is that gender separation during meal service is prohibited, a coeducational school may not use limited ED approval of gender-separate instruction to justify blanket gender separation during meal service. Limited exemptions in these situations must be approved by the USDA.

OTHER INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

State agencies may approve exemptions allowing separation by gender during meal service without express prior approval from the USDA in the following circumstances:

- meal service at religious institutions operating under the dictates of the religion with which they are affiliated;
- meal service at juvenile correctional facilities where combining members of the opposite gender would present a potential safety risk; and
- meal service at facilities that fully separate by gender as part of their normal operations, e.g., gender-separated summer camps.

The LEA must submit the request in writing to the CSDE. LEAs must specify which reason applies and why separation by gender is necessary. For more information, on the exemption process, see the CSDE's [Operational Memorandum 30-15](#).

The above listed exemptions are the only acceptable bases for gender separation during meal service in school nutrition programs. Any gender separation not based on the ED or USDA approval processes is strictly prohibited.

Situations that do not clearly fit into any of the exemptions outlined above may be considered on a case-by-case basis by the CSDE in direct consultation with the USDA Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Regional Office, including the FNS Civil Rights Office and appropriate FNS National Office Child Nutrition Program staff.