
What Is OVS?

- a.** An alternative way to start a tennis match?
- b.** A food service style where students serve themselves?
- c.** A new way to offer more food choices on school menus?
- d.** A system designed to decrease food waste and give students greater flexibility?

OVS: Who, When, and Where?

OVS is:

- Required for lunch at senior high schools
- Optional at lunch in lower grade levels
- Optional at breakfast in all grades

Who decides?

- School food authority decides:
 - whether to implement OVS when optional and in what grades
 - whether students below high school can decline 1 or 2 food items at lunch
- Students decide what foods to decline



What's for Lunch?

Students must be offered a lunch that contains:

- 5 food items...
- from the 4 food components...
- in at least the minimum serving sizes for the appropriate age/grade group.

The 4 food components at lunch are:

<i>Component</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>
Meat/Meat Alternate	M/MA
Vegetables/Fruits	V/F
Grains/Breads	G/B
Milk	Milk

The 5 food items at lunch include:

- Meat/Meat Alternate
- Grains/Breads
- Vegetables/Fruits—two or more servings of different kinds of vegetables and/or fruits
- Milk



Lunch Age/Grade Groups

Lunch meal patterns are established for the following age/grade groups:

- Ages 1-2
- Ages 3-4 (Preschool)
- Grades K-3
- Grades 4-12
- Grades 7-12 (optional)

Grains/Breads at Lunch

Requirements:

- Daily minimum
- Weekly minimum (5-day week)

Grains/Breads (servings)

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Per Day</i>	<i>Per Week</i>
Ages 1-2	at least ½	5
Ages 3-4	at least 1	8
K-3	at least 1	8
4-12	at least 1	8
7-12 (optional)	at least 1	10

Vegetables/Fruits at Lunch

Requirements:

- Two or more different kinds daily
- Planned serving size at least $\frac{1}{8}$ cup
- Minimum daily amount

Daily minimums

<i>Grade</i>	<i>V/F</i>
Ages 1-2 & Preschool	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup/day
K-3	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup/day
4-12	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup/day
7-12 (optional)	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup/day

Sample Lunch Menus

Traditional FBMP
(Grades K-3)

<i>Food Items</i>	<i>Food Components</i>
Lasagna OR Taco Pocket	1½ oz M/MA + 1 svg G/B
Green Salad w/dressing	¾ cup V/F
Fresh Banana Half	¾ cup V/F
Choice of Milk	½ pint (8 fl oz)
Hamburger on Bun (catsup, mustard) OR Chicken Nuggets w/sauce, Roll	1½ oz M/MA + 2 svg G/B
Potato Rounds w/catsup	¾ cup V/F
Fruit Cocktail	¼ cup V/F
Oatmeal Cookie	
Choice of Milk	½ pint (8 fl oz)
Ham Sandwich (mustard, mayo) OR Bean & Cheese Burrito w/salsa	1½ oz M/MA + 2 svg G/B
Green Beans	¼ cup V/F
Peaches	¼ cup V/F
Low-fat Vanilla Pudding	
Choice of Milk	½ pint (8 fl oz)

<i>Food Items</i>	<i>Food Components</i>
Spaghetti/Meat Sauce & Garlic Bread OR Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwich	1½ oz M/MA + 2 svg G/B
Tossed Salad w/dressing	¼ cup V/F
Apple	¾ cup V/F
Choice of Milk	½ pint (8 fl oz)
Chicken Drumsticks OR Cajun Fish Filet	1½ oz M/MA
Seasoned Rice	1 svg G/B
Carrot Sticks with Dip	¼ cup V/F
Kiwifruit	¼ cup V/F
Bread Pudding	
Choice of Milk	½ pint (8 fl oz)

Combination Foods at Lunch

Q: How can a meal provide 5 food items from the 4 food components yet feature only 4 foods on the menu?

A: One food is a combination food.

<i>Food Items on the menu</i>	<i>Food Components</i>
Bean & Cheese Burrito	M/MA (beans, cheese) G/B (tortilla)
Cheese Pizza	M/MA (cheese) G/B (crust) V/F (tomato sauce)
Chicken Nuggets	M/MA (chicken) G/B (breading)
Pork-Vegetable Stir-Fry	M/MA (pork) V/F (vegetables)

... and many more!

Reimbursable Lunches

General requirements for OVS at lunch are:

- Schools must offer at least the minimum serving sizes of all 5 food items.
- Students must select the minimum number of items required (at least 3 of 5 for senior high school; 3 or 4 of 5 for lower grades).
- Must take full servings to count toward a reimbursable meal.
- May decline any food item, including the entrée or milk.
- May take smaller portions of declined food items (does not affect price).
- Lunch must be priced as a unit.



Counting Vegetables/Fruits at Lunch

To count 1 V/F food item:

- A student must take the full serving size offered (planned to be $\frac{1}{8}$ cup or more of any V/F).

To count both V/F food items:

- A student must take at least 2 different V/F items totaling at least the daily minimum requirement for the component.

Example (Grades 4-12):

Chicken Drumsticks
Roll with Butter
Sweet Peas ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
Carrot Sticks ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
Diced Pears ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
Milk

How many V/F can you claim if a student takes the following as part of a reimbursable meal?

- Peas and carrot sticks?
- Pears only?
- Peas, carrots, and pears?

Counting Grains/Breads at Lunch

To count the G/B component:

- Student must take at least 1 full serving separately or in a combination food.

Serving sizes vary with the type of G/B:

- 1 slice bread (at least 25 g or 0.9 oz)
- ½ bagel (at least 25 g or 0.9 oz)
- ½ cup rice, pasta, or cooked cereal

Example (Grades 4-12):

Breaded Chicken Nuggets (2 oz M/MA, ½ svg G/B)

Whole-Grain Roll (1 svg G/B)

Tossed Salad (¼ cup V/F)

Diced Pears (½ cup V/F)

Spice Cake (other food)

Choice of Milk (½ pint)

How many G/B can you count if a student takes:

- Roll, Salad, and Pears?
- Nuggets, Roll, and Milk?
- Nuggets, Salad, and Cake?
- The complete meal?

Counting Meat/Meat Alternates at Lunch

To count the M/MA component:

- Student must take at least the minimum required amount (1.5 to 3 oz, depending on age/grade group) in the entrée only or in the entrée and one other food.

Example (Grades K-3):

Egg Roll (1 oz M/MA)

Fried Rice (½ oz M/MA)

Celery Sticks with Dip

Fruit Cocktail

Choice of Milk

What M/MA can you claim if a student takes the following as part of a reimbursable meal?

- Egg Roll
- Fried Rice
- Egg roll and Fried Rice

(TIP: It is easier to count M/MA when the entrée contains all of the minimum M/MA.)

Combination Foods with OVS at Lunch

(Grades 4-12)

Spaghetti and Meat Sauce. 2 oz M/MA +
1 svg G/B +
3/8 cup V/F
Garlic Bread 1 svg G/B
Tossed Salad w/ Dressing 1/4 cup V/F
Fresh Apple. 1/4 cup V/F
Choice of Milk. 8 oz MILK

Chicken Drumsticks. 2 oz M/MA
Whole-Wheat Roll 2 svg G/B
Sweet Peas. 1/4 cup V/F
Carrot Sticks. 1/4 cup V/F
Diced Pears 1/4 cup V/F
Choice of Milk. 8 oz MILK

For each menu:

- How many food items?
- What is the smallest number of food items that could comprise a reimbursable meal?



Taco Bar Lunch Menu #1

(Grades 4-12)

Taco Shells

Seasoned Meat

Refried Beans

Spanish Rice

Tortilla Chips

Chopped Lettuce

Diced Tomato

Grated Cheese

Fresh Salsa

Sour Cream

Guacamole

Baby Carrots

Cucumber Slices

Choice of Fruit

Choice of Milk

Oatmeal Cookie

How many food components?

How many food items?

Taco Bar Lunch Menu #2

(Grades 4-12)

- Choose 1 (2 oz M/MA + 1 svg G/B):
 - Beef Tacos (2)
 - Bean Tacos (2)
- Choose 1 (1 svg G/B):
 - Spanish Rice
 - Tortilla Chips
- Choose 1 or more ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup V/F):
 - Chopped Lettuce
 - Diced Tomato
 - Fresh Salsa
- Choose 1 or more ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup V/F):
 - Baby Carrots
 - Cucumber Slices
 - Choice of Fruit
- Choose 1 (8 fl oz Milk):
 - Choice of Milk
- Choose up to 2 condiments or desserts:
 - Grated Cheese
 - Sour Cream
 - Guacamole
 - Oatmeal Cookie



What's for Breakfast?

Breakfasts offered to students must contain:

- 4 food items;
- from 3 or 4 food components;
- in at least the minimum serving sizes for the appropriate age/grade group.

The breakfast food components are:

- Milk
 - Juice/Fruit/Vegetable (V/F)
 - Grains/Breads (G/B)
- AND/OR
- Meat/Meat Alternate (M/MA)

The 4 breakfast food items are:

-
- 1 1 serving of milk
-
- 2 1 serving of juice/fruit/vegetable
-
- 3 2 servings of grains/breads (G/B)
- & OR 2 servings of meat/meat alternate (M/MA)
- 4 OR 1 serving G/B and 1 serving M/MA
- OR An equivalent combination of M/MA and G/B
-

Age/grade groups established for breakfast:

- Ages 1-2
- Preschool (ages 3-4)
- Grades K-12

G/B or M/MA or Both at Breakfast?

For grades K-12, school breakfasts must offer:

2 svg G/B

(serving sizes vary)

OR

2 oz M/MA

(1 oz equivalent each)

OR

1 oz M/MA and 1 svg G/B

OR

An equivalent combination of M/MA and G/B

For example:

2 G/B

- Bagel (1.8 oz)
- Waffle (2.2 oz)
- Blueberry Muffin (3.6 oz)
- Oatmeal (cooked) ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) and Toast (.9 oz)

2 M/MA

- Hard-cooked Egg (1 large)
- Fruit-flavored Yogurt (1 cup)
- Cottage Cheese ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup)
- Sausage Links (2 oz equivalent M/MA)

1 G/B + 1 M/MA

- Sausage Biscuit (1 oz equivalent M/MA + .9 oz G/B)
- Breakfast Burrito (1 serving)
- Oatmeal (cooked) ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) with toasted nuts (1 oz)
- Cheese (1 oz) on toast (.9 oz)



Sample Breakfast Menus

Traditional FBMP
(Grades K-12)

<i>Food Items</i>	<i>Food Components</i>
Assorted Cereal	1 svg G/B
Toast & Jam	1 svg G/B
Orange Juice	½ cup V/F
Milk	8 oz MILK
Cheese & Egg Quesadilla with Salsa	1 svg G/B + 1 oz M/MA
Applesauce	½ cup V/F
Milk	8 oz MILK
Flavored Yogurt (4 oz)	1 M/MA
Bagel Half with Jelly	1 svg G/B
Dried Fruit Mix	½ cup V/F
Milk	8 oz MILK

<i>Food Items</i>	<i>Food Components</i>
Toasted Ham & Cheese Sandwich Half	1 svg G/B + 1 oz M/MA
Pineapple Chunks	½ cup V/F
Milk	8 oz MILK
Baked French Toast	1 oz M/MA + 1 svg G/B
Orange Wedges	½ cup V/F
Milk	8 oz MILK



Reimbursable Breakfasts

General requirements for OVS at breakfast (optional at all grade levels):

- Schools must offer at least the minimum servings sizes of all 4 food items from 3 or 4 food components.
- Students must select at least 3 food items.
- Must take full servings to count toward a reimbursable meal.
- May decline any food item, including the milk.
- May take a smaller portion of the declined food item.
- Breakfast must be priced as a unit.



Counting Breakfast Food Items

To count the V/F food item:

- Student must take the full half-cup minimum of any vegetable or fruit or full-strength juice.
- Can be combined with other food items. For example:
 - Fruit turnover
 - Burrito and salsa

To count 1 G/B food item:

- Student must take at least 1 full serving separately or in a combination food, such as:
 - Burrito
 - Sandwich

To count 1 M/MA food item:

- Student must take at least a 1 oz equivalent of M/MA.

Mind Your G/Bs and M/MAs in the Morning at Breakfast!

When offering 2 G/B or 2 M/MA food items:

- May be 2 different foods.
- May be 2 servings of the same food.

To claim reimbursement:

- At least 3 food items must be selected.
- Only 2 servings from M/MA or G/B can be counted (i.e., a maximum of 2 servings from either or both of these components count toward a reimbursable meal).

Example (grades K-12):

Bagel (2 G/B)

Egg (2 M/MA) (1 large)

Orange Wedges (1 V/F)

Milk (8 oz)

What if a student takes bagel and egg only?

What are possible reimbursable meals?



Breakfast Combinations

Combination foods at breakfast are foods containing more than 1 food item.

Examples:

- Cheese and Egg Quesadilla
- Baked French Toast
- Breakfast Burrito
- Sausage Biscuit (served together)

Consistency Counts

To minimize confusion among cashiers, consider planning daily menus that have:

- The same number of food items.
- The same number of choices within food items.

Vegetable/Fruit Choices at Lunch

To encourage students to select V/F:

- Offer tasty, attractive V/F choices daily.
- Make any 2 V/F choices equal or exceed the total amount required to count as 2 V/F food items.

Examples:

Choose 2 or more:

- Carrot and Celery Sticks w/ dip ($\frac{3}{8}$ cup)
- Potato Rounds w/ catsup ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup)
- Canned Peaches ($\frac{3}{8}$ cup)
- Fresh Banana ($\frac{1}{2}$ medium = $\frac{3}{8}$ cup)

What can a fourth-grader take to claim both V/F?

Offering Grains/ Breads at Lunch

- Plan full servings of G/B so that, if a student takes any G/B item, it counts.
- If 2 G/B food items are on a menu, make each 1 provide a full serving so that either 1 can count toward OVS. Note: both G/B items still count toward the weekly G/B requirement.
- Be sure to offer enough G/B servings to meet the weekly total.

Comparing Grains/Breads at Lunch

(Grades 4-12)

Lasagna 2 oz M/MA +
1 svg G/B +
1/4 cup V/F
Italian Bread 2 1/4 svg G/B
Green Salad 3/8 cup V/F
Pears 3/8 cup V/F
Milk 8 oz MILK

How many G/B items?

What counts?

Chicken Nuggets 2 oz M/MA +
1/2 svg G/B
Whole-Grain Roll 1 svg G/B
Carrots with Dip 1/2 cup V/F
Cinnamon Pears 1/4 cup V/F
Oatmeal Cookie other food
Chocolate Milk 8 oz MILK

How many G/B items?

What counts?

Would chicken nuggets, milk, and cookie be a reimbursable meal?



Offering Meat/Meat Alternates at Lunch

You can serve the M/MA in 1 or 2 food items (the main dish or the main dish and 1 other food), BUT:

- It is easier to count the M/MA if it is in the main dish only.
- When the M/MA is split between 2 foods, it is a good idea to merchandise and serve them together.

Example (grades 4-12):

Minestrone Soup	1/2 oz M/MA + 1/4 cup V/F + 1/4 svg G/B
Grilled Cheese Sandwich	2 svg G/B + 1 1/2 oz M/MA
Fresh Banana	1/2 cup V/F
Royal Brownie	other food
Choice of Milk	8 oz MILK

How could you offer the M/MA to increase chances that it will count toward the food component requirement?



Production Planning Tips

To achieve the OVS goal of less food waste:

- Keep accurate menu production records.
- Use forecasting to plan food quantities.
- Use cycle menus.

School Nutrition Staff Roles

Menu planners:

- Plan tasty, attractive menus featuring students' cultural and ethnic favorites.
- Include consistent numbers of food items and food item choices daily.
- Review menus to ensure meals meet daily and weekly requirements.
- Communicate menus to other staff.
- Educate students, teachers about OVS.

Cooks:

- Prepare the planned menu as directed.
- Follow standardized recipes.
- Portion foods accurately.



School Nutrition Staff Roles (continued)

Servers:

- Display food choices clearly, attractively.
- Ensure correct portion sizes.
- Encourage students to select a complete meal, via:
 - Enthusiastic comments
 - Merchandising

Cashiers:

- Review the planned menu:
 - Food items
 - Serving sizes
 - Reimbursable meals
- Remind students of choices and unit price.
- Practice!

Meal Service Efficiency

Issue: “OVS meal service takes too much time.”

Solutions to try:

- Educate students, adults.
- Rearrange service area to improve flow.
- Add a cashier during rush times.
- Post choices at start of service line.
- Use posters, table tents, etc. to explain concept of OVS.

Issue: “Offer more choices?! Our serving space is already cramped!”

Solutions to try:

- Use smaller size serving pans.
- Use tiered shelving.
- Offer combination foods.
- Purchase mobile serving counters/carts.



Alternative Meal Service

Issue: “How do I recognize adequate portions in self-service situations?”

Solutions to try:

- Know the planned portion sizes.
- Plan consistent portions of similar foods.
- Pre-portion some foods.
- Use portion control serving utensils where feasible.
- Display a sample portion for students and cashier.
- Educate students, adults.

Issue: “How do we implement OVS with a pre-pack or pre-plate delivery system?”

Solutions to try:

- Individually portion or package each food item.
- Convert to modified bulk delivery (portion some items at point of service).

Consider the cost of packaging, storage, transportation, and labor, along with the cost of saving expected from implementing OVS.



Teaching Students

Concerns:

- Number of items to select
- Portion sizes
- Pricing

Strategies:

- Encourage students to select complete meals.
- Use age-appropriate materials (posters, table tents, other signs) at the point of service.
- Promote consistent, key messages.
- Give hands-on demonstrations.
- Enlist teachers' help.
- Remind them again and again.

Convincing Administrators

Concerns:

- Slow meal service.
- What benefits?

Strategies:

- Participation in planning
- Presentation of goals, benefits
- Demonstration of meal service
- Open communication

Educating Teachers

Concerns:

- Slow meal service.
- Students should take and eat all foods.

Strategies:

- Presentation of goals, benefits, requirements.
- Participation in planning.
- Demonstration of meal service.
- Collaboration to educate students.
- Open communication.

Key points:

- Students select foods.
- Students may refuse any food item.
- Students may take any combination.
- Combination foods count as more than 1 food item.
- We encourage students to take complete meals.

Promoting to Parents

Concerns:

- Students should take and eat all foods.
- Students can't make wise food choices.
- Students lose benefits if they decline foods.
- Kids won't get enough to eat.
- Same price for less food.

Strategies:

- Presentation of goals, benefits.
- Invite them to observe meal service.
- Newsletter updates.
- Open communication.

Key messages:

- Students can make food selections, and will more likely eat what they select.
- Parents and other adults teach kids—by example—to make healthful choices.
- We encourage students to select all foods offered.
- Policy for extra portions at extra cost is unaffected by OVS.

Training School Nutrition Staff

Concerns:

- Resistance to change.
- Time and space limitations.
- Sympathy for students.

Strategies:

- Understand reasons for changes.
- Recall the benefits of OVS.
- Set realistic goals, implement gradually.
- Keep communication open.
- Reward success!

