

WHAT'S NEW IN SCHOOL LUNCH?

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Kirsten Nelson
Director of Food Services



Director's News

Welcome to the second edition of the "What's New in School Lunch." The purpose of our annual newsletter is to provide information to parents, school district personnel and other interested adults about the School Food Service Department.

We hope to communicate answers to some frequently asked questions, inform you about upcoming events and give you updates on menus and food items.

We would also like to use this newsletter to update you on the guidelines we use in providing a nutritious school lunch, as well as Information on the Dietary Guidelines and MyPyramid.

As support staff in the Acton-Boxborough Regional and Acton Public School Districts', we view our role as critical in culturing a positive, caring

and pleasant part of every person's day in each of our schools.

We hope that this newsletter will provide you a peek through the windows of our kitchens and help you gain some insight into what we are all about.

We encourage feedback regarding our newsletter, menus and daily service. We can respond to comments and questions personally via email.
(knelson@mail.ab.mec.edu)

We are excited about the opportunity to communicate with you on a more regular basis and hope that this will be an opportunity for you to work with us towards becoming an even better food service department.

Recommended Websites for Dietary Guidelines and My Pyramid information

- ◆ <http://www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines/>
- ◆ <http://www.mypyramid.gov/mypyramid/index.aspx>
- ◆ <http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids/index.html>
- ◆ <http://www.mypyramidtracker.gov/>
- ◆ <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/mypyramidblastoff.html>

School Lunch 101

We have been asked many questions about lunch and what exactly makes a lunch.

As we participate in the State and Federal School Lunch Program, we are bound by certain rules regarding meal components and portions. The following is a simple breakdown of what a student would NEED to take to meet the requirements for a School Lunch at the price of \$2.00 and what the maximum that they COULD take and not be charged anything additional.

Meals are broken down into components. The components are as follows...

Meat or meat alternate

Vegetable

Fruit

Bread or bread alternate

Fluid Milk

Each student **MUST take at least 3** of the components but **MAY take up to 5** for the School Lunch. We have provided the actual chart with portions on the third page of this newsletter.



The 2005 Dietary Guidelines and MyPyramid

The New Dietary Guidelines

- Eat fewer calories
- Be more active
- Make wiser food choices



Have You Had Your
3-A-Day™
Of Dairy Today?

Small Steps Take Small Steps Today!

1. Walk to work.
2. Use fat free milk over whole milk.
3. Do sit-ups in front of the TV.
4. Walk during lunch hour.
5. Drink water before a meal.

Visit www.smallstep.gov for More information!

MyPyramid:

Mix up your choices in each food group!

Fruit Group: Focus on Fruits!

- Eat a variety of fruit
- Choose fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruit
- Take it easy on fruit juice

Vegetable Group: Vary your Vegetables!

- Eat more dark green veggies like broccoli and spinach
- Eat more orange vegetables like carrots and sweet potatoes
- Eat more Dry Beans and Peas like Pinto Beans and Kidney Beans

Milk Group: Get your Calcium Rich Foods!

- Choose Milk products that are low in fat or fat free
- If you don't or can't consume milk products choose products that are lactose free or other calcium sources such as fortified foods and beverages

Grain Group: Make half of your grains whole!

- Eat at least 3 ounces of whole grain cereals, rice, breads or pasta every day
- 1 slice of whole grain bread is approximately 1 ounce, 1/2 cup cooked rice, pasta or cereal or 1 cup of breakfast cereal

Meat & Bean Group: Go lean with protein!

- Choose lean meats and poultry
- Choose more fish, beans, peas, nuts and seeds, vary your protein!
- Grill, Broil or Bake your foods

Limit Salt, Fat & Sugars!

Meal Pattern Requirements

FOOD COMPONENTS AND FOOD ITEMS	GROUP III, AGES 5-8 GRADES K-3	GROUP IV AGES 9 AND OLDER GRADES 4-12	GROUP V AGES 12 AND OLDER GRADES 7-12
Milk (as a beverage)	8 fluid ounces	8 fluid ounces	8 fluid ounces
Meat or Meat Alternate (quantity of the edible portion as served):			
Lean meat, poultry, or fish	1½ ounces	2 ounces	3 ounces
Alternate Protein Products ¹	1½ ounces	2 ounces	3 ounces
Cheese	1½ ounces	2 ounces	3 ounces
Large egg	¾	1	1½
Cooked dry beans or peas	¾ cup	½ cup	¾ cup
Peanut butter or other nut or seed butters	3 tablespoons	4 tablespoons	6 tablespoons
Yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened	6 ounces or ¾ cup	8 ounces or 1 cup	12 ounces or 1½ cups
Vegetable or Fruit: 2 or more servings of vegetables, fruits or both	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup
Grains/Breads: (servings per week): Must be enriched or whole grain. A serving is a slice of bread or an equivalent serving of biscuits, rolls, etc., or ½ cup of cooked rice, macaroni, noodles, other pasta products or cereal grains	8 servings per week ² -- minimum of 1 serving per day	8 servings per week ² -- minimum of 1 serving per day	10 servings per week ² -- minimum of 1 serving per day

¹ Must meet the requirements in appendix A of 7 CFR 210.

² For the purposes of this table, a week equals five days.

The Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning Approach is designed to meet nutritional standards set forth in program regulations.

Contact Us with Feedback and
Questions for our next
Newsletter!

Acton-Boxborough-Regional
Schools
Acton Public Schools
Food Service
Kirsten Nelson, Director
16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720

Phone:
(978) 264-4700 x3221

E-mail:
Knelson@mail.ab.mec.edu

Professional Development and Staff Training

Food Safety

Food Service Staff from all schools were either re-certified in the National Restaurant Associations Serv Safe certification course or newly certified. A minimum of 1 person in each cafeteria is certified in Food Safety and every staff member is educated in food safety.

School Nutrition Conference

A few of our staff attended the School Nutrition Conference held in Marlborough, MA this Fall.

This conference gives our staff a chance to sample new foods and to see what is new in School Lunch!

See our Menus by visiting...
[http://www.ab.mec.edu/
departments/food/food
menus.shtml](http://www.ab.mec.edu/departments/food/food_menus.shtml)
Click on the school menu
you would like to view.

Fight Bac Keeping Your Food Safe

By Karen Crawford, MS, RD, CSP

Before your next social event involving your family, friends and great food, ask yourself this very important question- is the food you are about to serve safe to eat? According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), there is good chance that something you are serving is not. And in fact, the CDC estimates that there are 76 million cases of foodborne illnesses each year, more than 300,000 persons hospitalized and 5,000 deaths from foodborne illnesses alone! As startling as this data may be, when preparing food at home, there are simple things that you can do to drastically decrease the risk.

Overview

Before getting into the specifics of food safety, it is necessary to know that some foods are more likely to cause foodborne illnesses than others. For instance, raw foods from animals, such as meat, poultry, eggs, unpasteurized milk and raw shellfish are likely culprits. Also, raw fruits and vegetables can be of particular concern if they are not handled and cleaned appropriately. In addition to at risk foods, some individuals are more at risk than others to get sick from improperly handled food. Those at greatest risk for contracting a foodborne illness are older adults, pregnant women, very young children and those with weakened immune systems.

Steps to Food Safety

The 4 most important rules of food safety are: Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill. If you do these things correctly when preparing foods, you will be protecting your family from a

Clean

Bacteria can spread easily throughout your kitchen by way of your hands and surfaces.

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before, during and after handling food.
- Wash surfaces, cutting boards and utensils with soapy water after contact with each food item.
- Thoroughly rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running water before eating.

Separate

Cross-contamination of foods and surfaces is how bacteria can get from one place to another.

- Designate different cutting boards using one for raw meat and one for fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Never use the same plate for raw meat and then again for cooked meat.
- Keep raw meat sealed and separate from the other foods in your refrigerator.

Cook

Always cook to proper temperatures. Proper temperatures are the point at which harmful bacteria are killed.

- Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot.
- Food may look fully cooked before it reaches the proper internal temperature.
- Always use a thermometer to determine proper temperatures.

Chill

Be sure to refrigerate foods promptly and properly.

- Refrigerate or freeze perishables and prepared foods within 2 hours of use.
- Always defrost frozen food in the refrigerator and not at room temperature.
- Separate large amounts of food into smaller portions before freezing or refrigerating so that the food cools down quickly.

Following the rules above will help to ensure safe and happy eating at your next holiday event, picnic, barbeque, or simple family meal. For more information on the rules of food safety or for specific cooking times and temperatures, visit the websites listed below. Happy eating!

References:

www.fightbac.org

www.homefoodsafety.org