

Four-day Breakfast Meal Pattern: Grades K-8 Option

School Year 2019-20 (Effective July 1, 2019)

This document summarizes the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) [School Breakfast Program \(SBP\)](#) four-day meal pattern option for grades K-8. The SBP meal patterns for grades K-5 and 6-8 overlap, which allows schools and institutions to choose to use one breakfast meal pattern for both grade groups. This option is useful for grade configurations that prevent students from being separated into the required grade groups for K-5 and 6-8. Examples include schools where students in grades K-8 or grades 5-8 eat together during the same breakfast period. **Note:** The breakfast meal pattern option for grades K-8 requires a narrower calorie range and more restrictive sodium limit (see “Dietary Specifications (Nutrition Standards)” below).

For additional SBP meal patterns, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. For detailed guidance on the SBP meal pattern requirements, review the CSDE’s guide, [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and visit the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Food Components ¹	Grades K-8 Option	
	Daily	Weekly ²
Milk, fluid (cups) ³ Low-fat (1%) milk or fat-free milk, unflavored or flavored	1	4
Fruits (cups) ⁴ Vegetables may substitute for fruits ⁵ Fruit juice together with vegetable juice cannot exceed half of the weekly fruits ⁶	1	4
Grains (ounce equivalents) ^{7,8} Whole grain-rich (WGR) or enriched	1	6½-8
Dietary Specifications (Nutrition Standards) <i>Daily amount based on the average for a four-day week</i>		
Calories ^{9,10}	400-500	
Saturated fat (percentage of total calories) ¹⁰	< 10	
Sodium (milligrams) ^{10,11}	≤ 540	
Trans fat (grams) ¹⁰	Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving	

◀ See page 2 for important menu planning notes ▶

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Menu planning notes

- ¹ Breakfasts must include the minimum serving of all three components. Larger amounts may be served if the weekly breakfast menu meets the dietary specifications for calories, saturated fat, sodium, and trans fat. Use the USDA's *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* (FBG) to determine the amount of purchased food that meets the requirements. For processed foods, review the product's Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS). For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, *Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program*, *Product Formulation Statements*, *Accepting Processed Product Documentation*, and *Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the NSLP and SBP*; and visit the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products" section of the CSDE's *Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs* webpage. Foods made on site must have a standardized recipe that documents crediting information. For more information, visit the "Crediting Foods Prepared on Site" section of the CSDE's *Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs* webpage.
- ² A week equals four days. This meal pattern is only for school food authorities (SFAs) that regularly operate on a four-day week. SFAs that regularly operate for five, six, or seven days must increase the weekly requirements by 20 percent for each additional day. SFAs that regularly operate for less than four days must decrease the weekly requirements by 20 percent for each day less than five days. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Menu Planning for Shorter and Longer Weeks*, and the five-day and seven-day NSLP meal patterns on the CSDE's *Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs* webpage.
- ³ SFAs must offer at least two different varieties of low-fat (1%) milk (unflavored or flavored) or fat-free milk (unflavored or flavored). At least one choice must be unflavored low-fat or fat-free milk. Whole milk and reduced-fat (2%) milk cannot be served.
- ⁴ The fruits component includes fresh fruit, frozen fruit, dried fruit, and canned fruit in juice, water, or light syrup. Fruit credits based on volume, except dried fruit credits as twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup of dried fruit credits as ½ cup of the fruits component.
- ⁵ Vegetables include fresh, frozen, canned, and rehydrated dried vegetables. Dried vegetables require a PFS. A serving of cooked vegetables must be drained. Vegetables from the dark green, red/orange, legumes, and "other" subgroups may substitute for the fruits component at any time. Starchy vegetables (such as hash-brown potatoes) cannot substitute unless the weekly breakfast menu includes at least 2 cups of nonstarchy vegetables. Vegetables credit based on volume, except raw leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach credit as half the volume served (e.g., 1 cup credits as ½ cup of vegetables), and tomato paste and puree credit based on the volume as if reconstituted (see the FBG). For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Vegetable Subgroups in the NSLP*.
- ⁶ Fruit and vegetable juice must be pasteurized 100 percent full-strength juice. Fruit juice together with vegetable juice cannot exceed half of the weekly fruit offerings. The juice limit includes all sources of juice, e.g., 100 percent fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice. For best nutrition, serve whole fruits instead of juice. For more information, see the CSDE's handouts *Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP* and *Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP*.

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Menu planning notes, *continued*

- ⁷ At least half of the weekly grains offered at breakfast must be WGR. Grains that are not WGR must be enriched. WGR foods contain at least 50 percent whole grains, any remaining grains are enriched, and any noncreditable grains are less than 2 percent ($\frac{1}{4}$ ounce equivalent) of the product formula. Grains must meet the applicable weights (groups A-G) or volumes (groups H-I) in the USDA's ounce equivalents chart (see [Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#)), or provide the minimum creditable grains per serving (see [Calculation Methods for Crediting Grains for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#)). Menus are not required to meet the weekly maximum ounce equivalents for grains, but must meet the weekly minimums and stay within the weekly calorie range. The weekly maximum ounce equivalents provide a guide for planning age-appropriate meals that meet the dietary specifications for calories, saturated fat, and sodium. For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, [Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#), [Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP](#), and [Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#).
- ⁸ The meat/meat alternates component is not required at breakfast. SFAs may substitute 1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternates for 1 ounce equivalent of grains after offering the minimum daily grains serving (1 ounce equivalent). The serving size refers to the edible portion of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish as served, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, extenders, or other ingredients. A 1-ounce equivalent equals 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish; 1 ounce of cheese (low-fat recommended); 2 ounces of cottage or ricotta cheese (low-fat recommended); $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of cooked beans and peas (legumes); $\frac{1}{2}$ large egg; 2 tablespoons of nut butters; 1 ounce of nuts or seeds; $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (2.2 ounces) of commercial tofu containing at least 5 grams of protein; 1 ounce of tempeh; 3 ounces of surimi; $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of yogurt or soy yogurt; and 1 ounce of alternate protein products (APPs). APPs must meet the USDA's requirements in [appendix A](#) of the SBP regulations (7 CFR 220). Allowable nuts and seeds include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios, and soy nuts. For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, [Crediting Deli Meats in the NSLP and SBP](#), [Crediting Legumes in the NSLP and SBP](#), [Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the NSLP and SBP](#), [Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP](#), and [Requirements for Alternate Protein Products](#).
- ⁹ The breakfast menu's average daily amount of calories for a four-day school week must be at least the minimum value, but no more than the maximum value.
- ¹⁰ Meals may include discretionary sources of calories (solid fats and added sugars) if the weekly breakfast menu meets the dietary specifications. For information on the dietary specifications, see section 6 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).
- ¹¹ These are the first sodium targets. Weekly breakfast menus must meet the first sodium target through June 30, 2024. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Sodium Reduction Timeline for the NSLP and SBP](#).

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For more information, review the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) guide, *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*, and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpages, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/SBPmealpattern4day_gradesK-8option.pdf.

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