

Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs

Answer Key for Module 2 Worksheet: Co-Mingled Meal Service



“Co-mingling” is the practice of serving meals to a variety of grades in the same service area at the same time, such as preschoolers and grades K-5 or preschoolers and grades K-8. School food authorities may use the meal pattern of the older grades for both grade groups when students are co-mingled if the meal service meets the following conditions: 1) the preschoolers and students from older grade groups eat together in the same place at the same time; 2) it is hard to tell the preschoolers from older students; and 3) it would be operationally difficult to serve different foods or different amounts of foods during the combined meal service.

Instructions: Indicate if each meal service scenario is co-mingled and why or why not.

Meal service	Are these meals or snacks co-mingled? Why or why not?
1. Preschoolers are mixed together with students in grades K-5 and both grade groups go through the serving line together at lunch.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Since all children go through the serving line together at the same time, it would be difficult for food service staff to determine which children are in preschool or grades K-5. The school may use the K-5 lunch meal pattern for both grade groups.
2. Preschoolers and grades K-8 arrive at school at the same time and enter the cafeteria serving line together to get breakfast.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No All children go through the serving line together and eat in the same meal service area at the same time. Since students are not separated by grade, it would be difficult for staff to distinguish preschool students from older students. The school may use the K-8 breakfast meal pattern for both grade groups.

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Meal service	Are these meals or snacks co-mingled? Why or why not?
3. Preschoolers and grades K-8 are served ASP snack in the same service area at the same time.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Since children are served ASP snack together at the same time, it would be difficult for food service staff to determine which children are in preschool or grades K-8. The school may use the K-12 snack meal pattern for both grade groups.
4. Preschoolers and grades K-5 eat together during the same meal period but one serving line is used for preschoolers and another serving line is used for grades K-5.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No While both grade groups eat together during the same meal period, the preschoolers can be easily identified because they go through a separate lunch line. The school must use two different meal patterns, the preschool meal pattern for preschoolers and the K-5 meal pattern for grades K-5.
5. A school with preschoolers and grades K-8 offers a bagged grab-and-go breakfast from one location that is available to students at the beginning of the school day.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Since the grab-and-go breakfast is available to all grade groups, it would be difficult for food service staff to determine which children are in preschool or grades K-8. The school may use the K-8 breakfast meal pattern for both grade groups.
6. At lunch, the preschool classes eat immediately after the older grade groups and food service staff do not have time to switch serving utensils or change food items, such as removing flavored milk.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Since there is no time for serving staff to switch serving utensils or change the foods on the serving line, it would be operationally difficult for the school to serve different foods or different amounts of foods during the meal service. The school may use the lunch meal pattern for the older grades for both grade groups.
7. Preschoolers eat breakfast in the classroom.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No The preschoolers eat at a separate location and time from older grades. The school must use the preschool breakfast meal pattern.

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The Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) **Preschool Meal Patterns Training for the School Nutrition Programs** is a series of eight recorded modules that provide comprehensive guidance on complying with the preschool meal patterns for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the NSLP, and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP. To access the training modules and resources, visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

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