

Quick Guide to Serving Meals to Pre-K Students who are not Co-Mingled

Co-Mingled vs. Non-Co-Mingled: Is the Point of Service for the Pre-K students in the cafeteria or in the classroom? If they go through the cafeteria line (regardless of whether they eat in the cafeteria or classroom), the Pre-K students are considered co-mingled with the older students and they may be served meals that follow the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) meal pattern. If the Pre-K students are served in the classroom, the meals must follow the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern.

Point of Service Meal Counts: Meals served in the classroom must still have Point of Service Meal counts. Point of service meal counts must be taken at the time each child receives a reimbursable meal. Meal counts cannot be taken before the meal is served or counted up after the meal service. Counts based on pre-order numbers, attendance numbers, or counting trays are not allowable.

Training: If teachers are responsible for doing the meal counts, they must at least have Civil Rights training, meal counting training, identifying a reimbursable meal training. If they are responsible for handling the food, they should also have training on basic food safety and sanitation.

Meal Service Methods: Meal service options for the CACFP meal pattern include “Serve” and “Family Style.” In Serve, students must take all of the required components in the correct, minimum portion size. In Family Style, the food is placed on the table and the students serve themselves with the help of the teacher, if needed. The teacher should encourage the child to take the minimum portion size and under Family Style meal service in the School Meal Programs, Pre-K students must take at least a ¼ cup of vegetable or fruit. Offer vs. Serve (OVS) is not allowed when using the CACFP meal pattern.

Civil Rights: If the students always eat meals in the classroom and do not go to the cafeteria to get their meals, there must be an “And Justice for All” non-discrimination poster prominently posted in the classroom.



Key Meal Pattern Differences to Keep in Mind:

In the CACFP meal pattern:

- Flavored milk is not allowed. One-year-olds must have unflavored whole milk. Two to five-year-olds must have unflavored fat-free or unflavored 1% milk. No milk choice is required.
- There can be no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce of cereal.
- There can be no more 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces of yogurt.
- Grain-based desserts (e.g., cinnamon rolls and granola bars) may not credit toward the grains component. Sweet crackers (e.g., graham crackers and animal crackers) are allowable and count toward the grains component.
- Juice may only be offered once a day.

CACFP Pre-K Meal Pattern:

	Breakfast		Lunch		Snack
	1-2 years	3-5 years	1-2 years	3-5 years	1-5 years
Milk	½ cup (4 oz.)	¾ cup (6 oz.)	½ cup (4 oz.)	¾ cup (6 oz.)	½ cup (4 oz.)
Fruits	¼ cup	½ cup	1/8 cup	¼ cup	½ cup
Vegetables	¼ cup	½ cup	1/8 cup	¼ cup <i>Optional: A second, different vegetable may be served in place of fruit at lunch.</i>	½ cup
Grains	½ oz. eq.	½ oz. eq.	½ oz. eq.	½ oz. eq.	½ oz. eq.
Meat/Meat Alternate	<i>Optional: Meat/meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component up 3 times per week.</i>		1 oz. eq.	1 ½ oz. eq.	½ oz. eq.

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