

Since its founding in 2009 the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement has championed the use of evidence-based, simple low and no-cost changes to lunchrooms which can simultaneously improve participation and profits while decreasing waste. This tool can help you to evaluate your lunchroom, congratulate yourself for things you are doing well and identify areas of opportunity for improvement

Instructions

Read each of the statements below. Visualize your cafeteria, your service areas and your school building. Indicate whether the statement is true for your school by checking the box to the left. If you believe that your school does not reflect the statement 100% do not check the box on the left. After you have completed the checklist, tally all boxes with check marks and write this number in the designated area on the back of the form. This number represents your school's baseline score. The boxes which are not checked are areas of opportunity for you to consider implementing in the future. We recommend completing this checklist annually to measure your improvements!

It's not nutrition
...until it's eaten!



Important Words

Service areas: Any location where students can purchase or are provided with food

Dining areas: Any location where students can consume the food purchased or provided

Grab and Go Meals: Any meal with components pre-packaged together for ease and convenience – such as a brown bag lunch or “Fun Lunch” etc.

Designated Line: Any foodservice line which has been specified for particular food items or concepts – such as a pizza line, deli line, salad line etc.

Alternative entrée options: Any meal component which could also be considered an entrée for students - such as the salad bar, yogurt parfait, vegetarian/vegan or meatless options etc.

Reimbursable “Combo Meal” pairings: Any reimbursable components available independently on your foodservice lines which you have identified as a part of a promotional complete meal – For example you decided your beef taco, seasoned beans, frozen strawberries and 1% milk are part of a promotional meal called the, “Mi Amigo Meal!” etc.

Non-functional lunchroom equipment: Any items which are either broken, awaiting repair or are simply not used during meal service – such as empty or broken steam tables, coolers, registers etc.

Good Rapport: Communication is completed in a friendly and polite manner

All Points of Sale: Any location where a register/pin-pad is located for example: deli-line, snack window, a la carte line, hot line, kiosks/carts etc.

- ☐ Fruit is available at all points of sale (deli-line, snack windows, a la carte lines etc.)
- ☐ Daily fruit options are available in at least two different locations on each service line
- ☐ At least one daily fruit option is available near all registers (If there are concerns regarding edible peel, fruit can be bagged or wrapped)
- ☐ Whole fruit options are displayed in attractive bowls or baskets (instead of chaffing/hotel pans)
- ☐ A mixed variety of whole fruits are displayed together
- ☐ Daily fruit options are easily seen by students of average height for your school
- ☐ Daily fruit options are bundled into all grab and go meals available to students
- ☐ Daily fruit options are written legibly on menu boards in all service and dining areas

Promoting Vegetables & Salad

- ☐ At least two types of vegetable are available daily
- ☐ Vegetables are not wilted, browning, or otherwise damaged
- ☐ At least one vegetable option is available in all foodservice areas
- ☐ Individual salads or a salad bar is available to all students
- ☐ The salad bar is highly visible and located in a high traffic area
- ☐ Self-serve salad bar utensils are at the appropriate portion size or larger for all fruits and vegetable offered
- ☐ Self-serve salad bar utensils are smaller for croutons, dressing and other non-produce items
- ☐ Daily vegetable options are available in at least two different locations on each service line
- ☐ Daily vegetable options are easily seen by students of average height for your school
- ☐ A daily vegetable option is bundled into grab and go meals available to students
- ☐ A default vegetable choice is established by pre-plating a vegetable on some of the trays



- ☐ Available vegetable options have been given creative or descriptive names
- ☐ All vegetable names are printed/written on name-cards or product IDs and displayed next to each vegetable option daily
- ☐ All vegetable names are written and legible on menu boards
- ☐ All vegetable names are included on the published monthly school lunch menu

Moving More White Milk

- ☐ All beverage coolers have white milk available
- ☐ White milk is placed in front of other beverages in all coolers
- ☐ White milk crates are placed so that they are the first beverage option seen in all designated milk coolers
- ☐ White milk is available at all points of sale (deli-line, snack windows, a la carte lines etc.)
- ☐ White milk represents at least 1/3 of all visible milk in the lunchroom
- ☐ White milk is easily seen by students of average height for your school
- ☐ White milk is bundled into all grab and go meals available to students as the default beverage
- ☐ White milk is promoted on menu boards legibly
- ☐ White milk is replenished so all displays appear “full” continually throughout meal service and after each lunch period



Entrée of the Day

- ☐ A daily entrée option has been identified to promote as a “targeted entrée” in each service area and for each designated line (deli-line, snack windows, a la carte lines etc.)
- ☐ Daily targeted entrée options are highlighted on posters or signs
- ☐ Daily targeted entrée is easily seen by students of average height for your school
- ☐ Daily targeted entrées have been provided creative or descriptive names
- ☐ All targeted entrée names are printed/written on name-cards or product IDs and displayed next to each respective entrée daily



Focusing on Fruit

- ☐ At least two types of fruit are available daily
- ☐ Sliced or cut fruit is available daily
- ☐ Fruit options are not browning, bruised or otherwise damaged
- ☐ Daily fruit options are given creative, age-appropriate names



- ☐ All targeted entrée names are written and legible on menu boards
- ☐ All targeted entrée names are included on the published monthly school lunch menu
- ☐ All targeted entrees are replenished so as to appear “full” throughout meal service

Increasing Sales Reimbursable Meals



- ☐ A reimbursable meal can be created in any service area available to students (salad bars, snack windows, speed lines, speed windows, dedicated service lines etc.)
- ☐ Reimbursable “Combo Meal” pairings are available and promoted daily
- ☐ A reimbursable meal has been bundled into a grab and go meal available to students
- ☐ Grab and go reimbursable meals are available at a convenience line/speed window
- ☐ The convenience line offers only reimbursable grab and go meals with low-fat non-flavored milk fruit and/or vegetable.
- ☐ Grab and go reimbursable meals are easily seen by students of average height for your school
- ☐ The School offers universal free lunch
- ☐ A reimbursable combo meal pairing is available daily using alternative entrees (salad bar, fruit & yogurt parfait etc.)
- ☐ Reimbursable “Combo Meal” pairings have been provided creative or descriptive age-appropriate names (i.e. – The Hungry Kid Meal, The Athlete’s Meal, Bobcat Meal etc.)
- ☐ Reimbursable “Combo Meal” pairing names are written/printed on name-cards, labels, or product IDs and displayed next to each respective meal daily
- ☐ All reimbursable “Combo Meal” names are written and legible on menu boards
- ☐ All reimbursable “Combo Meal” names are included on the published monthly school lunch menu
- ☐ Reimbursable “Combo Meal” pairings are promoted on signs or posters
- ☐ The named reimbursable “Combo Meal” is promoted during the school’s morning announcements
- ☐ Students have the option to pre-order their lunch in the morning or earlier
- ☐ The cafeteria accepts cash as a form of payment

Creating School Synergies Signage, Priming & Communication



- ☐ Posters displaying healthful foods are visible and readable within all service and dining areas
- ☐ Signage/posters/floor decals are available to direct students toward all service areas

- ☐ Signs promoting the lunchroom and featured menu items are placed in other areas of the school such as the main office, library or gymnasium.
- ☐ Menu boards featuring today’s meal components are visible and readable within all service and dining areas
- ☐ A dedicated space/menu board is visible and readable from 5ft away within the service or dining area where students can see tomorrow’s menu items
- ☐ Dining space is branded to reflect student body or school (i.e. – school lunchroom is named for school mascot or local hero/celebrity)
- ☐ All promotional signs and posters are rotated, updated or changed at least quarterly
- ☐ All creative and descriptive names are rotated, updated or changed at least quarterly
- ☐ A monthly menu is available and provided to all student families, teachers and administrators
- ☐ A monthly menu is visible and readable within the school building
- ☐ A weekly “Nutritional Report Card” is provided to parents detailing what thier student has purchased during the previous week.

Lunchroom Atmosphere

- ☐ Trash on floors, in, or near garbage cans is removed between each lunch period
- ☐ Cleaning supplies and utensils are returned to a cleaning closet or are not visible during service and dining
- ☐ Compost/recycling/tray return and garbage cans are tidied between lunch periods
- ☐ Compost/recycling/tray return and garbage cans are at least 5ft away from dining students
- ☐ Dining and service areas are clear of any non-functional equipment or tables during service
- ☐ Sneeze guards in all service areas are clean
- ☐ Obstacles and barriers to enter service and dining areas have been removed (i.e. – garbage cans, mop buckets, cones, lost & found etc.)
- ☐ Clutter is removed from service and dining areas promptly (i.e. – empty boxes, supply shipments, empty crates, pans, lost & found etc.)
- ☐ Students artwork is displayed in the service and/or dining areas
- ☐ All lights in the dining and service areas are currently functional and on
- ☐ Trays and cutlery are within arm’s reach to the students of average height for your school
- ☐ Lunchroom equipment is decorated with decals/magnets/signage etc. wherever possible

- ☐ Teachers and administrators dine in the lunchroom with students
- ☐ Cafeteria monitors have good rapport with students and lunchroom staff
- ☐ The dining space is used for other learning activities beyond meal service (i.e. – home economics, culinary nutrition education activities, school activities etc.)
- ☐ Staff is encouraged to model healthful eating behaviors to students (i.e. – dining in the lunchroom with students, encouraging students to try new foods etc.)
- ☐ Staff smiles and greets students upon entering the service line continually throughout meal service
- ☐ Students who do not have a full reimbursable meal are politely prompted to select and consume a fruit or vegetable option by staff

Student Involvement

- ☐ Student groups are involved in the development of creative and descriptive names for menu items
- ☐ Student groups are involved in creation of artwork promoting menu items
- ☐ Student groups are involved in modeling healthful eating behaviors to others (i.e. – mentors, high school students eating in the middle school lunchroom occasionally etc.)
- ☐ Student surveys are used to inform menu development, dining space décor and promotional ideas
- ☐ Students, teachers and/or administrators announce daily meal deals or targeted items in daily announcements

Recognition & Support of School Food

- ☐ The school participates in other food program promotions such as: Farm to School, Chefs Move to Schools, Fuel Up to Play 60, Share our Strength etc.)
- ☐ The school has applied or been selected for the Healthier US School Challenge
- ☐ A local celebrity (Mayor, sports hero, media personality) is invited to share lunch with student 3 to 4 time a year

A la Carte

- ☐ Students must ask to purchase a la carte items from staff members
- ☐ Students must use cash to purchase a la carte items which are not reimbursable
- ☐ Half portions are available for at least two dessert options

Total Checked

Scoring Brackets

- 70-100 – Smarter Lunchrooms Gold
- 50-70 – Smarter Lunchrooms Silver
- 30-50 – Smarter Lunchrooms Bronze



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