

New Guidelines for Lunch

Lunch Prices K-Grade 8: \$3.00 High School: \$3.25

There has been a lot of chatter about the new regulations regarding lunches. HHFKA (Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act)

What are the changes, what do we have to do?

The Food Service Department at the Wachusett Regional School District has been working diligently over the last few years towards the new regulations for healthier foods, more local fruits and vegetables, and more choices for the students and staff. With the help of the PEP (Carol White-Physical Education Program) we have been able to bring in a variety of fruits and vegetables that would otherwise be too costly to our program.

We are now faced with the challenge of strict guidelines from USDA (federal) and even more strict DESE (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) that are being implemented in the next few years. August 2012 is the start of mandatory implementation.

A few websites to peruse:

www.johnstalkerinstitute.org info for A-List a la carte items

www.mass.gov/dph/healthierschools guidance for implementing Mass. School Nutrition standards for competitive foods

www.schoolnutrition.org

www.ChooseMyPlate.gov

www.usda.gov

www.nfsmi.org

Some changes to be aware of:

1. The protein portion for meals have decreased to 2 oz, although there are maximums and minimums for a 5 day period
2. Grains: at least half of the grains served weekly have to be whole grain (The District has already been doing this!)
3. Fruits: local purchases encouraged (already in place); must be served daily (already)
4. Vegetables: there must be 5 different colored vegetables served over a 5 day period and served daily
5. A fruit or vegetable must be on the tray to qualify as a meal.
6. The portion size has increased at the high school level. (We had already been giving larger portions of fruit/vegetables
7. Legumes: must be served at least one time per week (we have already been including these on our menu, but not regular basis)
8. There are 5 components (grain, milk, fruit, vegetable, protein) to a meal: Students must take 3 but can take up to 5. A fruit or vegetable must be on the tray.

The fundraiser portion of new regulations and classroom parties will be discussed at the next cabinet meeting.

The Head Food Service Associate at your school has started training on the new regulations and I expect this will be ongoing throughout the next few years. Please let us know any comments or suggestions you may have to help us improve our program.

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