

School Food Success TK–K Meal Patterns

September 25, 2024

Cindy Hu, MEd

Education Program Manager, Center for Ecoliteracy

Crystal Whitelaw, MPH

Senior Program Manager, Center for Ecoliteracy



CENTER FOR
ECOLITERACY

CALIFORNIA FOOD
FOR CALIFORNIA KIDS®



School Food Success TK–K Meal Patterns

September 25, 2024

Jen McNeil, RDN, SNS

Founder & CEO, LunchAssist

Elisabeth Mendoza

School Nutrition Consultant, LunchAssist



Agenda

- Introducing the California Food for California Kids[®] Network
- Nourishing Students, Nutrir a los estudiantes
- TK & K Meal Patterns
- School District Highlights
- Q + A
- Resources
- Breakout Rooms
- Closing





CALIFORNIA FOOD FOR CALIFORNIA KIDS®

California Food for California Kids is an initiative of the Center for Ecoliteracy



CENTER FOR
ECOLITERACY

California Food for California Kids



144

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

37

COUNTIES

2,361,860

STUDENTS ENROLLED

366,859,712

MEALS SERVED ANNUALLY

Meet LunchAssist!



Jen McNeil
RDN, SNS



Jackie Roller
RDN, SNS



Joselyn Caceres
RDN, CDCES



Camille Biazzo
MPA, RDN



Amanda Mercer
MS, RDN



Ally Mrachek
MS, RDN, IBCLC, SNS



Emily Dunklee
CPH, SNS



Rochelle Davies
RDN, LN, SNS



Catherine Karnatz
MPH, RD



Shine Benitez



Dennis Mwaura



Kammy Benson



Mike Munna



Elisabeth Mendoza



Emma Finn
MOG



Teresa Motlas
MS, RD, LN

Introducing Fruits and Vegetables to Early Learners

Nourishing Students, Nutrir a los estudiantes



Nourishing Students, Nutrir a los estudiantes

Introducing Fruits and Vegetables to Early Learners

Connecting the classroom, cafeteria, and garden for our youngest learners and offering experiences that lead to a life-long love of California grown fruits and vegetables.

Resources:

- Simple, Student-Approved Recipes
- Virtual Menu Planning Sessions
- Bilingual Teaching Resources and Gardening Kits

TK & K Meal Patterns

What is TK?

Transitional Kindergarten is the first year in a two-year Kindergarten program.

- New program specifically designed for 4-year-olds.
- Every school district in CA is required to have TK.
- CA EC 48000 defines transitional kindergarten (TK) as the first year of a two-year kindergarten (K) program and thus TK is considered part of the K through grade 12 (K–12) school system.
- CA EC 49501.5 the “State Meal Mandate” applies to TK students, so schools are required to provide breakfast and lunch to TK each school day.
- There are two meal pattern options:
 - USDA School Nutrition Meal Pattern (K-5 / K-8), **or**
 - CACFP Ages 3-5 “Preschool” Meal Pattern (*optional*)



Which meal pattern(s) can I follow?

Do Transitional Kindergarten menus need to follow the Preschool Meal Pattern?:

Transitional Kindergarten

Transitional kindergarten (TK) programs, as defined in California *Education Code (EC)* 48000, are not preschool classrooms or child development programs. They are part of the K–12 public school system and are the first year of a two-year kindergarten program, which uses a modified kindergarten curriculum. While preschool-aged children are typically children between the ages of three to five years old, TK serves four-year olds. Therefore, schools serving TK children are not required to use the preschool meal pattern.

Which meal pattern(s) can I follow?

Can Transitional Kindergarten menus follow the Preschool Meal Pattern?:

Thank you for contacting us at the California Department of Education (CDE) regarding your clarifying question.

To answer your question:

Is it allowable to use the Preschool Meal Pattern for TK if we would prefer to use that instead of the K-5 meal pattern? Yes, it is allowable. That said, there are additional areas to address as you make this transition to use the preschool meal pattern. The below items will ensure a “more age-appropriate” meal service:

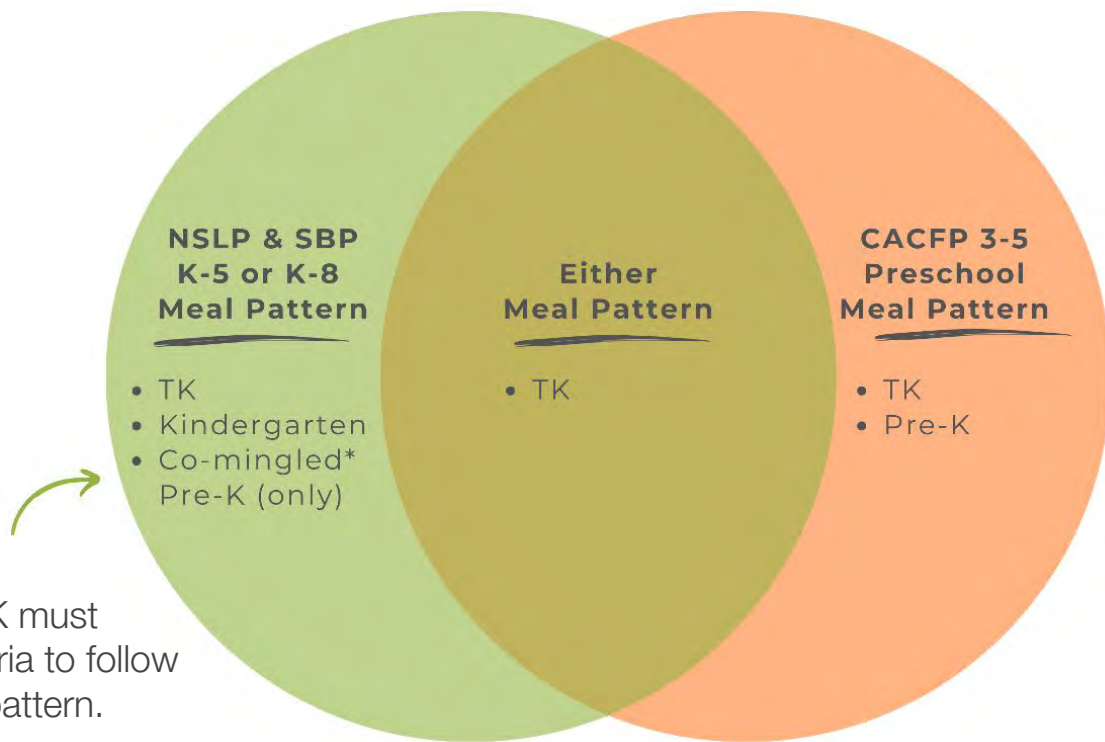
- OVS is not allowed when serving preschoolers.
- Family style meal service when possible as it allows children to serve themselves from common dishes of food with assistance from supervising adults. When using the family style meal service in the School Meal Programs, preschoolers must take at least ¼ cup of vegetable or fruit. In addition, the supervising adult should initially offer the required minimum serving size of each food component or food item to each student.

I hope you found this guidance helpful.

Sincerely,

Lori Porter, Child Nutrition Consultant

Which meal pattern(s) can I follow?



*Co-mingled Pre-K must meet specific criteria to follow NSLP/SBP meal pattern.

NSLP Lunch Meal Pattern for TK & K

	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Meal Components	Amount of Food ¹ per Week (minimum per day)		
Fruits (cups) ²	2 ½ (½)	2 ½ (½)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups) ²	3 ¾ (¾)	3 ¾ (¾)	5 (1)
Dark Green Subgroup ³	½	½	½
Red/Orange Subgroup ³	¾	¾	1 ¼
Beans, Peas, and Lentils Subgroup ³	½	½	½
Starchy Subgroup ³	½	½	½
Other Vegetables Subgroup ^{3,4}	½	½	¾
Additional Vegetables from Any Subgroup to Reach Total	1	1	1 ½
Grains (oz. eq.) ⁵	8-9 (1)	8-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
Meats/Meat Alternates (oz. eq.) ⁶	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
Fluid Milk (cups) ⁷	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Dietary Specifications: Daily Amount Based on the Average for a 5-Day Week⁸			
Minimum-Maximum Calories (kcal)	550-650	600-700	750-850
Saturated Fat (% of total calories)	<10	<10	<10
Added Sugars (% of total calories)	<10	<10	<10
Sodium Limit: In place through June 30, 2027	≤1,110 mg	≤1,225 mg	≤1,280 mg
Sodium Limit: Must be implemented by July 1, 2027	≤935 mg	≤1,035 mg	≤1,080 mg

NSLP Lunch Meal Pattern for TK & K


Schools follow the K-5 Meal Pattern, or K-8 overlap.



	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Meal Components	Amount of Food¹ per Week		
	(minimum per day)		
Fruits (cups) ²	2 ½ (½)	2 ½ (½)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups) ²	3 ¾ (¾)	3 ¾ (¾)	5 (1)
Dark Green Subgroup ³	½	½	½
Red/Orange Subgroup ³	¾	¾	1 ¼
Beans, Peas, and Lentils Subgroup ³	½	½	½
Starchy Subgroup ³	½	½	½
Other Vegetables Subgroup ^{3,4}	½	½	¾
Additional Vegetables from Any Subgroup to Reach Total	1	1	1 ½
Grains (oz. eq.) ⁵	8-9 (1)	8-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
Meats/Meat Alternates (oz. eq.) ⁶	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
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	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Meal Components	Amount of Food ¹ per Week (minimum per day)		
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Vegetables (cups) ²	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ($\frac{3}{4}$)	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ($\frac{3}{4}$)	5 (1)
Dark Green Subgroup ³	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Red/Orange Subgroup ³	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
Beans, Peas, and Lentils Subgroup ³	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Starchy Subgroup ³	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Other Vegetables Subgroup ^{3,4}	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$
Additional Vegetables from Any Subgroup to Reach Total	1	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
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Offer at least 1 oz eq of grains and 1 oz eq of M/MA must daily. 80% of grains must be WGR. Offer at least 8 oz eq grains and 8 oz eq M/MA weekly. →

	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
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Vegetables (cups) ²	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ($\frac{3}{4}$)	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ($\frac{3}{4}$)	5 (1)
Dark Green Subgroup ³	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Red/Orange Subgroup ³	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
Beans, Peas, and Lentils Subgroup ³	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Starchy Subgroup ³	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Other Vegetables Subgroup ^{3,4}	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$
Additional Vegetables from Any Subgroup to Reach Total	1	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
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Offer 8 oz of milk daily; flavored milk allowed. →

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Vegetables (cups) ²	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ($\frac{3}{4}$)	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ($\frac{3}{4}$)	5 (1)
Dark Green Subgroup ³	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Red/Orange Subgroup ³	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
Beans, Peas, and Lentils Subgroup ³	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Starchy Subgroup ³	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Other Vegetables Subgroup ^{3,4}	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{3}{4}$
Additional Vegetables from Any Subgroup to Reach Total	1	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Grains (oz. eq.) ⁵	8-9 (1)	8-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
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Offer 8 oz of milk daily; flavored milk allowed.

Nutrients must be balanced across the week, including limits on total calories, saturated fat, and sodium.

	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Meal Components	Amount of Food ¹ per Week (minimum per day)		
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Vegetables (cups) ²	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ($\frac{3}{4}$)	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ($\frac{3}{4}$)	5 (1)
Dark Green Subgroup ³	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Red/Orange Subgroup ³	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
Beans, Peas, and Lentils Subgroup ³	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Starchy Subgroup ³	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Other Vegetables Subgroup ^{3,4}	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$
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Grains (oz. eq.) ⁵	8-9 (1)	8-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
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SBP Breakfast Meal Pattern for TK & K

	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Meal Components	Amount of Food¹ per Week (minimum per day)		
Fruits (cups) ²	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups) ²	0	0	0
Dark Green Subgroup	0	0	0
Red/Orange Subgroup	0	0	0
Beans, Peas, and Lentils Subgroup	0	0	0
Starchy Subgroup	0	0	0
Other Vegetables Subgroup	0	0	0
Grains or Meats/Meat Alternates (oz. eq) ³	7-10 (1)	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)
Fluid Milk (cups) ⁴	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Dietary Specifications: Daily Amount Based on the Average for a 5-Day Week⁵			
Minimum-Maximum Calories (kcal)	350-500	400-550	450-600
Saturated Fat (% of total calories)	<10	<10	<10
Added Sugars (% of total calories)	<10	<10	<10
Sodium Limit: In place through June 30, 2027	≤540 mg	≤600 mg	≤640 mg
Sodium Limit: Must be implemented by July 1, 2027	≤485 mg	≤535 mg	≤570 mg

SBP Breakfast Meal Pattern for TK & K


Schools follow the K-5 Meal Pattern, or K-8 overlap.



	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Meal Components	Amount of Food ¹ per Week (minimum per day)		
Fruits (cups) ²	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups) ²	0	0	0
Dark Green Subgroup	0	0	0
Red/Orange Subgroup	0	0	0
Beans, Peas, and Lentils Subgroup	0	0	0
Starchy Subgroup	0	0	0
Other Vegetables Subgroup	0	0	0
Grains or Meats/Meat Alternates (oz. eq) ³	7-10 (1)	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)
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Offer at least 1 c fruit daily. Vegetables can substitute for fruit. Under Offer vs. Serve, at least ½ c fruit or vegetable must be taken with each meal. 

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Offer at least 1 oz eq of grains, M/MA, or combination daily. 80% of grains must be WGR. Offer at least 7 oz eq grains, M/MA or combination weekly. 

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Offer at least 1 oz eq of grains, M/MA, or combination daily. 80% of grains must be WGR. Offer at least 7 oz eq grains, M/MA or combination weekly. →

Offer 8 oz of milk daily; flavored milk allowed. →

	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
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Dark Green Subgroup	0	0	0
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Starchy Subgroup	0	0	0
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Offer 8 oz of milk daily; flavored milk allowed. →

Nutrients must be balanced across the week, including limits on total calories, saturated fat, and sodium. →

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Vegetables (cups) ²	0	0	0
Dark Green Subgroup	0	0	0
Red/Orange Subgroup	0	0	0
Beans, Peas, and Lentils Subgroup	0	0	0
Starchy Subgroup	0	0	0
Other Vegetables Subgroup	0	0	0
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CACFP 3-5 “Preschool” Meal Pattern for TK

	Breakfast		Lunch	
	1–2 years	3–5 years	1–2 years	3–5 years
 Milk	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)
 Fruits	¼ cup	½ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup
 Vegetables			⅛ cup <small>Optional: A second, different vegetable may be served in place of fruit at lunch.</small>	¼ cup
 Grains	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq
 Meats/Meat Alternates	<small>Optional: Meats/meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component up to three times per week at breakfast. Minimum serving size for both age groups is ½ oz eq.</small>		1 oz eq	1½ oz eq

CACFP 3-5 “Preschool” Meal Pattern for TK

TK may follow the 3-5 years old age group.








	Breakfast		Lunch	
	1–2 years	3–5 years	1–2 years	3–5 years
 Milk	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)
 Fruits	¼ cup	½ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup
 Vegetables			⅛ cup <small>Optional: A second, different vegetable may be served in place of fruit at lunch.</small>	¼ cup
 Grains	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq
 Meats/Meat Alternates	<small>Optional: Meats/meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component up to three times per week at breakfast. Minimum serving size for both age groups is ½ oz eq.</small>		1 oz eq	1½ oz eq

CACFP 3-5 “Preschool” Meal Pattern for TK

TK may follow the 3-5 years old age group.

Offer 6 oz of milk per meal; flavored milk **not** allowed.






	Breakfast		Lunch	
	1–2 years	3–5 years	1–2 years	3–5 years
 Milk	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)
 Fruits	¼ cup	½ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup
 Vegetables			⅛ cup <small>Optional: A second, different vegetable may be served in place of fruit at lunch.</small>	¼ cup
 Grains	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq
 Meats/Meat Alternates	<small>Optional: Meats/meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component up to three times per week at breakfast. Minimum serving size for both age groups is ½ oz eq.</small>		1 oz eq	1½ oz eq

CACFP 3-5 “Preschool” Meal Pattern for TK

TK may follow the 3-5 years old age group.

Offer 6 oz of milk per meal; flavored milk **not** allowed.

Offer at least ½ c fruit or vegetable at breakfast and ¼ c fruit at lunch. Juice limited to once per day.

	Breakfast		Lunch	
	1–2 years	3–5 years	1–2 years	3–5 years
 Milk	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)
 Fruits	¼ cup	½ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup
 Vegetables			⅛ cup <small>Optional: A second, different vegetable may be served in place of fruit at lunch.</small>	¼ cup
 Grains	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq
 Meats/Meat Alternates	<small>Optional: Meats/meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component up to three times per week at breakfast. Minimum serving size for both age groups is ½ oz eq.</small>		1 oz eq	1½ oz eq






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Offer at least ¼ c vegetable at lunch. A second, different type of vegetable may be served in lieu of fruit for lunch. Vegetable subgroups not required.

	Breakfast		Lunch	
	1–2 years	3–5 years	1–2 years	3–5 years
 Milk	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)
 Fruits	¼ cup	½ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup
 Vegetables			⅛ cup <small>Optional: A second, different vegetable may be served in place of fruit at lunch.</small>	¼ cup
 Grains	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq
 Meats/Meat Alternates	<small>Optional: Meats/meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component up to three times per week at breakfast. Minimum serving size for both age groups is ½ oz eq.</small>		1 oz eq	1½ oz eq

CACFP 3-5 “Preschool” Meal Pattern for TK

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Offer at least ½ c fruit or vegetable at breakfast and ¼ c fruit at lunch. Juice limited to once per day.

Offer at least ¼ c vegetable at lunch. A second, different type of vegetable may be served in lieu of fruit for lunch. Vegetable subgroups not required.

Offer at least ½ oz eq of grains at breakfast and lunch.

At least one serving per day must be WGR.

	Breakfast		Lunch	
	1–2 years	3–5 years	1–2 years	3–5 years
 Milk	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)
 Fruits	¼ cup	½ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup
 Vegetables			⅛ cup <small>Optional: A second, different vegetable may be served in place of fruit at lunch.</small>	¼ cup
 Grains	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq
 Meats/Meat Alternates	<small>Optional: Meats/meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component up to three times per week at breakfast. Minimum serving size for both age groups is ½ oz eq.</small>		1 oz eq	1½ oz eq

CACFP 3-5 “Preschool” Meal Pattern for TK

TK may follow the 3-5 years old age group.






Offer 6 oz of milk per meal; flavored milk **not** allowed.

Offer at least ½ c fruit or vegetable at breakfast and ¼ c fruit at lunch. Juice limited to once per day.

Offer at least ¼ c vegetable at lunch. A second, different type of vegetable may be served in lieu of fruit for lunch. Vegetable subgroups not required.

Offer at least ½ oz eq of grains at breakfast and lunch. At least one serving per day must be WGR.

Offer at least 1.5 oz eq M/MA at lunch. M/MA may substitute for grains at breakfast 3 times per week.

	Breakfast		Lunch	
	1–2 years	3–5 years	1–2 years	3–5 years
 Milk	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)
 Fruits	¼ cup	½ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup
 Vegetables			⅛ cup <small>Optional: A second, different vegetable may be served in place of fruit at lunch.</small>	¼ cup
 Grains	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq
 Meats/Meat Alternates	<small>Optional: Meats/meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component up to three times per week at breakfast. Minimum serving size for both age groups is ½ oz eq.</small>		1 oz eq	1½ oz eq

CACFP Ages 3-5 “Preschool” Meal Pattern

TK may follow the 3-5 years old age group.






Offer 6 oz of milk per meal; flavored milk **not** allowed.

Offer at least ½ c fruit or vegetable at breakfast and ¼ c fruit at lunch. Juice limited to once per day.

Offer at least ¼ c vegetable at lunch. A second, different type of vegetable may be served in lieu of fruit for lunch. Vegetable subgroups not required.

Offer at least ½ oz eq of grains at breakfast and lunch. At least one serving per day must be WGR.

Offer at least 1.5 oz eq M/MA at lunch. M/MA may substitute for grains at breakfast 3 times per week.

	Breakfast		Lunch	
	1–2 years	3–5 years	1–2 years	3–5 years
 Milk	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)
 Fruits	¼ cup	½ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup
 Vegetables			⅛ cup <small>Optional: A second, different vegetable may be served in place of fruit at lunch.</small>	¼ cup
 Grains	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq
 Meats/Meat Alternates	<small>Optional: Meats/meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component up to three times per week at breakfast. Minimum serving size for both age groups is ½ oz eq.</small>		1 oz eq	1½ oz eq

Notes: Nutrients are not analyzed. Components are not balanced across the week. Offer vs. Serve is not permitted. Grain-based desserts not allowed. Limits on sugars in cereal and yogurt.

Which meal pattern should I follow?

NSLP & SBP Meal Pattern

- Can be utilized for TK & K (and older grades as well!).
- A good option if your TK and K are co-mingled.
- Can only be utilized for Pre-K if meal service is co-mingled.
- TK is served the same food items and portion sizes (same menu) as K-5.
- Offer vs Serve is allowed (and encouraged).

CACFP Ages 3-5 “Preschool” Meal Pattern

- Can be utilized for TK & Pre-K.
- Cannot be used for Kindergarten (only TK & Pre-K)
- A good option if you already have a preschool menu for your Pre-K students.
- Age-appropriate portion sizes.
- Can be more cost-effective (in some cases).
- Offer vs. Serve is not permitted.
- Limits on sugars:
 - Cereals >6 g sugar per oz
 - Yogurts >23 g sugar per 6 oz
 - No grain-based desserts
 - No flavored milk

Which meal pattern do
you follow for TK?



Reducing the Risk of Choking

Serving school meals to young children:

- Provide adequate time to eat.
- Cut round and tube-shaped foods in half lengthwise:
 - Raw carrots
 - Cherry tomatoes
 - Grapes
- Prepare foods that are easy to chew.
- Avoid popcorn, hard pretzels, and hard chips.

Prepare Foods So They Are Easy to Chew
You can make eating safer for young children by following the tips below:

- Cook or steam hard food, like carrots, until it is soft enough to pierce with a fork.
- Remove seeds, pits, and tough skins/peels from fruits and vegetables.
- Finely chop foods into thin slices, strips, or small pieces (no larger than 1/2 inch), or grate, mash, or puree foods. This is especially important when serving raw fruits and vegetables, as those items may be harder to chew.
- Remove all bones from fish, chicken, and meat before cooking or serving.
- Grind up tough meats and poultry.

Cut Round Foods Into Smaller Pieces
Small round foods such as grapes, cherries, cherry tomatoes, and melon balls are common causes of choking.

Slice these items in half lengthwise.

Then slice into smaller pieces (no larger than 1/2 inch) when serving them to young children.

1/2-INCH pieces

0 INCHES 1

Avoid Choking Hazards
To help prevent choking, do not serve small (marble-sized), sticky, or hard foods that are difficult to chew and easy to swallow whole, including:


- Cheese cubes or blocks: Grate or thinly slice cheese before serving.
- Chewing gum*
- Dried fruit
- Gummy fruit snacks*
- Hard candy, including caramels, cough drops, jelly beans, lollipops, etc.*
- Hard pretzels and pretzel chips
- Ice cubes*
- Marshmallows*
- Nuts and seeds, including breads, crackers, and cereals that contain nuts and seeds
- Popcorn
- Spoonfuls of peanut butter or other nut butters: Spread nut butters thinly on other foods (e.g., toast, crackers, etc.). Serve only creamy, not chunky, nut butters.
- Whole round or tube-shaped foods such as grapes, cherry tomatoes, cherries, raw carrots, sausages, and hot dogs

*Not creditable in the Child Nutrition Programs, including the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, and Summer Food Service Program.

Resources






TK & K menu planning resources:

- California Universal Meals Program Implementation Guidelines
- California Preschool Meal Pattern Requirements
- USDA NSLP Meal Pattern
- USDA SBP Meal Pattern
- USDA CACFP Nutrition Standards
- USDA Serving School Meals to Preschoolers
- Reducing Choking Risk in Young Children




Serving School Meals to Preschoolers


Preschool meals served through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (NSLP and SBP) are designed to meet the nutritional needs of young children. Children receive meals that follow the preschool meal pattern if they are a student in the preschool age/grade group. There are two age groups under the preschool meal pattern: children 1 through 2 years old (1-2 years), and children 3 through 5 years old (3-5 years). Types of milk and minimum serving sizes for some meal components are different for the two age groups. By following the preschool meal pattern, your school can help young children eat the types and amounts of foods that best support their growth and development.

Preschool Meal Pattern				
	Breakfast		Lunch	
	1-2 years	3-5 years	1-2 years	3-5 years
 Milk	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)	½ cup (4 fl oz)	¾ cup (6 fl oz)
 Fruits	¼ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup
 Vegetables			¾ cup	¾ cup
			Optional: A second, different vegetable may be served in place of fruit at lunch.	
 Grains	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	½ oz eq
 Meat/Meat Alternatives	Optional: Meats/meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component up to three times per week at breakfast. Minimum serving size for both age groups is ½ oz eq.		1 oz eq	1 ½ oz eq

Serving sizes are minimums.
Operators may offer larger portions.
fluid ounces = fl oz, oz = ounces, or eq = ounce equivalents



FNS-663 | June 2019, Slightly Revised September 2024
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.
More training, menu planning, and nutrition education materials for Child Nutrition Programs can be found at TeamNutrition.USDA.gov.



Meal Service

vegetables, fruits, or both

Minimum serving size of each item or component must be offered to each student over the course of the meal.

School District Highlights

Fallbrook Unified School District



Riverside Unified School District



Turlock Unified School District



Q + A

A Poll About Fruits and Vegetables

Resources

Call for TK-K Recipes

CURRENT OFFERING

We're seeking recipes that feature California-grown avocados, beans, carrots, cilantro, or radishes for a new cookbook focused on TK-K school meals. If your recipe is selected, your district will be highlighted in the new cookbook.



Join the California Food for California Kids Network

California Food for California Kids is an initiative of the Center for Ecoliteracy that builds the capacity and commitment of public school districts to provide all students with fresh, locally-grown school meals and develop connections between the cafeteria, classroom, and garden.



Center for Ecoliteracy Resources

PUBLICATIONS

[Call for TK–K Recipes](#)

[California Food for California Kids Celebration Resources](#)

VIRTUAL EVENTS

[School Food Innovator Series: Wed, December 4 @ 1:30 p.m. PT](#)

[School Food Innovator Series Archive](#)

[Menu Planning Session #2: Wed, February 26 @ 2:00 p.m. PT](#)

Partner Organization Resources

[LunchAssist Weekly Update Newsletter](#)

[LunchAssist Administrative Review Prep Webinar](#) - Oct. 24

[SeedMoney Challenge](#) – *applications due November 12*

Thank you!



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School Food Success

TK–K Meal Patterns

Cindy Hu

cindy@ecoliteracy.org

Crystal Whiteclaw

crystal@ecoliteracy.org

