

# FRESH BITES NEWSLETTER

September 2020

Featured: NutriStudents K-12 Expands Menu Rotation



Do you sense already that your menu rotation may not hold students' interest through the fall? Are you stretched thin with menus for multiple service models, such as meals in the classroom and takeaway meals for distance learners?

Imagine how you and your students could benefit from a 40-week menu rotation! Starting today, NutriStudents K-12 has 40 weeks of USDA-compliant, student-approved menus at every NSLP age group available for your use. The 10 weeks recently added to our rotation include:

- Options that accommodate multiple service models: meals in the cafeteria, classroom, grab & go or meal pickup/delivery. Prepare one meal for multiple points of service!

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## 10 additional menu weeks developed for COVID-19 meal service

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- A combination of hot and cold entrees, with 5 weeks of exclusively cold entrees that go beyond cold deli sandwiches each day.
- Quick-cook, scratch recipes that will keep your participation levels up and incorporate the USDA Foods/ commodities you may have wondered how to work into your modified menus.
- Delicious entrees that students love hot or cold, such as the Fiesta Chicken Wrap, Pancakes, Soft Pretzel with Cheese, Pesto Chicken Sandwich, Pizza and the Craisin Chicken Bowl.

You can see our full 7-day, 40-week menu rotation on [this pictorial menu](#). If you're not already a client, we'd love to give you a complete overview of our menus, productivity tools and operational support.



**SCHEDULE  
A DEMO  
TODAY!**

[Visit MenuFreedom.com/Demo](https://www.MenuFreedom.com/Demo)

**Schedule a system demonstration today.**

**User hint! If your district/school is following a hybrid learning model in which one day each week is set aside for building cleaning and sanitation, use our 4-day menu weeks to best meet your needs!**

## COVID-19 Emergency Menus available to all for free

The USDA recently extended several waivers for school meal programs through December 31, 2020. This means schools can use summer meal guidelines to feed all students, assuming your state oversight agency also extends the waivers (which they have done in the past). Specifically, the USDA is allowing:

- SFSP and SSO meals to be served in all areas and at no cost.
- Meals to be served outside of the typically required group settings and mealtimes
- Waiving meal pattern requirements, as necessary.
- Parents and guardians to pick up meals for their children.

As we have since the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown schools, NutriStudents K-12 continues to stand behind school foodservice programs with FREE-TO-ALL resources, including our USDA-compliant menus for both SFSP and SSO.

**DOWNLOAD THESE MENUS NOW**

**Get In Touch!**  
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## Free Resource: Back-to-School Guide



[Download Now!](#)

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 last spring, NutriStudents K-12 has mobilized to help school foodservice programs everywhere continue to feed kids. Free emergency menus and our COVID-19 Back-to-School Guide have equipped foodservice directors to succeed in uncertain times.

The downloadable COVID-19 Back-to-School Guide, available for FREE to any school nutrition program in the country, is based on more than 30 years of experience in school foodservice and includes:

1. Step-by-step instructions for successfully providing meals under any socially distant scenario:
  - Meals in the Classroom
  - Meals in the Cafeteria
  - Meals On-the-Go / Grab and Go
  - Meals for Distance Learning
2. A complete COVID-19 Safety Preparedness Plan template. You can quickly adapt this to your program or consult it for safety protocols you may want to implement.
3. Wellness ideas to help your students cope with unsettling times.

The school year is veiled in uncertainty. Take advantage of this free resource today and share it with your foodservice friends.

## Roll out the red carpet for National School Lunch Week



Your school meal program undoubtedly looks different this year than in years' past. With rising food insecurity due to COVID-19, school meals are paramount to ensuring students learn and grow. Especially this year, school lunch is worth celebrating during National School Lunch Week, October 12-16.

**National School Lunch Week** is a prime opportunity to promote the value of your school lunch program to parents, students, staff and elected officials. The School Nutrition Association has chosen a movie theme, "Now Playing: National School Lunch Week," for the annual commemorative occasion. The theme makes possible fun activities, event ideas and engaging visuals. [SNA's free](#)

[downloadable toolkit](#) has pages and pages of ideas for you to use to draw your kids and parents into the power of school lunch, whether lunch is in the classroom, cafeteria or at home.

Here are a few of SNA's many creative ideas:

**Meals in the Classroom:** Include one "lucky bag" for each classroom and pack it with an age-appropriate giveaway, such as a movie-theme bookmark, ruler, pencil or package of stickers or crayons. If meal components are distributed separately, mark one with a gold star on the bottom of the package.

**Meals to Go:** Throughout late September, encourage families to submit short videos or photos of remote-learners picking up meals, eating school meals or making dishes together from meal kits or recipes suggested by your team. Work with an A/V teacher, film student or ask a tech-savvy staffer to use a "slideshow" app to stitch these together into a simple "documentary" that celebrates students, school meals, cooking, gardening and so on. Post this movie on your social media pages or website and promote it throughout NSLW.

**Grab & Go:** If students will be picking up their lunches from hallway kiosks before heading back to classrooms, consider theme-ing the cart, kiosk or mobile station as a "Box Office" or a "Movie Concessions Stand" or creating a "marquee"-style banner to advertise the day's menu offerings.

**Meals in the Cafeteria:** Provide small samples of a brand-new menu item and market it as its "world premiere." Use a simple posterboard featuring "thumbs up or thumbs down" column headers and ask students to record their reaction to the new item using a colored dot label on the appropriate side of the display.

**All:** Designate a specific movie theme for days during NSLW. Encourage staff, volunteers and families to wear a costume tied to that theme.

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# Roll out the red carpet for National School Lunch Week

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You might also consider:

- Renaming your meals each day that week with a title that plays off the name of characters in kid-friendly movies. Referencing Buzz Lightyear, Simba, Elsa and other characters can bring a smile to kids' faces.
- Encouraging parents and their kids to collaborate on a [recipe featured in Disney movies](#), such as the cheese souffle from Beauty and the Beast or Snow White's gooseberry pie.
- Roll out the red carpet, literally, in the cafeteria, near grab & go stations or at meal pickup sites.

However you choose mark the occasion, be sure to post photos on social media with the hashtag #NSLW20. Drop us a note about your celebration as well!



## Inspirational messages to share with students

If your district/school is using distance learning, let your scholars know how much you care and miss them by sharing some of these short messages in to-go meals:

- Love yourself enough to eat your broccoli.
- You do not find the happy life, you make it.
- Be Active, Be Healthy, Be Happy.
- Don't give up – you'll be amazed at what happens.
- You don't have to have it all figured out to move forward.
- No one is you and that is your POWER.
- Eating well is a form of self-respect.
- Nourishing your body with good food. Nourishing your mind with fulfillment. Nourishing your heart with satisfaction.
- "All you need is faith, trust, and a little pixie dust." Peter Pan
- "You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think." Christopher Robin
- "Venture outside your comfort zone. The rewards are worth it." Rapunzel
- "Today's special moments are tomorrow's memories." Genie
- Keep Calm and Sparkle.
- We become what we think about – DREAM BIG!
- Embrace imperfection – we are all different for a reason.
- Books are uniquely portable magic.
- Life doesn't have to be perfect to be beautiful.
- Reading is dreaming with your eyes open.
- The person who doesn't do the work isn't learning.
- You are capable of so much more than you can ever imagine.
- Never give up on the things that make you smile.
- If you can't make a mistake, you can't make anything. Mistakes are proof that you are trying.