



FIELD TRIP (BAG) MEAL TOOLKIT

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INTRODUCTION

School food service operations offer meals to students on field trips to maintain a steady revenue stream. Fewer student meals affect the funding schools receive in student payments, federal reimbursement, state match payment, and commodity allocations. This loss of revenue can add up over the course of the school year. In addition, it is difficult for school food service operations to appropriately adjust labor hours when there are occasional dips in participation, which may negatively impact productivity. Field trip meals are also a great convenience to busy parents. Here are some options for providing field trip meals.

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THREE OPTIONS FOR FIELD TRIP MEALS

Option #1: Prepare your own bag breakfast or lunch

Provide a bag breakfast and/or lunch to accompany students on field trips. The meals may be claimed for reimbursement if planned and served in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) meal pattern requirements.

Advantages

- No need to make arrangements for meals when planning field trips
- Cost savings realized when school meal is a lower-cost alternative to a meal purchased before, during or after the field trip
- Students have an opportunity to receive a well-balanced meal
- School nutrition service does not experience a loss in revenue or productivity
- Teachers and other school staff have fewer concerns (such as students forgetting to bring meals or money, or wholesomeness of the food items brought from home)

To Implement

- Develop an ordering procedure so that food service staff has ample time to purchase, prepare and pack bag meals
- Keep food items, including milk, at the appropriate temperatures until meal service
- Use an acceptable point of service counting procedure to record the number of reimbursable meals served by category (free, reduced-price and paid) and/or account for any a la carte sales. Schools may use a class roster to check off each student's name as he/she is handed a reimbursable meal. Another option for schools with electronic meal counting systems is to mark the computer-generated bar codes of the students when they receive the meals.

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Option #2: Purchase meals at your destination that are reimbursable

Purchase meals at the field trip site that qualify for reimbursement under the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Museums and other field trip locations may choose to work with the state agency to provide meals that meet meal pattern requirements. Contact the site to ask if such arrangements have been made.

Advantages

- Meals arrangements are made with minimal effort on the part of the field trip planners
- Food safety considerations are minimized as meals are prepared on-site
- All students receive the same meal
- Menus are analyzed to determine compliance with meal pattern requirements and weekly dietary specifications (calories, saturated fat, and sodium) during state-conducted evaluations

Considerations for Claiming Reimbursement

- Only one school may claim the meals for reimbursement.
- Procedures must be established for collecting meal payments and obtaining a count by eligibility category in a manner that does not overtly identify students approved for free and reduced price meal benefits.
- Meals must be provided at no cost to students approved for free meal benefits and the meal charges for students approved for the reduced price meal category is no more than the maximum charge set by USDA (currently 30 cents for breakfast and 40 cents for lunch).
- Point of service counts must be obtained for meals served to students by eligibility category (free, reduced-price, and paid).
- For schools using Offer versus Serve: Reduce waste when possible by allowing students to select from the milk choices and the other available lunch and/or breakfast meal components by setting up the serving line prior to the time students will leave for the field trip. With supervision to ensure reimbursable meals are selected, allow students to place menu items in their bag meals consistent with Offer versus Serve. Students must select 3 of 5 components at lunch, including ½ cup fruit and/or vegetable. Students must select 3 of 4 items at breakfast, including ½ cup fruit and/or vegetable. Label bags with the name of the student. Students may enter their pin or student ID number but actual participation must be verified when the meal is served to provide accurate counts by eligibility category for the monthly claim.

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Option #3: Obtain meals from a site that participates in the federal meal programs

Make arrangements to obtain meals at a field trip site that participates in the National School Lunch and/or Breakfast Programs. Possible sites include other schools that host a local or regional event and environmental learning centers.

Advantages

- Reimbursable meals that meet USDA requirements are readily available
- If it is a school, the meals may be claimed by the host school for the visiting students (paid student category only unless the eligibility category is known and is kept confidential when payment is received and meals are counted and claimed) or by the visiting school

To Implement *(choose one)*

- Bill the visiting school for the number of student and adult lunches and/or breakfasts served. The meal prices may be those set by the host school for meals purchased by students and staff or negotiated meal prices. The visiting school follows procedures for collecting appropriate payment for adult and student meals by type and for submitting accurate claims for reimbursement meals by type and by student eligibility category (free, reduced-price and paid). The visiting school processes the invoice and submits payment to the host school that provided the meals.
- Obtain a point of service count of the number of visiting student meals by eligibility category (free, reduced-price and paid) and the number of visiting adult meals. Appropriate meal payments are also collected by the host school. Provisions are made to protect the identity of students receiving free or reduced-price meals and to collect payments that do not exceed the maximum charge set by USDA for breakfast and for lunch if the students qualify for reduced price meals. Adult and student meals are reported by the host school following instructions for completion of the monthly reimbursement claim.

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MEAL PATTERN REQUIREMENTS FOR FIELD TRIPS

Children on a field trip must be offered lunches that meet the daily meal component requirements. Refer to the chart below for the daily and weekly ranges for the specified grade groups. Example: A lunch planned for lunch for students in grades K-5 must contain: ½ cup of fruit, ¾ cup vegetables from one or more sources, 1 ounce equivalent of grains, 1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternate and 1 cup of milk. Two milk types must be available for selection by the students. The allowable milk types are fat-free (skim) unflavored, fat-free (skim) flavored, and low-fat (1%) unflavored.

For occasional field trips, the menu planner does not have to adjust the weekly menu planned for the meals served at the school and does not have to pack the same vegetable offering that is served at the school that day. The menu planner has the option to offer a different vegetable, or a different vegetable from the same subgroup. However, the meals from field trips must be included when determining if the lunches planned meet the weekly grain and meat/meat alternate ranges and weekly dietary specifications (calories, saturated fat, and sodium).

NSLP Lunch Meal Patterns				
	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades K-8	Grades 9-12
Meal Pattern	Amount of Food Per Week (Minimum per Day)			
Fruits (cups) ^{c,d}	2 ½ (½)	2 ½ (½)	2 ½ (½)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups) ^{c,d}	3 ¾ (¾)	3 ¾ (¾)	3 ¾ (¾)	5 (1)
Dark Green ^f	½	½	½	½
Red/Orange ^f	¾	¾	¾	1 ¼
Legumes (Beans/Peas) ^f	½	½	½	½
Starchy ^f	½	½	½	½
Other ^{f,g}	½	½	½	¾
Additional Veg to Reach Total ^h	1	1	1	1 ½
Grains (oz eq) ⁱ	≥ 8 (1)	≥ 8 (1)	≥ 8 (1)	≥ 10 (2)
Meats/Meat Alternates (oz eq)	≥ 8 (1)	≥ 9 (1)	≥ 9 (1)	≥ 10 (2)
Fluid Milk (cups) ^l	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Other Specifications: Daily Amount Based on the Average for a 5-Day Week				
Min-Max Calories (kcal) ^{m,n,o}	550-650	600-700	600-650	750-850
Saturated Fat (% of total calories) ^{n,o}	< 10	< 10	< 10	< 10
Sodium (mg) ^{n,p}	≤ 1230	≤ 1360	≤ 1230	≤ 1420
Trans Fat ^{n,o}	Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving.			

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^b Food items included in each food group and subgroup and amount equivalents. Minimum creditable serving is $\frac{1}{8}$ cup.

^c One quarter-cup of dried fruit counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit; 1 cup of leafy greens counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables. No more than half of the fruit or vegetable offerings may be in the form of juice. All juice must be 100% full-strength.

^d For breakfast, vegetables may be substituted for fruits, but the first two cups per week of any such substitution must be from the dark green, red/orange, beans and peas (legumes) or "Other vegetables" subgroups as defined in §210.10(c)(2)(iii).

^f Larger amounts of these vegetables may be served.

^g This category consists of "Other vegetables" as defined in §210.10(c)(2)(iii)(E). For the purposes of the NSLP, "Other vegetables" requirement may be met with any additional amounts from the dark green, red/orange, and beans/peas (legumes) vegetable subgroups as defined in §210.10(c)(2)(iii).

^h Any vegetable subgroup may be offered to meet the total weekly vegetable requirement. Meals on Field Trips December 2015

ⁱ At least half of the grains offered must be whole grain-rich in the NSLP beginning July 1, 2012 (SY 2012-2013), and in the SBP beginning July 1, 2013 (SY 2013-2014). All grains must be whole grain-rich in both the NSLP and the SBP beginning July 1, 2014 (SY 2014-15).

^l Fluid milk must be low-fat (1 percent milk fat or less, unflavored) or fat-free (unflavored or flavored).

^m The average daily amount of calories for a 5-day school week must be within the range (at least the minimum and no more than the maximum values).

ⁿ Discretionary sources of calories (solid fats and added sugars) may be added to the meal pattern if within the specifications for calories, saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium. Foods of minimal nutritional value and fluid milk with fat content greater than 1 percent milk fat are not allowed.

^o In the SBP, calories and trans fat specifications take effect beginning July 1, 2013 (SY 2013-2014).

^p Final sodium specifications are to be reached by SY 2022-2023 or July 1, 2022. Intermediate sodium specifications are established for SY 2014-2015 and 2017-2018. See required intermediate specifications in § 210.10(f)(3) for lunches and § 220.8(f)(3) for breakfasts.

Please Note: Only whole dried fruit, whole dried fruit pieces, fresh, frozen or canned fruits; vegetables; or fullstrength juice may contribute toward fruits and vegetables components. Effective July 1, 2012, 100 percent fruit strips, fruit drops or other snack-type fruit or vegetable products cannot be credited and may not be served as a meal component.

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MENU IDEAS

Note: oz eq = ounce equivalent; oz = ounce; fl oz = fluid ounce; M/MA = meat/meat alternate; 28 grams = 1 ounce

Entree	Minimum Per Day			
	Grades K-5, 6-8, K-8	Grades 9-12		
Deli sandwich	1 oz eq M/MA (deli meat/cheese) 1 oz eq grain (e.g., 1 28-gram slice of whole grain-rich bread)	2 oz eq M/MA (deli meat/cheese) 2 oz eq grain (e.g., 2 28-gram slices of whole grain-rich bread)		
Peanut butter & jelly sandwich	1 oz eq M/MA (2 Tbsp. PB) 1 oz eq grains (e.g., 1 28-gram slice of whole grain-rich bread)	2 oz eq M/MA (4 Tbsp. PB) 2 oz eq grains (e.g., 2 28-gram slices of whole grain-rich bread)		
Cheese stick	1 oz eq M/MA (1 1-oz cheese stick)	2 oz eq M/MA (2 1-oz cheese sticks)		
Yogurt	1 oz eq M/MA (4 fl oz or ½ cup yogurt)	2 oz eq M/MA (8 fl oz or 1 cup yogurt)		
Fruit	½ cup or combination to equal ½ cup for grades K-5, 6-8, K-8 1 cup or combination to equal 1 cup for grades 9-12			
Apple = 1 cup	Banana = ½ cup	Mixed fruit		
Pear (150 count) = ½ cup Pear (120 count) = ¾ cup	Orange = ½ cup	Applesauce cup (½ cup by volume)		
Raisins or other dried fruit (¼ cup) = ½ cup creditable fruit <i>(dried fruit credits as twice the volume served)</i>				
Note: Only whole dried fruit, whole dried fruit pieces, fresh, frozen or canned fruits; vegetables; or full-strength juice may contribute toward fruits and vegetables components. Effective July 1, 2012, 100 percent fruit strips, fruit drops or other snack-type fruit or vegetable products cannot be credited and may not be served as a meal component.				
Vegetables	¾ cup or any combination to equal ¾ cup for grades K-5, 6-8, K-8 1 cup or combination to equal 1 cup for grades 9-12			
Note: ½ cup uncooked leafy greens = ¼ cup creditable vegetable <i>(leafy green vegetables credit as half the volume served)</i>				
Dark Green	Red/Orange	Beans/Peas (Legumes)	Starchy	Other
Broccoli	Baby carrots	Black bean salsa	Potato salad	Green beans
Kale salad	Marinara sauce (dip for vegetables or string cheese)	Edamame (served raw or steamed and served cold)	Jicama sticks	Cabbage slaw
Romaine salad	Salsa	Black bean and corn salad	Peas and/or corn (thawed from frozen)	Cucumbers
Spinach salad	Red pepper strips	Chickpea salad		Celery sticks
Grains <i>(When not included in entrée)</i>	Must be Whole Grain-Rich (WGR)			
	1 ounce equivalent for grades K-5, 6-8, K-8 2 ounce equivalent for grades 9-12			
Snack crackers (WGR) 1 oz eq = 1 oz or 28 grams	Corn chips (WGR) 1 oz eq = 1 oz or 28 grams	Muffin (WGR; except corn) 1 oz eq = 55 gram muffin or 2 oz		
Breadstick (WGR) 1 oz eq = 1 oz or 28 grams	Dinner roll (WGR) 1 oz eq = 1 oz or 28 grams	Pasta salad (WGR) 1 oz eq = 1 oz dry pasta or ½ cup cooked pasta		

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TIPS FOR PREPARING, PACKAGING & SERVING

Preparing & Packaging

- Set up a production line for packaging field trip meals.
- Protect food from contamination by purchasing pre-packaged or placing items in sealable, individual serving containers.
- Place set number of bag meals in transport containers and mark the containers with the number of meals.
- Don't forget to include the following items:
 - Spoon for yogurt, fruit cups, salads and other non-finger foods
 - Napkin
 - Condiments (pre-packaged, "no refrigeration required" items)

Keeping Bagged Meals Safe

- Maintain the temperature of potentially hazardous food (time/temperature control for food safety food) at appropriate temperatures during all holding periods (41° F. or below if cold and 140° F. or above if hot).
- Chill potentially hazardous food (time/temperature control for food safety food) that will be served cold before placing transport containers.
- Transport hot and cold potentially hazardous food (time/temperature control for food safety food) in insulated transport containers, coolers that can be plugged into a portal in the car or bus, or arrange to purchase potentially hazardous food items.
- Consider purchasing milk in shelf-stable packaging that does not require refrigeration if milk temperature cannot be maintained in portable coolers.
- Use cold packs to maintain the temperature of potentially hazardous food (time/temperature control for food safety food)
- Make arrangements to purchase milk at the field trip location if it cannot be safely transported or stored.
- Discard potentially hazardous food (time/temperature control for food safety food) returned in coolers from the field trip.

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STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE – TEMPLATE

Policy

Food service employees and teachers, other school staff, parents and volunteers will work together to ensure that field trip meals are safe to eat. Teachers, other school employees, and parents will follow ordering procedures established by food service.

The foodservice supervisor will:

1. Develop and share procedures for ordering meals.
2. Plan field trip meal menus with food safety in mind.
3. Process order from teacher, other staff member or parent.
4. Arrange for an appropriate time and location for picking up field trip meals.
5. Obtain suitable portable cold storage units (such as coolers) and cooling devices such as ice packs that will keep cold food items at 41°F up to 4 hours.
6. Review safe handling procedures listed below food service staff and with those who are picking up meals, when possible.
7. Accept and inspect returned portable food transport units and other equipment used for field trip meals.
8. Follow procedures for billing responsible teacher or staff member when portable cold storage units and/or other equipment items are not returned or are damaged when returned.

The foodservice staff will:

1. Follow standard operating procedures for personal hygiene and employee health reporting.
2. Prepare and pack meals according to the field trip order.
3. Follow standard operating procedures pertaining to food preparation which minimize contamination and the time potentially hazardous food (time/temperature control for food safety food) are held at temperatures between 41°F and 135°F.
4. Store components of field trip meals that must be refrigerated in cold storage units until time of pick up.
5. Use gloves or utensils to prevent bare hand contact when handling any ready-to-serve food items.

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6. Place all potentially hazardous food (time/temperature control for food safety food) in portable cold storage units with ice packs or other devices to maintain temperature during holding.

Teachers, school employees and volunteers who chaperone field trips will:

1. Observe appropriate food handling techniques such as:
 - Keeping cold items in portable food transport units (coolers) until time of meal service.
 - Washing hands prior to distributing meals.
 - Encouraging students to wash hands prior to meal service.
 - Serving meals within 4 hours of picking up meals from food service.
2. Discard ALL leftover food items immediately following the meal service.
3. Return portable cold storage units with reusable ice packs and other equipment to the school food service after returning from field trip.

Date of implementation or most recent revision: _____

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FIELD TRIP MEAL REQUEST FORM - TEMPLATE

As a special service, a bag meal for field trips may be ordered from school foodservice. Your class or school group may order these meals in advance (two-week notice is requested, when possible) by completing and returning this form. A copy of this form will be returned to you after the request is processed.

Name of School:	Number of Meals Requested:
Class/Group:	Date of Field Trip/Event:
Name of Contact:	Pick Up Time:

Meal price for non-reimbursable meals will be negotiated with contact person listed above. Any revisions to the menus need to be made due to cost constraints or non-availability will be negotiated with the contact listed above.

Please order the food items for the bag meals from the attached Bag Meal Menus (lunches and breakfast). **Do not fill in the shaded column.**

Meal Components	Menu Items Requested	Revisions Made (for school food service use)
Meat/Meat Alternate		
Grains		
Vegetables		
Fruit		
Milk		
Other		

Food quality, safety and spoilage precautions will be taken. Bag meals (including milk) will be packed in insulated containers.

Signature of Contact:	Date:
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Please contact the person listed below for questions or concerns about the bag meals.

Contact Name: _____ Title: _____
 Phone number: _____ E-mail: _____

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STUDENTS RECEIVING FIELD TRIP MEALS - TEMPLATE

Name of school: _____ Class/group: _____

Meal Type (*circle the one that applies*): Breakfast Lunch

Date of trip/event: _____

List those students who received reimbursable bag meals. To obtain accurate participation data, record this information when the meals are distributed to students.

1.	21.
2.	22.
3.	23.
4.	24.
5.	25.
6.	26.
7.	27.
8.	28.
9.	29.
10.	30.
11.	31.
12.	32.
13.	33.
14.	34.
15.	35.
16.	35.
17.	37.
18.	38.
19.	39.
20.	40.

Please return the signed packing slip and list of students receiving field trip meals to:

Contact Name: _____ Title: _____

Phone number: _____ E-mail: _____