

Research shows that school meals are

HEALTHY MEALS

Compared to lunches brought from home, school lunches provide more protein, fiber, vitamin A, and calcium. School lunches also have fewer calories, less saturated fat, and sugar. School lunch provides greater exposure to fruits and vegetables than packed lunches.²



The National School Lunch Program provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost, or free lunches to children each day. School lunches must meet Federal and State nutrition requirements.

Other USDA Programs Under Idaho Child Nutrition:

- ▶ School Breakfast Program
- ▶ Afterschool Snack Program
- ▶ Special Milk Program
- ▶ Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- ▶ Child and Adult Care Food Program
- ▶ Summer Food Service Program



IDAHO
CHILD NUTRITION
PROGRAMS



²Farris, Alisha, Sarah Misyak, Kiyah Duffey, George Davis, Kathy Hosig, Naama Atzaba-Poria, Mary McFerren, and Elena Serrano. "Nutritional Comparison of Packed and School Lunches in Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Children following the Implementation of the 2012-2013 National School Lunch Program Standards." Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior 46.6 (2014): 621-26.

³Datz, Todd. "New School Meal Standards Significantly Increase Fruit, Vegetable Consumption." Harvard School of Public Health. 4 Mar. 2014.

For more information on federal child nutrition programs contact:



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Child Nutrition Programs
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WHY EAT SCHOOL LUNCH



Studies have shown that school meal programs enhance academic performance¹

Idaho Schools: Healthy Options

Idaho students have many options when it comes to choosing what to have for lunch. The school lunch program offers balanced, low cost meals that appeal to students' tastes.

Know the options! Idaho schools are required by law to offer fruit and vegetable options along with whole grains, lean proteins, and low fat or fat free milk options. Many schools go above and beyond by offering fresh salad bars.

Have you visited your child during school lunch recently? If not, you should try it. Adults are welcome to eat at most schools. Encourage your child to choose from the healthy options they have available to them every day.



WHY BUY A SCHOOL LUNCH?

Compare a lunch brought from home with a school lunch and you will see that school lunches are a wholesome meal at a reasonable price.

	School Lunch <i>(Based on Mandarin Chicken Rice Bowl)</i>	Turkey and Cheese Sub Sandwich <i>(Commercially available)</i>	Sack Lunch <i>(PB&J, apple, juice, chips, cookie)</i>	Summary
Approximate Cost	\$2.34	\$4.50	\$2.13	School lunch provides great variety for a low cost.
Nutrient Content	<i>Calories: 508 cal Trans Fat: 0 g Saturated Fat: 1.88 g Sodium: 1341 mg</i>	<i>Calories: 430 cal Trans Fat: 0 g Saturated Fat: 5 g Sodium: 1422 mg</i>	<i>Calories: 817 cal Trans Fat: 0 Saturated Fat: 4.5 g Sodium: 702 mg</i>	School lunches must meet federal and state nutrient standards and are usually more nutrient dense than meals from home.
Variety of Entrée	Numerous choices	Limited choices depending on location	1 entrée	Schools offer several entrée choices including home cooked items, sandwiches and wraps, rice bowls, and salad bars.
Fruit/Vegetable	Variety of choices	Lacks fruit and vegetable side options	May contain fruit but usually lacks vegetable	Many Idaho schools have salad bars that offer a variety of fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables daily.
Beverage	Water and variety of low fat/nonfat milk	Fruit drink or soda	Often contains high sugar juices or soda	All school meals offer milk, which is nutrient dense and low in sugar and fat, and water to drink.
Food Safety	Prepared under strict sanitary conditions and held at appropriate temperatures	May not be held at safe temperature (in classroom)	May not be held at safe temperature (in classroom)	Food service personnel are required to be trained in Food Safety and cafeterias are regularly inspected by the health department.
Service	Fast and easy	Quick and easy	Requires preparation at home	School lunch is accessible to all students throughout the school year.
MyPlate	Grains: 2 oz. equivalent Fruits: 1 cup Vegetables: 1 cup Milk: 1 cup Protein: 3 oz. equivalent 	Grains: 2 oz. equivalent Fruits: 0 Vegetables: 1/4 cup Milk: 0 Protein: 3 oz. equivalent 	Grains: 2 oz. equivalent Fruits: 1 cup Vegetables: 0 Milk: 0 Protein: 1.5 oz. equivalent 	School lunch provides a well balanced meal for students, which increases exposure to and acceptance of a variety of healthy foods.