

## **Needham Public Schools Nutrition Services Offer vs Serve Policy**

### **OVS at Lunch**

At all 8 Needham public schools, every effort is made to serve a complete MEAL to every student, as opposed to a la carte items only. If a student brings lunch from home, they are allowed to purchase a la carte items from the cafeteria.

At Elementary Schools, the only a la carte items available to students are 8 oz water, and 4 oz yogurt.

At Middle Schools, a la carte items are available with the purchase of a meal (fewer choices at High Rock 6th grade school, and more at Pollard 7th & 8th grade school). Students are limited to purchasing one beverage (water is the only beverage available a la carte), and one snack item with their meal.

At High School, a few a la carte items are available, including second entrees.

Needham school cafeterias offer students all five required food components in at least the minimum required amounts. The components at lunch are:

- meat/meat alternates
- grain
- fruit
- vegetable
- 1 cup fluid milk

Under OVS, a student must take at least three components in the required serving size for their grade group. One selection must be at least ½ cup from either the fruit or vegetable component.

It is our practice to make many choices of appetizing fruit and vegetables available at all schools every day, and staff encourages students to take and try them.

### **OVS at Breakfast**

Four (4) Needham Schools currently have breakfast programs: Pollard Middle School, Mitchell Elementary, Eliot Elementary, and Needham High School.

At each of these schools, a few options of each of the 4 meal components are offered in the proper portion sizes:

- 2 grain
- or 1 grain and 1 meat/meat alternate
- 1 fruit or vegetable
- 1 cup fluid milk

Under OVS, a student must take at least three components in the required serving size for their grade group. One selection must be at least ½ cup from either the fruit or vegetable component.

Staff at all schools are trained to properly identify a complete breakfast, and remind students to take additional food components, to make a complete meal. At the HS only, if students don't wish to take a complete meal, breakfast items are rung in as a la carte.

## **Training**

Staff are trained on meal components, reimbursable meals, and Offer vs Serve regularly, beginning during their orientation as a cafeteria substitute worker, at staff meetings, and during regular site visits.

Staff understands what constitutes a reimbursable meal and the number of required meal components/food items for a reimbursable meal, including that each meal must have three components and one has to be a ½ cup serving of fruit or vegetable.

Staff are able to distinguish reimbursable meals from all a la carte purchases and have been trained on how to properly ring a la carte sale purchases. Only permanent, trained staff is allowed to operate cash registers.

Monthly manager meetings often include discussion about offer vs serve, and assuring reimbursable meals at the point of sale.

Students and parents are informed about meal components and complete reimbursable meals periodically via

- signage in cafeteria
- intern presentations
- individual interactions with students in cafeteria line
- A copy of “What is Included in a Meal” document is included in each school’s opening paperwork and meal applications

At the cash register, students are reminded, if they haven’t already, that they need to take a “complete meal” including 3 components, and one must be a fruit or vegetable.

A collection of various fruit and vegetable components are kept at the cash register for students to select from if/when they forget to take a fruit or vegetable.

My Plate “complete meal” signage is posted in the serving area of each cafeteria, explaining Offer versus Serve to students. Regulations in 7 CFR 210.10(a)(2) require schools to identify reimbursable meals to students; this aims to reduce the unintended purchase of a la carte items and help students make healthy food choices.

Refer to Offer vs. Serve Guidance for additional information:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/Policy-Memos/2013/SP45-2013a.pdf>