

## ***Lunch***

The cafeterias in Pamlico County School district follow the new federal nutrition standards for school meals. All meals are healthy and well-balanced and provide students all the nutrition they need to succeed at school. Now is a great time to encourage your child(ren) to choose school lunch!



Studies show that good nutrition increases student achievement. PC schools demonstrate their support of good nutrition by offering school meals of high nutritional quality. Did you know that our school lunches provide at least 1/3 of the daily requirements for your student? This includes: calories, protein, iron, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, calcium, and fiber. The fat content is kept below 30% calories from fat and below 10% calories from saturated fat and 0% trans fat. They are also low in cholesterol and sodium.

The Student Wellness Policy in 2006 governs the food served in cafeterias, vending machines as well as, foods used for fundraising during the school day. Child Nutrition follows this policy when planning menus for students. The ultimate goal is to positively impact how students think about food and create better lifelong eating habits. Studies have shown that students who eat lunch at school consume fewer calories from fat and that school lunches contain twice as much fruit and vegetables than those lunches brought from home. Also, school lunch is a far healthier choice than those meals purchased in restaurants or fast food places.

All of the lunch meals will follow the Offer versus Serve (OVS) serving method which allows the student to select nutritious options. School lunch meals offer students fat free or 1% milk, fruits and vegetables, proteins and grains, and they must meet strict limits on saturated fat and portion size. School lunches will meet additional standards requiring:



- Age group -appropriate calorie limits
- Larger servings of vegetables and fruits (students must take at least one serving of fruit or vegetables)
- A wider variety of vegetables, including dark green and red/orange vegetables and legumes
- Fat-free or 1% milk (flavored milk must be fat-free)
- More whole grains
- Reduced sodium

The lunch OVS serving method, offers students all five required food component groups. The student can select all 5 or a minimum of 3 required food groups:

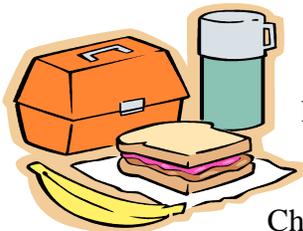
2 -3 oz. Protein/Meat  
Fruit  
Vegetables  
Serving of whole grains  
Nonfat or low fat flavored / unflavored milk

## ***Visitors during Lunch***

We are always happy to see an authorized parent, grandparent or sibling come to eat with a student. It is a special occasion for everyone involved. Visitors are encouraged to purchase a lunch from the cafeteria or bring a bag lunch from **home**. Visitors are not permitted to share their food items with other students. Funds on a student's account are for student meals only. It is nice for the students to see that grown ups support healthy eating. We ask that you do not bring in soft drinks, candy or "fast food" lunches. Also the sale of soft drinks and candy is prohibited in Pamlico County Schools until the end of the school day.

The emphasis on nutritional learning is reflected in our selection of foods offered in our cafeteria. We ask when you come to have lunch with us, that you model healthy, nutritious eating as a life style. It will be your presence, above everything that will make your visit special. Call your child's school to get the correct time their class eats in the cafeteria.

## ***Lunches from Home***



We highly recommend and strongly encourage students eat in the cafeteria. Our cafeteria staff is trained to provide a safe and healthy atmosphere. You can be assured that your child is eating food that is safe and nutritious.

Children eating school lunches had higher intakes of protein; vitamins A, D, and K; and calcium and lower intakes of energy, fat, carbohydrate, vitamin E, and sugar compared with children eating bagged lunches. The ratios of mean protein and calcium consumption to minimum required values tended to be greater for children eating school lunches compared with those eating bag lunches. Children eating bag lunches had lower vegetable intake and higher whole grain and fruit intakes and higher meal energy density compared with children eating school lunch. Parent nutrition education is needed to improve the nutritional quality of bagged lunches.

If a child elects to bring a lunch from home, please provide the proper containers and utensils when packing their meals. Food safety should be a high concern. Please refrain from packing items that can quickly "spoil" or encourage bacteria growth. Use an insulated container to place items in. Cold foods should remain around 41 degrees or below. Foods that need to be heated can be done in the microwave units provided by the school principal. Students can purchase milk and other items from the menu, if needed.

### **Save Money: Eat School Lunch**

- On average it costs less to buy a school lunch than to bring a lunch from home.
- The estimated national average research of a school lunch from home was \$3.43

