

Regular Board Meeting – May 17, 2011

SUBJECT: LUNCH PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Hot lunch and breakfast is served in all four schools. The program has been managed by an outside contractor since 1982 and is staffed by a combination of district and contract employees.

National School Lunch Program

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program which is a federal program operated by the United States Department of Agriculture that subsidizes a portion of the cost of each student meal in order to offer free and reduced meals to children in low income families. The program also provides commodities to the schools to be used in the food service program. Currently, 48% of our students qualify for free or reduced breakfast and lunch.

In order to receive these subsidies, participants must adhere to strict guidelines covering menus, nutrient composition, and portion sizes of every part/component which makes up a lunch or breakfast. A school lunch is required to provide one third or more of the recommended daily levels for key nutrients. Percentages of calories from fat, and saturated fat are constantly monitored. Only specified, age appropriate portions of meats/proteins, vegetables/fruits, grains/breads, and milk are allowed.

Each meal consists of specific components. Lunch consists of five components; breakfast consists of four components. The student may decline up to two components for lunch and one component for breakfast.

Lunch Components

- 8 oz Fluid Milk
- 2 oz Edible Protein
- 2 ½ cups Fruit or Vegetable
- Grains or Breads

Breakfast Components

- 8 oz Fluid Milk
- 1 oz Edible Protein
- ½ cup of Fruit or Vegetable
- Grains or Breads

It is acceptable to offer two proteins and no grain, or two grains and no protein in a breakfast meal. The lunch meal must contain at least one grain per day. Each grain/bread serving counts toward requirements that are based on item type and weight. For grades 1-6, 12 servings of grain/bread per week are required and for grades 7-12, 15 servings per week are required.

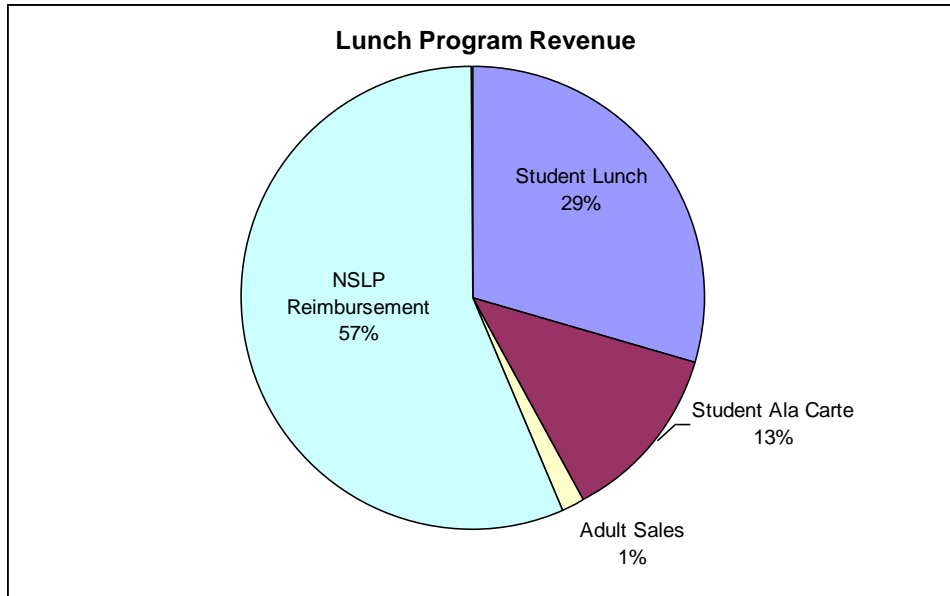
The Illinois State Board of Education closely monitors school food service programs. They evaluate school menu nutrient content. Administrative reviews cover all aspects of a school food service program. Skokie 68 has successfully completed all state reviews.

Program Finances

Lunch prices are established by the Board of Education each year at a level designed to ensure that program revenues at least cover the direct expenses of the lunch program. Prices for 2010-2011 are as follows:

- Student lunch - \$2.55
- Student breakfast - \$1.50
- Milk - \$.55
- Ala Carte items - \$.25 to \$2.50

Program revenue is projected at \$663,300 for 2010-11 from the following sources:



Program Management

The program is managed by Arbor Food Service. The cafeteria manager, Marv Barishman, is currently finishing his third year in District 68. He has implemented a number of changes to improve the program and had increased overall participation in the lunch program from 70% last year to 69% so far this year.

A debit card system implemented in Fall, 2003, was expanded to allow parents to manage their accounts on-line and provide e-mail notifications of low balance. The Lunch Program Advisory Committee, which is comprised of parents, students, faculty and administrative staff, meets several times each year to review the program and make suggestions for improvement. Over the last several years many changes have been made to the program in an effort to provide nutritious and appealing options within the financial constraints of the program (see attached).

Lunch Advisory Committee

The Lunch Advisory Committee which is composed of students, staff and parents from each school meets several times each year to discuss the program and recommend changes. Changes that have been implemented over the last 5 years include:

2006-2007:

- Portion size and price of fresh baked desserts, including cookies, brownies and Rice Krispy treats reduced
- Little Debbie products removed from the district
- Potato chips removed from the elementary buildings
- Donuts and sweet rolls removed from the district
- Availability of french fries at OOJH reduced from 5 days per week to 3, oven browned potatoes served on the 2 remaining days
- Fresh fruit choices offered daily throughout the district
- Powerade and Minute Maid juice drinks eliminated

2007-2008:

- Bottled water offered at all schools
- Fresh lettuce & tomato cups added at OOJH as condiments for sandwiches
- Turkey wraps offered more often at elementary schools
- Fried chips replaced with baked chips at all schools
- 50% juice product replaced with 100% juice product

2008-2009:

- Menu variety increased and the repeat cycle lengthened
 - New Entrees: Chicken Wrap, Meatball Sandwich (OOJH), Soft Shell Taco, Popcorn Chicken, Hot Turkey Sandwich (*later discontinued*), Homemade Macaroni and Cheese, French Bread Pizza (OOJH), Pizza Dippers, Chicken Parmesan Sandwiches (OOJH).
 - Improved entrée: Salisbury Steak (thicker patty)
- Large size fries eliminated at the junior high and availability of fries reduced to 2 days per week
- Wheat bread substituted for white bread in sandwiches (whole grain too costly)
- Hard plastic trays replace disposable at Highland and Devonshire
- Variety and availability of ice cream reduced to 1 day per week in the elementary schools; frozen Icy Juicy offered on other days (limited availability during the week)
- Transaction fee waived when parents use Mealtime Online for deposits
- Federal breakfast program implemented at the junior high

2009-2010:

- Breakfast program implemented at Jane Stenson including hot options
- Fresh fruit always offered as alternate when canned fruits are offered
- All protein salads are made with low fat mayonnaise
- Fresh fruit plate with cottage cheese and protein cold salad plate with vegetable sticks and a scoop of either tuna, egg or chicken salad offered daily
- All breakfast cereals either reduced sugar or no sugar added
- Fresh broccoli added to the student salad along with cheese option (instead of meat)
- All cut salads contain romaine lettuce in addition to the regular iceberg salad mixture
- Vegetarian Pizza offered as a regular lunch option at OOJH

2010-2011:

- Breakfast offered at all district schools, including hot options
- OOJH opened a full breakfast line to speed up service & allow additional daily choices
- All elementary schools offer a second entrée choice such as turkey, chicken, or a vegetarian dish
- Cold Salad Plate (a scoop of tuna, egg or chicken salad, vegetable sticks and whole wheat crackers) rotated into the elementary school menu as an occasional second entrée choice
- Fruit and vegetable bar introduced at OOJH. Daily options include fresh and canned fruit, 100% pure fruit juice, and fresh vegetables
- Pilot programs testing pizza supplier, wraps, meatless offerings, and stir fry entrees proved successful
- Pilot program testing whole wheat spaghetti was not well received and was discontinued
- Frozen vegetables tested (vs. canned vegetables). Color and texture were judged to be more appetizing but it did not increase consumption. Erratic supplier deliveries of the frozen commodities impacted the program
- Turkey based products replace beef/pork products
- Nutrition Month labeling indicating fat and calorie counts for ala carte and regular lunch items posted for students
- Additional information provided to parents on the website about the National School Lunch Program and the District's food service program

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for Tuesday, May 17 to discuss plans for next year. Recommendations to be discussed include the following items.

- Eliminate cooking fryers at OOJH French Fries will no longer be served. All products will be oven-baked
- Reconfigure the line at OOJH to put the healthier options such as the Fruit and Vegetable Bar at the beginning of the line
- Introduce a mix of 50/50 whole wheat and regular macaroni in the macaroni and cheese entrée
- Rotate pizza offering to include 3 different types of pizzas (Tony's, Uno's and Double Stuffed) and review feedback and participation for each
- Meatless offerings which were tested in 2010-11 to be added to the menu cycle
- Stir fry entrees which were tested in 2010-11 to be offered periodically throughout the year
- Frozen vegetables instead of canned will be offered as available throughout the year

The district will continue to work with the vendor and the committee to make the program more nutritious while remaining within the parameters of a break-even program.