



Building Partnerships for Tomorrow

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## UCESC

### Lunch Offer versus Serve Policy

#### **Union County Educational Services Commission:**

**Implementation Date: September 7, 2017**

Offer versus serve (OVS) is a policy for reimbursable meals that allows students to decline a certain number of food components in the meal in order to reduce plate waste and food cost.

A school lunch eligible for federal reimbursement shall offer five (5) food components in the appropriate amounts per grade grouping:

- Fruit,
- Vegetable,
- Milk,
- Grain and
- Meat/Meat Alternate.

Students are allowed to decline two (2) of the five (5) required food components, but **must select** at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of either fruit (or fruit combination) or a  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vegetable (or vegetable combination) or  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of a fruit /vegetable combination.

After selecting the  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fruit or vegetable requirement, students must select at least two (2) additional full components in the full amounts (per age/grade grouping required amounts) to count toward the reimbursable offer versus serve meal.

The student's decision to accept all five (5) food components or to decline two (2) food components shall not affect the price charged for the meal. The lunch is price as a unit. If children do not choose enough food items to comprise a reimbursable meal, a la carte prices will be charged.

School staff cannot make exceptions to the policy, such as requiring every child to take a particular food component. It is the student's choice to select any three, four or all five components of the reimbursable meal.


At each school implementing the Offer versus Serve Policy, school food service staff will be trained annually.

Offer versus Serve will be implemented in all Schools

## Offer versus Serve

# The 5 Meal Components for School Lunch


**1**  
Meat or  
Meat Alternate

A collection of food items including a chicken drumstick, a red apple, a wedge of yellow cheese, a small round container of cottage cheese, and a small pile of red kidney beans.

**2**  
Grain

A variety of breads and grains, including a slice of whole wheat bread, a slice of white bread, a corn cob, and a piece of pizza.


**3**  
Fruit

A variety of fresh fruits including a watermelon slice, a cantaloupe slice, a kiwi slice, a grapefruit slice, and several apples.

**4**  
Vegetable

A variety of fresh vegetables including broccoli, cauliflower, corn on the cob, bell peppers, and mushrooms.

**5**  
Milk

A clear glass filled with white milk.

**You must choose at least 3 including:**

- ½ cup of fruit or vegetable
- At least two other full components

**For best nutrition, choose all 5!**

**Adapted from the Connecticut State Department of Education, *Offer versus Serve* (2012).** In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; fax: (202) 690-7442; or email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.