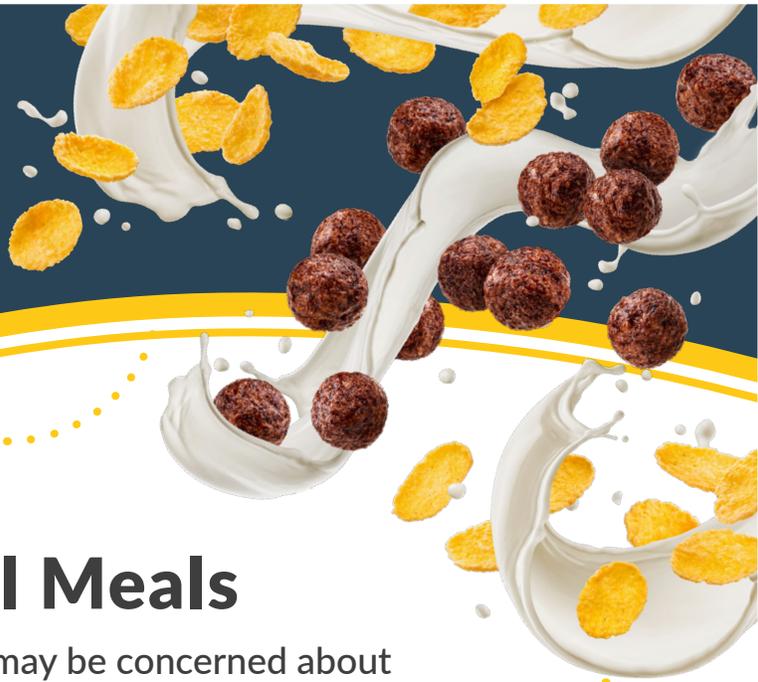


Cafeteria Connection

Connecting you to your child's school lunchroom



THE TRUTH ABOUT Added Sugar in School Meals

There is no denying it -- kids love sugar. You may be concerned about how much added sugar your kids consume. After all, too much sugar can lead to negative health consequences: obesity, heart disease, chronic inflammation, high blood pressure and Type 2 diabetes.

What's the scoop about added sugar in school meals?

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, which established the current USDA nutritional guidelines for school meals, was enacted to address rising childhood obesity rates and the nutritional quality of kids' diets. It requires schools to serve fruit, vegetables, and whole grains, and to limit sodium, fat, and overall calories. It also **eliminated the sale of sugary beverages and snacks** that were available in school vending machines and a la carte service.

While added sugar is not addressed in current nutrition guidelines, with calorie limits set for breakfast and lunch this naturally reduces the amount of sugar in school meals. At 4 calories per gram of sugar, added sugar can quickly account for many of those calories with little nutritional value in return.

Breakfast is our most challenging meal to keep sugar in check with so many sweet breakfast favorites. We tackle the challenge by offering breakfast items that are specially produced for schools to meet the USDA guidelines and have less sugar than similar foods found in stores. For example, a school breakfast Trix cereal cup has 25% less sugar than the version found in grocery stores.

While it's impossible to completely eliminate sugar from meals, our #1 goal is to feed kids – providing them fuel to focus and learn during class. Serving students with many different food preferences while following the USDA nutrition guidelines and fitting our budget can be challenging. Healthier foods, including those with artificial sweeteners, tend to be more expensive and are often rejected by a lot of kids. Every day, we must strike a balance between nutrition, budget, and kids' taste buds.