

OFFER VERSUS SERVE

Gouverneur Central School has had 'Offer versus Serve' implemented in their Breakfast and Lunch Program for quite a while. The following information will help to develop a better understanding of offer versus serve. We'll start with the lunch meal requirement.

In the National School Lunch Program, meal patterns are designed so that over a period of time, school lunches will provide children with approximately one-third of the nutrients they need.

A school lunch consists of five different food items from four food component groups. The five food items are: one serving of meat or meat alternate; two servings of different vegetables or two servings of different fruits, or one serving of fruit and one of vegetable; one serving of bread or bread alternate; and one serving of fluid milk.

Under offer versus serve the following conditions must be met:

- 1. All five food items must be offered to all students.*
- 2. The serving sizes must equal the minimum required quantities.*
- 3. The lunch must be priced as a unit and student may take 3, 4, or all 5 items for the same price.*
- 4. Students have the option of which item(s) to decline.*

Students cannot be required to take any specific food items. For example, a school may not tell students they must take the meat but that they may decline the milk. The choice of which food to take or decline is left to the student.

*A complete breakfast in the School Breakfast Program consists of: one serving of fluid milk; one (1) serving of a vegetable or fruit or full-strength fruit juice or vegetable juice, **AND** two (2) servings of bread or bread alternate **OR** two (2) servings of meat or meat alternate **OR** one (1) serving of meat or meat alternate **AND** one (1) serving of bread or bread alternate.*

Under offer versus serve in breakfast, the student may be allowed to decline one item that they do not intend to consume. The decision as to which food item to decline rests solely with the student. To qualify as a reimbursable breakfast under the provisions of offer versus serve, the following conditions must be met:

- 1. All four food items must be offered to all students,*
- 2. The serving sizes must equal the minimum quantities required,*
- 3. The breakfast must be priced as a unit and students may take 3 or 4 items for the same price, and*
- 4. Students have the option of which item to decline.*

NOTE: Offer versus serve breakfast - students may decline one item.
Offer versus serve Lunch - students may decline two items.

If the student's choice doesn't meet the National School Lunch requirements, he/she is charged ala carte prices. Ala carte is priced higher to encourage our students to buy a lunch and/or breakfast that meets Federal Meal Pattern Requirements and is reimbursable. Federal reimbursement is provided for each meal that meets their program requirements.

Offer versus Serve **DOES NOT** apply to adult lunches. Adults choosing to not buy a full lunch must pay ala carte prices.

Offer versus Serve allows the students a choice and hopefully reduces food waste.

If you have any questions please call Christine Bristol, School Lunch Manager, at 287-1690.

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