



# RHODE ISLAND WELLNESS-WISE

NUTRITIONAL TIPS & NEWS FOR PARENTS

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## SCHOOL LUNCH: GOOD FOR KIDS AND GOOD FOR YOUR WALLET

*As the cost of everything increases – there is one meal that is still a great value: both nutritionally and economically! School lunch is still an incredible value at Rhode Island schools.*

### School Lunch Includes Five Great Choices:

- Milk – Fat free or 1% - flavored or regular
- Vegetables – From fresh carrot sticks to steamed broccoli
- Fruit – Everything from pineapple to locally grown apples; often fresh
- Grains – More whole grain items like rolls or sandwich bread
- Meat or meat alternate – Items like white meat chicken, bean chili, lean beef



### 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 of a school lunch from home was \$3.43 last school year.<sup>1</sup>



### School Lunch VS Bagged Lunch

**\$2.08      \$3.43**

**Total savings = \$243 per year!\***

*(comparison of national averages)  
\*When lunch is purchased every day  
for a 180-day school year.*

<sup>1</sup> According to a meal cost analysis by Alice Jo Rainville, PhD, RD, CHE, SNS of Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI



## HAS YOUR INCOME SITUATION CHANGED? YOU COULD QUALIFY FOR BENEFITS

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) provides benefits to students at participating schools. All RI schools participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

- Depending on family income and the number of family members, students could be eligible for free meals or reduced-price meals; these students can be charged no more than 40 cents.
- If you completed an application at the beginning of the school year and your income situation changed, you can still re-apply.
- Contact your school nutrition department to fill out a school meal application today.

## HEALTHY MEALS FEED EAGER MINDS

- Meals served under the NSLP must meet nutrition guidelines based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- No more than 30% of calories can come from fat and less than 10% from saturated fat.
- School lunches provide one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances of protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium and calories over the course of one week of menus.
- Students who eat school lunches consume less calories from fat than students who bring lunch from home.
- Compared to lunches from home, school lunches contain:
  - Three times as many dairy products
  - Twice as much fruit
  - Seven times the vegetable amounts
- NSLP participants have substantially lower intakes of added sugars than do non-participants.



*helping students flourish*