School Food Policy & Organizing Toolkit
Acknowledgements

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Introduction

The purpose of this *School Food Policy & Organizing Toolkit* is to provide school communities, organizations, agencies, and other healthy school food advocates with an easy-to-follow guide for district and school site advocacy and organizing. These tools can be used to mobilize parents, students, teachers, and others to pursue full implementation of school food and nutrition policies that fight against serious health problems, including hunger, food insecurity, obesity, and diabetes, and advocate for healthy, nutritious, and appetizing meals in the school cafeteria every day.

Changing school food nutrition, like any major undertaking, requires focus, time, patience, and a creative group of people who are clear about what they want to accomplish. Before launching a full campaign for school food improvement, it is crucial to research how school cafeteria nutrition programs work and understand existing policies within the school district. This awareness will help build support and accomplish enforcement of all school food and nutrition policies.

The School Food Policy & Organizing Toolkit includes strategies, lessons learned, and other resources aimed at helping communities learn about school food policy, and build capacity and momentum to improve healthy food access and reduce diet related illness among student populations in LAUSD, Southern California, and beyond.

*Parents at HSFC school food policy training and cooking demo.*
The Healthy School Food Coalition (HSFC) is one of several food justice programs at the Urban & Environmental Policy Institute (UEPI) at Occidental College. The HSFC consists of committed parents, teachers, students, and community members working to develop and implement comprehensive food and nutrition policies in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD).

Beginning in April 2001, parents, organizers, and advocates concerned about the growing health problems associated with poor diet and lack of healthy food options, began to advocate for an overall change in policies and standards for school food nutrition programs in LAUSD. Students involved in HSFC activities expressed discontentment with the lack of food variety and time allotted to eat in the cafeteria. Middle and high school students expressed concern about the stigma created by the districts’ meal ticket system. Food preparation and poor customer service were among other concerns they voiced. Parents were most apprehensive about nutrition, students’ eating habits and health, as well as the need for more transparency about how the cafeteria nutrition programs work.

HSFC members engaged other peers and the LAUSD Board in HSFC-led campaigns, resulting in the passage of district-wide policies such as the Healthy Beverage Resolution (2002), the Obesity Prevention Motion (2003), and the Cafeteria Improvement Motion (2005). Since 2006, the adoption and the subsequent implementation of these measures occurred at three different levels: the district, school, and community.

Today, the HSFC’s focus is first to ensure that the school food and nutrition policies become a daily reality for all students, parents, and community members who visit and eat at any LAUSD cafeteria. Second, the HSFC engages members, as well as school food services administrators, the Board, and other community based organizations and agencies, in creating a just and healthy school food environment. Working together elevates the importance of school nutrition, making healthy school food a priority in a district-wide agenda.
How School Cafeteria Programs Began and How They Work

The development of school cafeteria programs can largely be traced back to the creation of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Established in 1946 through the National School Lunch Act, the NSLP funds school lunches for students across the United States. Today, this federally funded program seeks to provide nutritious school lunches and afterschool program snacks at free or low-cost during the school year.

Piloted in 1966, The School Breakfast Program (SBP) became permanent in 1975 as a federally funded program that provides cash assistance to states to run school breakfast programs in public and non-profit private schools. The program is administered by the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and state education agencies, and implemented by local school food agencies. Two creative approaches to encouraging students to participate in the SBP are Second Chance Breakfast (2CB) served during recess and Breakfast in the Classroom.

Both the NSLP and the SBP include dietary guidelines that limit the amount of fat and saturated fat, and require minimums of important nutrients.

It is estimated that $10 billion dollars was spent on school nutrition programs in 2011, serving approximately 32 million children across the United States.

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is one of thousands of school districts across the United States that participates in both the NSLP and SBP. Before the school year begins, each student must fill out an application for the district to determine nutrition program eligibility. After the Food Services Division (FSD) staff reviews applications, students fall into one of three categories based on family income level: free, reduced, or full-priced meals.
LAUSD receives cash reimbursements from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for each full meal. The rate of reimbursement can vary according to several factors. Meals at LAUSD consist of five components: protein, grain, fruit, vegetable, and milk. For a meal to qualify as “full” or “reimbursable,” students must select at least three out of five food components. If students do not select at least three out of the five components, they must pay a higher price per item.

The dollar amount reimbursed by the USDA for lunch also depends on the school’s population edibility. If more than sixty percent of a school’s students are eligible for free or reduced meals, the site will receive a higher amount; if fewer than sixty percent of the students qualify for free or reduced price, the school receives a lesser amount, a difference of two cents per meal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LUNCH TYPE</th>
<th>REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNT ($)</th>
<th>&gt;60% OF STUDENTS QUALIFY FOR FREE AND REDUCED MEALS</th>
<th>&lt; 60% OF STUDENTS QUALIFY FOR FREE AND REDUCED MEALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free Lunch (family income qualifies student to receive lunch for free)</td>
<td>$2.79</td>
<td>$2.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced Price Lunch (family income qualifies student to receive lunch for a reduced price)</td>
<td>$2.39</td>
<td>$2.37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Price Lunch (family income does not qualify the student to receive assistance in paying for lunch; student pays full price)</td>
<td>$0.28</td>
<td>$0.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single items (if fewer than three of the five required components are selected for lunch)</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to note that the cost of providing a meal includes expenses such as salaries, benefits, maintenance, paper goods, and other costs associated with serving food. Despite receiving as much as $2.79 per lunch meal, only about $0.77 of that is spent on the actual food served to each student.
2 Understanding LAUSD’s Leadership

A seven-member Board of Education that sets policies for the entire district and a Superintendent who oversees educational and administrative aspects of the district lead LAUSD. The current superintendent, Dr. John Deasy, whose term began in the summer of 2011, also governs operational procedures and assigns roles to school administrators. District administration is subdivided into eight sub-districts that each have a Local District Office and a Local Superintendent that support designated schools and oversee compliance with policies.

As described in Section 7, “How to Advocate for Healthy School Food,” reaching out to district leadership is an important part of organizing for a better school food environment. The Current LAUSD Superintendent & Board of Education Members are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. John E. Deasy, Superintendent</td>
<td><a href="mailto:superintendent@lausd.net">superintendent@lausd.net</a></td>
<td>213-241-7000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marguerite Poindexter LaMotte, Board District 1</td>
<td><a href="mailto:marguerite.lamotte@lausd.net">marguerite.lamotte@lausd.net</a></td>
<td>213-241-6382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monica García*, Board District 2</td>
<td><a href="mailto:monica.garcia@lausd.net">monica.garcia@lausd.net</a></td>
<td>213-241-6180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamar Galatzan, Board District 3</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tamar.galatzan@lausd.net">tamar.galatzan@lausd.net</a></td>
<td>213-241-6386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Zimmer, Board District 4</td>
<td><a href="mailto:steve.zimmer@lausd.net">steve.zimmer@lausd.net</a></td>
<td>213-241-6387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bennett Kayser, Board District 5</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bennett.kayser@lausd.net">bennett.kayser@lausd.net</a></td>
<td>213-241-5555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nury Martínez, Board District 6</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nury.martinez@lausd.net">nury.martinez@lausd.net</a></td>
<td>213-241-6388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Richard Vladovic, Board District 7</td>
<td><a href="mailto:richard.vladovic@lausd.net">richard.vladovic@lausd.net</a></td>
<td>213-241-6385</td>
</tr>
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</table>

* Board President

For more information about the LAUSD Board of Education, visit: [http://laschoolboard.org](http://laschoolboard.org)
Understanding the Food Services Division in LAUSD

The Food Services Division (FSD) is just one of dozens of departments within LAUSD. The division’s main role is to manage the breakfast, lunch, snack, summer, and other feeding programs in all the district schools as well as in some charter schools that have contracts to receive their meals through LAUSD Food Services. This includes ensuring that the meals prepared and served in the cafeteria comply with USDA’s regulations and the district’s school food and nutrition policies.

Director Dennis Barrett heads the FSD, which includes several Deputy Directors in charge of different aspects of the nutrition programs, such as ensuring menu compliance with nutrition guidelines, proper training of cafeteria staff, and up-to-date purchases and contracts. Recently, the Executive Chef developed new and tasty recipes with help and input from students. Together they created entrees and menu concepts that comply with LAUSD, state and federal nutrition standards.

For more information about the LAUSD Food Services Division, visit: http://cafe-la.lausd.net or call 213-241-3366
LAUSD is the second largest school district in the country, with over 900 school sites, nearly 700,000 students, and 77,000 employees. LAUSD students come from predominantly low-income Latino households (72%) and 79.14% of all students qualify for free and reduced meals. Across the district, over one quarter (26%) of these students are overweight, with some schools having as many as 44% of its students classified as overweight.

The Food Services Division in LAUSD runs the largest breakfast program and the second largest lunch program in the country, making it a laboratory for exploring new ways to encourage healthy nutrition habits. In the last decade, the district increased focus on promoting healthier nutritional habits to reduce the rate of overweight among school-aged children, as well as addressing food insecurity and hunger among the student population.

Since 2002, the LAUSD Board of Education has adopted a series of school food and nutrition policies to improve the nutrition quality and access to food in the cafeteria, as well as to increase participation in the school nutrition programs. These policies came about as a direct result of organizing and advocacy work done by the HSFC and other food policy advocate allies, and have created an expectation that school food environments can be transformed. The following are highlights of the LAUSD school food and nutrition policies.

a. *Healthy Beverage Resolution (2002)*
   - Elimination of soda sales in schools
   - Creation of district standards for the sale of approved beverages onsite, and an oversight system to ensure compliance
- Elimination of junk food sales
- Ensure that students have access to breakfast by mandating a 2nd Chance Breakfast service at school sites
- Ensure access to a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables in the cafeteria
- Institute daily vegetarian options

c. Cafeteria Improvement Motion (2005)
- Establishment of the Cafeteria Improvement Committee (CIC)
- Ensure that the Executive Chef is working with students on menu design through taste testing and other related activities, as well as addressing their nutrition and food services concerns
- Elimination of the meal ticket system
- Ensure students have sufficient time to eat; at least 20 min after picking up food
- Ensure that the meals served as part of the cafeteria nutrition programs are healthy, low in sugar, salt, fat and contain no added trans-fats

For the full text of these school food and nutrition policies, please see the Resources section.

Just as there have been changes in nutrition standards in LAUSD schools, California has approved bills to improve nutrition statewide. Some of the requirements are as follows:
- Each entrée can contain no more than 400 calories in each item
- Each entrée can contain no more than 36% fat
- Snacks can contain no more than 250 calories and 35% fat
- All juices must be composed of at least 50% fruit juice with no added sweeteners
e. School Wellness Policy (2006)

The Federal Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Section 204 of Public Law 108) requires that all schools that participate in federally funded food programs must have a Local School Wellness Policy. While each school district has the option to expand the policy as needed, districts must comply with the basic requirements mandated by law. Some of the minimum requirements that focus on nutrition include: specific goals for nutrition education and physical activity, nutritional guidelines for reimbursable meals served at school, guidelines for food available outside the cafeteria, and expectations for the enforcement and implementation of the policy.

The first step to creating a Local School Wellness Policy is to establish a committee. Often called the Safety Committee, members include school administrators and other representatives, parents, and at least one student (in the case of high schools). The committee is responsible for identifying goals, designing a plan, and monitoring progress of implementation.

LAUSD established its Local School Wellness Policy in 2006. Named the Coordinated Safe and Healthy School Plan, the wellness policy focuses on several aspects of student health, including nutrition. LAUSD’s Safety Committee tracks progress and presents assessment results to the district annually on December 1st. Key committee members, including the parent representative, must sign off on the assessment before submission.

For more information in English and Spanish, call 213-241-4131 or visit: http://lausd-oehs.org/schoolsafetyplans_v1.asp
As part of Section 204, school districts must make information about their Local School Safety Plans available to the public. In LAUSD, this means that anyone can ask to see a school’s Coordinated Safe and Healthy School Plan at the school’s Main Office.


Many students do not have access to fresh drinking water in schools, particularly in low-income communities. In September 2010, Governor Schwarzenegger signed SB 1413 requiring free, fresh drinking water be made available to students in food service areas, unless the board of a school district can demonstrate it is unable to comply with the requirements due to fiscal constraints or health and safety concerns.

Several schools in California are already implementing alternative strategies to provide free, safe water in school food service areas. The El Monte Union High School District provides 8-ounce bottled water as part of its meal service, and the Berkeley Unified School District supplies students with paper cups and fills 5-gallon containers with water during school meals. The Folsom-Cordova, Oakland and Hayward Unified school districts have also installed filtered “hydration stations” in cafeterias at an annual cost of $2,000 to $3,000 per site.

Implementing free water programs is relatively inexpensive. In LAUSD, the provision of free water costs the district $1.20 per student per year ($2,000 per site per year), which includes the cost of lead tests, water filters, 5-gallon dispensers and cups.

For more information, visit: http://waterinschools.org
In June 2011, LAUSD’s Board of Education approved new contracts with its dairy vendors that exclude flavored milk from school nutrition programs. The district will continue to order hormone-free low-fat and non-fat plain milk. The decision to eliminate flavored milk comes from concern over the amount of sugar children are consuming in beverages, including chocolate milk. A cup of plain, fat-free milk naturally contains about 12 grams of sugar, while a cup of chocolate milk contains about 22 grams of sugar—an additional 10 grams of sugar per cup. This new agreement is one of the steps LAUSD is taking to promote healthy beverage options.

Another upcoming change involves a possible early adoption of the newly proposed USDA nutrition standards. The standards, which are based on recommendations from the Institute of Medicine (IOM), emphasize lowering sodium, increasing whole-grains, including both fruits and vegetables in meals rather than one or the other, offering diverse and nutrient-dense vegetables, setting limits on calories, and adopting food-based menu planning by all districts in order to simplify meal pattern planning. The district is presently drafting a new policy that will reflect their commitment to high nutrition standards and support of healthy eating habits.

In August 2011, LAUSD unveiled the 2011-2012 cafeteria menu, which offers low sodium meals, more fresh fruits, more nutritious and diverse vegetables, and even more whole grain foods. The new menu options also represent a shift towards a multi-cultural set of entrees, in an effort to introduce students to new foods and to remove junk food items such as chicken nuggets, pizza, and the peanut butter and jelly pocket.

See a sample of the menu changes in the Resources section.
The first step in organizing a Healthy School Food Action Group is to think about likely supporters for efforts to improve school food and nutrition. Potential supporters may include parents who participate in Parent Center activities, members of associations and councils such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), the School Site Council, teachers, students in leadership positions, community organizations, non-profits, and many others involved in the school community.

Given the alarming levels of diabetes and obesity among children, especially those from low-income families, the HSFC believes that engaging low-income parents and students is critical. Often, they can best identify and suggest solutions for the problems students face in the cafeteria. Teachers are another stakeholder group likely to support school food advocacy, as they tend to understand the connection between healthy and nutritious food and a student’s ability to learn and achieve in the classroom. Ideas for how to engage these three stakeholder groups can be found in section 9, “How to Engage School Stakeholders in Improving School Food.”

Once potential supporters are identified, organize a meeting where stakeholders can come together to learn about and discuss school food and nutrition policy.

Plan your first meeting:

- Choose a time and location that is accessible to attendees.
- Provide a light and healthy snack such as vegetables and bite sized fruit.
- Ensure that childcare or language interpretation services are available if the participants you are outreaching to need such services.
How to facilitate your first meeting:

- Provide a sign-in sheet to collect the participants’ contact information.
- Begin the meeting with introductions and ask participants to share why they chose to attend.
- Give a presentation about the school food and nutrition policies to the group.
- Ask participants to share their opinions, and allow for short discussion.
- Address concerns and respond to questions participants have regarding school food or possible violations of the policies at their schools.
- Determine, as a group, next action steps.
- Assign roles and tasks to participants to help give them focus and create accountability.
- Select a date and location for the next meeting.

Follow up etiquette:

In order to create strong relationships with members of the group, contact participants within a couple of days after each meeting. Call participants and ask them questions like:

- What did you think of the meeting?
- Did you have any other comments or questions about what we discussed in the meeting that you would like to talk about?
- How are you doing with the task you volunteered to do? Do you need any help?
After the initial meeting:

- Add to your list of potential supporters from your school site; this may reflect what participants shared during your first meeting.
- Think about how to contact and invite new members to join your group.
- Think of each contact as an individual with whom you are trying to build a relationship, not just simply a name on a long list.
- Remind new and existing members about your next meeting.

Outreach and recruitment are both activities that require ongoing effort, but expanding the number of people that join a Healthy School Food Action Group will increase the visibility and effectiveness of school food policy organizing efforts. There can be countless resources in a school setting; school staff, parents, and other community members want students to be healthy and successful.

For more ideas on developing new contacts and building a base, please see the Resources section.
Once the group has met and received training on policies, standards, and expectations for the cafeteria and the school site, the next step is to document the school food environment. This exercise will provide the group with a clear sense of where implementation may be lacking, such as the cafeteria, vending machines, student store, fundraising food sales by a student club, etc. It is also important to observe lunch period supervision and learn about the meal service and bell schedules to evaluate compliance with district policies.

Creating a checklist or survey tool based on school food and nutrition policies can make it easier for group members to document observations. Have students take pictures of long lunch lines and competitive food sales during mealtime. Ask students to record the amount of time they wait in line to receive their meal each day. The data gathered through these tools helped HSFC to develop arguments for the advocacy work at the school site administration level and the district level, with Board members, the Food Services Division and other district offices. For samples of surveys and documentation tools, please see the Resources section.

Once the Healthy School Food Action Group has gathered sufficient and recent documentation on the school food environment, the data can help the group develop a set of priority areas and generate talking points for discussions at future meetings with the cafeteria staff, the principal, the Food Services Director, or the local Board member.

It is important to schedule a meeting with the administrator that can best address the group’s concerns. For example, if the data shows that lunch options run out, or that students are not able to choose from all the entrees or menu items, then the meeting should be with the Cafeteria Manager. The Cafeteria Manager is in charge of ordering the food, and, with the help of
the computerized Cafeteria Management System, should have a clear sense of participation levels and food order quantities. Other concerns about the school food environment may require talking to a different administrator.

Within LAUSD, not all school food and nutrition policies fall under the jurisdiction of the Food Services Division. Here is a brief list of which policies are enforced by the FSD, and which ones are the responsibility of other school administrators, to help guide a Healthy School Food Action Group identify and approach the appropriate entity for specific issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policies enforced by the Food Services Division</th>
<th>Policies enforced by School Administration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food quality and preparation</td>
<td>Competitive food sales on campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elimination of meal tickets</td>
<td>Bell schedules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input on meals and menu items</td>
<td>Length of lunch period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness in the cafeteria area</td>
<td>Supervision of lines during meal period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer service</td>
<td>Teachers keeping children in classroom during lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of meal choices throughout meal periods</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

For any areas of concern, document instances of infraction and communicate findings to the Food Services Division or the responsible school administrator. If the school administration does not respond to the concerns within a reasonable amount of time, contact your Local Superintendent’s Office.
Breaches of the competitive food sales ban during school hours (such as McDonald’s being sold at the quad), can be reported to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) at 866-528-7364. Calls are anonymous.

HSFC parents walking with principal.
The first step in preparing to engage a board member is to find out which Board office represents the school site. Identify the appropriate district’s school board representative and contact their office to inquire about their level of support of school food and nutrition policies. Board member offices typically have a policy staff person working for them who may be particularly knowledgeable on the subject and a good person to approach for a meeting. When meeting with the board office, a Healthy School Food Action Group should bring gathered data, along with a clear set of questions for the board office to address. For example, a group might bring along talking points, supported by data gathered from surveys and observations, which demonstrate that students at the school site do not have 20 minutes to eat or that the school administrator is allowing junk food sales during school hours, etc.

There are at least two primary reasons why it is important to engage board members. First, they need to hear from school site stakeholders regularly in order to keep school food and nutrition policies a priority. Between budget cuts, low test scores, and staff turnover at school sites, among other issues, board members have many competing priorities and school food may not always rank high on their list. When a board member is unaware of school food related issues, he or she is less likely to expect or propose any improvements or changes.
The second reason to engage board members is that the Healthy School Food Action Group may find that despite their work at the site level, implementation continues not to be enforced. School food policies are standards approved by the entire board, so it is their responsibility to respond and act when policies are not implemented.

To identify the appropriate board member, refer to the Board of Education table presented previously or visit http://lausd.net under the heading “Board of Education.” If additional assistance is required, please contact the HSFC at 323-341-5097.

HSFC Members.
How to Engage School Stakeholders in Improving School Food

This section includes materials that can be used to run policy workshops that educate stakeholders on student School Food Rights. If the targeted school is not within LAUSD, or does not have school food and nutrition policies in place, it is possible to use LAUSD’s policies as a model to inspire stakeholders to advocate for their own school food policies.

a. Students
Teaching students about their School Food Rights informs students about school food and nutrition policies and sets expectations for the food environment at their school site. This information can be empowering for students, and can assist them in making positive changes at their school.

What students can do to improve school food:
- Participate in the Breakfast and School Lunch Programs.
- Remain open minded about tasting new foods, and about menu changes.
- Choose each of the five food components offered during mealtime for better nutrition.
- Observe what happens during meal times in the cafeteria.
- Express any concerns to the Cafeteria Manager.
- Offer new ideas or suggestions to the Cafeteria Manager.
- Encourage other students to join in efforts.
- Talk with parents about school cafeteria food and share observations.

Conduct a Food Talk
Members of the healthy School Food Action Group can host “Food Talks,” where students learn their School Food Rights, and can brainstorm ways to implement policy changes.
At the beginning of a Food Talk:

- Introduce yourself and give a brief explanation about why you are there.
- Share some brief background information about school food, nutrition, and school food policies.
- Start a discussion by asking some of the following questions:
  - Who participates in the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program? If students do not understand the question, rephrase it by asking, who eats breakfast and lunch here at school?
  - What are the reasons you do or do not eat lunch or breakfast at school?
  - Are breakfast and lunch important to you? Why, or why not?
  - Since you have been in school, have you seen any changes in the lunch program?
  - What do you like and what do you not like about the school cafeteria? This can be turned into a longer discussion, and you can even write some of their likes and dislikes on the board.
  - What are some changes that you would like to see happen in your school cafeteria? Try to focus on positive things that can be done in partnership with the school cafeteria staff and stay away from vague and negative feedback that is not constructive.

School Food Rights

Once students have had an opportunity to express their likes and dislikes, and given feedback on what they would like to see in their school cafeteria, introduce the School Food Rights. The most effective strategy in discussing these rights is to divide the students in small groups; this provides an opportunity for honest and open discussion. Have each group focus on a handful of different school food rights. Students can develop a skit or a brief explanation that they can present to the entire group or class. This will allow everyone to review the entire list of rights and facilitate the smaller group discussions.
Here are some of the School Food Rights:

- There should be a Second Chance Breakfast period.
- A vegetarian option should be served at every meal.
- There should be nutritional information available.
- Meals should be prepared and served properly.
- There should be at least twenty minutes to eat from the time the meal is received.
- Lunch should be served between 11 AM and 1 PM. Not earlier or later.
- There should be fresh fruits and vegetables to choose from at each meal.
- Students’ opinions should be heard and the Cafeteria Manager needs to listen and address concerns.
- There should be a cafeteria menu available to view.

Many students will not be aware of half of the rights listed. Stress how it important it is that students participate and make their voices heard. If their school food rights are infringed upon, they can do something about it; student members of the HSFC have advocated for better food by leading survey efforts, creating posters and petitions, and testifying in front of the school board about their cafeteria experience. Students should leave the session with tools and a plan to work toward transforming their school food environment.

It is important that any food served during the meetings or workshops with students is healthy. Providing a nutritious snack, like fruit, vegetables, or nuts, reinforces the concept of eating wholesome food and reminds students that healthy food is tasty.

For templates or resources to use during Food Talks, please see the Resource section.
b. Parents

*Suggested tips for parents who want to improve school food:*

- Keep open communication with your children about school food.
- Provide healthy meals at home that include colorful vegetables, fruits, water, and low-fat milk.
- Eat meals sitting together; teach by example!
- Encourage your children to participate and be aware of their School Food Rights.
- Attend any meetings on the topic of school food.
- Observe lunch to see firsthand how the cafeteria runs the nutrition programs.
- Buy school food; a lunch tray costs $2.50.
- Express any concern immediately to the appropriate party.
- Share information about the policies with other parents.
- Join the HSFC! Or start a group at your child’s school if there is a problem that is not being addressed.

c. Teachers

*Suggested tips for teachers who want to improve school food:*

- Invite the HSFC to do a “Food Talk” session in the classroom.
- Eat in the cafeteria, and, if possible, eat with students and discuss thoughts and observations about school food in a constructive way.
- Find other teachers at the school site to join in efforts to support students’ health.
- Encourage students to create posters, comics, or essays about school food policy and organizing by linking it to a lesson plan.
- Document any competitive food sales that are taking place on campus and express concern to the principal.
- Reach out to the Cafeteria Manager if there is any concern about the food being served.
- Read all of the school food policies and make sure the school site is abiding by all of them. If not, reach out to the appropriate representative.
This School Food Policy and Organizing Toolkit focuses primarily on LAUSD and some school districts operate differently. What may work in LAUSD to improve school food may not work in the same way in all districts or charter schools, and vice versa. Still, the information from the previous sections is useful for understanding how school cafeteria programs work. For sites or districts in California, be sure to know the CA Nutritional Standards. Here are a couple more key steps to take toward changing the food at a non-LAUSD school site.

**Do your Research!**

*Learn how your district is organized and find out:*

- Is there a cafeteria at your school?
- Who is in charge of the school cafeterias in the district?
- Where is the food served coming from?
- Is there staff serving meals on site?
- Does your school/district have a school board?
- How often do they meet?
- Do they allow people to observe and participate in their meetings?
- Who is the board member that represents your school or area?
- What is the board representative’s agenda?

*Get to know your school site:*

- Is there a Parent Center?
- Is your school a Title I site?
- Does your school have organized and active parent councils?
- Do you have a School Site Council (SSC) and how often do they meet?
- Can you invite people to the meetings?
- Are there student clubs in your school?
- Is there a Shared Decisions Committee? Who is part of it and what do they work on?
- Is there a nurse? What does she/he think about nutrition?
11 What if Your School is a Charter Site?

In California, charter schools are exempt from the law that requires public schools to offer healthy and nutritionally balanced meals free or at a reduced-price to families. While some charter schools do offer meals during the school day, others do not. At present, there is no accurate or reliable data to help the California Department of Education know how many of the 800 charter schools in the state are offering nutrition programs, whether they offer breakfast and/or lunch, what type of meal options they offer, and what is the cost of those meals. As a result, it is difficult to know how many of the 341,000 students attending charters are participating in meal programs during the school day. Here are a couple of key steps to take toward learning about charter school food and changing its food access landscape.

Do Your Research!

Learn how your charter school food service works:

- Are there nutrition programs in your school?
- Is there a cafeteria or a place where students can go to obtain meals during school?
- Who is in charge of the cafeteria nutrition program?
- Where is the food served coming from?
- Does the food comply with the USDA requirements?

Once you have done your research:

- Involve students in the process.
- Engage teachers and other administration from your school.
- Contact the HSFC and other advocates such as California Food Policy Advocates, 213-482-8200
If your charter school does offer meals, meet with the principal and other parents to:

- Discuss how the meal programs comply with USDA requirements.
- Request that the meal programs match LAUSD’s standards.
- Request that the school complies with California’s nutrition and junk food sales standards.

If your charter school does not offer meals, meet with the principal and other parents to:

- Request the establishment of breakfast and lunch programs.
- Suggest the charter school enter in a contract with LAUSD to buy meals.
- Request that the school comply with California’s nutrition and junk food sales standards.
- Ensure that the school’s Wellness Policy goals demonstrate progress in the area of nutrition.

For more information on California’s Charter Schools, please visit the 2010 Report from the California State Auditor: http://bsa.ca.gov/pdfs/reports/2010-104.pdf

School food taste-testing with parents.
The resistance to change at LAUSD was deep and seemingly insurmountable when the HSFC began mobilizing to improve school food in 2001. Since then, LAUSD adopted the polices outlined in this toolkit and recently received positive attention for its school cafeteria menu updates. The HSFC base continues to attract new members excited about school food advocacy and improving the school food environment.

Effective mobilization and continuing advocacy are ultimately the most important ways to empower students, parents, and community members to sustain and create long lasting changes and ensure a healthy generation. The HSFC hopes this School Food Policy & Organizing Toolkit will inspire the creation of many more Healthy School Food Action Groups to advocate for school food and nutrition policy compliance. Groups, parents, teachers, students and other advocates who need assistance during the process should feel free to contact the HSFC for support.

Phone: 323-341-5097
Email: emedrano@oxy.edu or uepi@oxy.edu

Mailing Address:
Healthy School Food Coalition
Occidental College – UEPI
1600 Campus Road, MS-M1
Los Angeles, CA 90041
Breakfast in the Classroom – an initiative designed to bring breakfast into the classroom during the first fifteen minutes of school, allowing students to be fed and to eat together in the classroom setting.

Cafeteria Improvement Committee (CIC) – a committee that meets once a month to discuss school food services within LAUSD, with a focus on ensuring policy implementation.

Cafeteria Management System (CMS) – LAUSD Food Services Division’s computerized system designed to support food service operations, including meal application processing, menu planning, forecasting and data capturing.

Competitive Sales - any food or drink sold on or near a school’s campus that does not meet LAUSD and California standards.

Coordinated Review Effort (CRE) – a state inspection required by the USDA of every NSLP and SBP at least once every five years to ensure the program abides by the regulations and properly counts and claims their meals.

Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) – Established in 1961, LAUSD has the largest number of students of any school district in California, and ranks second only to New York as the biggest public school district in the country. The student population is largely Latino.

Federal Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 – improved children’s access to nutritious and quality food in school, after school program and childcare settings. It also expanded and enhanced key programs such as the fresh fruit and vegetable pilot programs, the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

Food Based Menu Planning – a traditional approach to school meal planning that requires specific food components be served in certain amounts for specific age groups. There are four components: meat/meat alternate, grains/breads, vegetables/fruits, and milk, and three age groups: preschool, grades K-3, and grades 4-12; an optional age group portion option for grades 7-12 can also be used.

Institute of Medicine (IOM) Recommendations – adopted by LAUSD, these recommendations place a limit on the calories, fat, and salt in each school meal.
National School Lunch Program (NSLP) – established under the National School Lunch Act of 1946, this program provides students with nutritious lunch and snacks administered by states and districts.

Nutrient Based Menu Planning (NBMP) – established by the USDA, this planning technique uses analysis software to plan school meals that meet the nutrient standards for each age group.

Offered vs. Served – The cafeteria offers five meal components to each student during lunch: grain, protein, fruit, vegetable, and milk. A student may select fewer than five components, however; in order for the school to receive a full reimbursement, the student must choose at least three.

Point of Sale (POS) – the location where a cafeteria worker reviews the student’s choice of meal. The POS allows a cafeteria worker to ensure that the student has taken three of the five meal components required for the school to receive full reimbursement.

Provision 2 – passed in 1980 by Congress to reduce the amount of paperwork, this provision reduces the free and reduced meal application burden on the school, and allows a school with a high percentage of qualifying students to serve meals free of charge to all students for a four-year period.

Reimbursement Rate – the rate at which the federal government provides reimbursement to schools for every meal they serve to students. This money is used to cover all costs related to food service, including labor, maintenance, and administration. LAUSD’s reimbursement rate is $2.77 for every free lunch served, $2.37 for every reduced price lunch served, and $0.26 for every full paid lunch served.

School Breakfast Program (SBP) – piloted in 1966 as an addition to the NSLP and ratified in 1975, the SBP is a federally assisted meal program operating in schools across the United States that supplies a morning meal to students.

Second Chance Breakfast (2CB) – a program that provides breakfast during the recess break.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – responsible for the development and execution of federal policy on issues of farming, agriculture, and food. The USDA also funds and sets policies for several school meal programs, including the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs.
**NUTRITION BINGO**

- Find someone who matches the description in each box.
- The same person cannot sign your sheet more than once.
- Once you find someone, write down their name clearly & fill in their answer.
- The first person to get 2 straight lines of boxes (across, down, or diagonally) WINS!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Find someone who ate a fresh piece of fruit today.</th>
<th>Find someone who likes to eat artichokes.</th>
<th>Find someone who loves to cook.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: ____________________</td>
<td>Name: ____________________</td>
<td>Name: ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit: ____________________</td>
<td></td>
<td>Favorite meal to cook:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>_______________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Find someone who brought their own lunch to school today.</th>
<th>Find someone who ate a serving of whole grains today.</th>
<th>Find someone who visited the Farmers' Market.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: ____________________</td>
<td>Name: ____________________</td>
<td>Name: ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Find someone who likes to eat fruit with their breakfast.</th>
<th>Find someone who exercises every day.</th>
<th>Find someone who can name a slogan about nutrition and eating healthy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: ____________________</td>
<td>Name: ____________________</td>
<td>Name: ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit: ____________________</td>
<td>Exercise: ____________________</td>
<td>Slogan: ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Advocacy means…

**Speaking Up!**

You can write a letter, sign postcards, call, or do a visit.

There is strength in numbers, so encourage others to advocate with you. Unite with other groups to build a strong coalition.

To prepare, think about:
- What group do you represent?
- How many people are members of your group?
- How many people does your group serve?
- In one sentence, what is the issue you are advocating for or against?

**30 second speech**

“Hi my name is _________. I am with __(group name)__ and we represent __(# of members/who you serve)___. I live in your district. I want you to support/oppose ____________.”

Be sure you are heard!
- Bring notes with you
- Memorize a short speech
- Don’t get sidetracked
LAUSD SCHOOL FOOD POLICIES

Healthy Beverage Resolution (2002)

1) Effective January 2004 the only beverages authorized for sale at the Los Angeles Unified School District before, during, and until one half hour after the end of the school day at all sites accessible to students shall be: fruit based drinks that are composed of no less than 50 percent fruit juices and have no added sweeteners; drinking water; milk, including, but not limited to, chocolate milk, soy milk, rice milk, and other similar dairy or nondairy milk; and electrolyte replacement beverages and vitamin waters that do not contain more than 42 grams of added sweetener per 20 ounce serving;

2) Effective immediately neither the District nor individual schools shall enter into any new contracts, nor extend or renew any existing contracts, for the sale of any non approved beverage on campus from before the school day until one half hour after the end of the school day;

3) Effective January 2004 only approved beverages may be sold in vending machines, cafeterias, student stores, or advertised, or promoted at all sites accessible to students with the following expressed exception: 1) Non-approved beverages as related to this motion may be sold for fundraising activities or at school events occurring at least one half hour after the end of the school day provided that vending machines, student stores, and cafeterias are not utilized for such sales;

4) The Superintendent will develop and implement with the Office of the Inspector General an audit program that will monitor compliance of this resolution;

5) Any unauthorized contracts shall be immediately declared void and appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken for violation of this policy;

6) To assist in the implementation of this resolution, the Superintendent will, in collaboration with health organizations, disseminate information on healthy beverage sale options to all schools prior to January 2004, including resources on healthy beverages identified by the District’s Linking Education, Activity, and Food (LEAF Grant) schools;

7) The Superintendent will establish a working group that will represent the areas of instruction, student health, school operations and business services, in consultation with the Child Nutrition Advisory Committee, and that this group will review current food policies and enforcement of such policies, develop implementation procedures for competitive food sales, and develop programs in the areas of physical education and nutrition education for both students and parents, and will report back to the Board semi annually through fiscal year 2003-2004, and include in the first 6 month report a plan to address the revenue issues;

8) Effective January 2005 the Superintendent will report to the School Board Regarding the progress of this resolution

Obesity Prevention Motion (2003)

1) Effective July 1, 2004, the only food (excluding beverages) authorized for sale at the Los Angeles Unified School District outside the Federal School Meal Program (including but not limited to the Student Store, Vending Machines, a la carte sales, and fundraising) before, during, and until one half hour after the end of the school day at all sites accessible to students shall meet the following nutrient standards:
   a. No more than 35% of total calories from fat (not including nuts, seeds);
   b. No more than 10% of total calories from saturated fat, including trans fat;
   c. No more than 35% added sugar by weight (not including fruits and vegetables when used as additives);
   d. No more than 600 mg of sodium per serving;
2) Adopts the following serving portion sizes for all foods (excluding beverages) not included those within the Federal School Meal Program, effective July 1, 2004:

a. Snacks and Sweets (Including, but not limited to chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts seeds, dried fruit, jerky): 1.5 oz
b. Cookies/cereal bars: 2 oz
c. Bakery Items (e.g. pastries, muffins): 3 oz
d. Frozen desserts, ice cream: 3 oz
e. Other entree items and side dishes (including, but not limited to, French fries and onion rings) shall be no larger than the portions of those foods served as part of the Federal School Meal Program.

3) Directs the Superintendent to appoint a representative from the Division of Food Services to participate in the Los Angeles School Lunch Nutritional Review Panel;

4) Directs the Superintendent to provide at least one vegetarian option that includes a vegetable or fruit component in addition to the salad bar as one of the 11 options served daily in the cafeteria;

5) Directs the Superintendent to increase the variety, visibility, and accessibility of fresh fruit and vegetables at school sites through facility design, the creation of an site plan, and programs such as the Farm-to-Cafeteria Projects, and report such plan to the Board of Education;

6) Directs the Superintendent to identify steps to increase the number of middle and secondary students selecting a full, complete meal each day with all offered meal components, including fresh fruits and vegetables;

7) Directs the Superintendent to undertake a pilot program offering a la carte soy milk options at 5 schools;

8) Directs the Superintendent to develop a strategic plan for implementation of a point of sales computerized payment system at all schools within 6 years and to address relevant connectivity issues where necessary within the next 5 years;

9) Directs the Superintendent to provide a vegetable and fruit bar, where facilities permit, at all High Schools within 2 years, at all Middle Schools within 4 years, and at all Elementary Schools within 6 years;

10) Directs the Superintendent to offer the second chance breakfast at all elementary, middle and high schools within 2 years;

11) Directs the Superintendent to improve and broaden nutrition education and nutrition education materials within the k-12, adult, and parent public health education programs of the District;

12) Sets as policy the concept that cafeterias should be places of learning and therefore should provide informational posters and nutrition and nutrient information about all items served in cafeterias, and directs the Superintendent to coordinate the efforts of the Food Services Division with nutritional education curriculum;

13) Directs the Superintendent to encourage all Charter School applicants to adhere to these nutrition guidelines as well as those previously adopted in the Healthy Beverage Resolution;

14) Directs the Superintendent to develop a Food Service outreach plan to facilitate regular community input and participation in the District Food Service Program;

15) Directs the Superintendent to create an enforcement mechanism for vending and student body sales in consultation with Local District Superintendents, the COO, and the Inspector General;

16) Directs the Superintendent to develop guidelines to eliminate within 3 years District contracts and relationships with branded fast-food products (defined as companies primarily marketing high-fat, high calorie and high-sugar foods);
17) Directs the Superintendent to provide information on alternative fundraising methods to schools to mitigate potential impacts of new nutrition regulations;

18) Directs the Superintendent to fund a central Physical Education Advisor position within the Instructional Support Services Division and to develop instructional guides for Physical Education;

19) Directs the Superintendent to work with non-profit organizations such as the American Diabetes Association on education programs to be offered at school sites teaching children healthy eating and lifestyle habits;

20) That a semi-annual report be presented to the School Safety, Health and Human Services Committee on this plan, its progress, related physical fitness activities as well as equal access to the opportunities mentioned in the motion.

Cafeteria Improvement Motion (2005)

1) Update and revise goals and the plan for increasing participation in the school breakfast, lunch and summer nutrition programs by nonparticipating students to incorporate the contents of this motion;  
   a. Track student participation and monitor impact of plan;  
   b. Create a Cafeteria Improvement Committee comprised of nutrition experts, community based organizations, parents and other appropriate partners to provide input on the plan and assist with implementation.  
   c. Report to the Board of Education via committee the status of implementation and impact on participation annually for 3 years;  
   d. Recommend changes to the Board of Education if participation is adversely affected for any reason.

2) Work with market research firms, parent and student organizations and other appropriate partners to gather information from nonparticipating students (and their parents) about the district’s cafeteria programs through, but not limited to, surveys, focus groups and ongoing community feedback mechanisms; Conduct market research and student focus groups while transitioning to new nutrition specifications to facilitate product reformulation and evaluate acceptance of reformulated products;

3) Implement the following to increase participation in the School Meals Program:  
   a. Present information at a future committee meeting on current food safety, compliance and monitoring systems and mechanisms for students and parents to report concerns regarding school kitchen and cafeteria cleanliness and food safety; Establish and publish a hazardous analysis critical control point (HACCP) plan by July 1, 2006;  
   b. Parents may request that principals print and post at school sites cafeteria inspection reports that are on the district website.  
   c. Ensure schools serve lunch at appropriate times, 12:30 pm or before (where possible).  
   d. Ensure all students have sufficient time to eat by convening a working group to identify steps necessary to add additional lunch periods at overcrowded sites;  
   e. Identify and fund facilities upgrades to improve participation at satellite kitchen sites, and provide an update on the use of bond funds for kitchen and cafeteria alterations at existing and new buildings;  
   f. Publish established customer service expectations and tenets;  
   g. Initiate a partnership with local chefs to identify potential improvements in batch-cooking practices, dining area design and equipment;
h. Incorporate student and parent input and the nutrition improvements specified in this and previous Board motions to develop a comprehensive program to market cafeteria meals to students;

4) Improve the nutritional value of the school meals program by adopting the following policies:
   a. Adopt the sodium recommendations of the Los Angeles Unified School District Lunch Review panel as follows:
      1. Reducing sodium levels to no more than 2000 milligrams per individual meal, and no more than 1500 milligrams of sodium per meal averaged over a one week period no later than January 1, 2007.
      2. Reducing sodium levels to no more than 1500 milligrams per individual meal, and no more than 1100 milligrams of sodium per meal averaged over a one week period no later than July 1, 2008.
   b. Add nutritional specifications to cafeteria procurement contracts to eliminate trans fat added in the manufacturing process;
   c. Limit fat content of entrees to 35 grams of fat;
   e. Improve accuracy of forecasting to ensure variety in accordance with Food Services policy and rotate staple entrees to reduce availability of entrees with more than 15% total calories from saturated fat;
   f. Reduce students’ consumption of added sugars in school meals by limiting prepared foods and pastries with high fructose corn syrup and other added sugars or caloric sweeteners. Immediately limit added sugar to less than 7 grams per ounce of cereal;
   g. Staff may bring recommendations to add singular items that are nutrient dense but may not meet the above-listed standards to the Board of Education’s Health and Safety Committee on a quarterly basis and for approval by the whole board through the ratifications report.

5) Facilitate students’ ability to make healthier choices and increase capability to track students’ choices
   a. Post nutritional information for all entrees and a la carte items in the cafeteria and indicate visually which items are the healthiest so students can make informed selections.
   b. Develop accurate forecasting with assistance from the cafeteria point of sale system implemented on site, using historical trends to ensure a variety of breakfast and lunch entrees, and fresh fruits and fresh vegetables and salad bars (where served) will be available throughout the meal period;
   c. To develop bid specifications for the development of the integrated cafeteria Point of Sale system to include mechanisms to gather data regarding type of entrée selected;
How to Support School Food and Nutrition Changes in LAUSD?

A Checklist to Becoming Active in your Child’s School Food Improvement


2. Talk to your children about what they eat at school for breakfast and lunch- Check the menu together and encourage them to try the new items listed. Do this regularly. You can find menus posted in English and Spanish at [http://cafe-la.lausd.net/](http://cafe-la.lausd.net/)

3. Get to know your Cafeteria Manager- Develop a relationship with the Manager and learn about how the cafeteria nutrition programs work.

4. Become a volunteer at school- Talk to the principal and offer to help supervise lunch lines and cafeteria area. This will help you to have a better understanding of the programs. Invite other parents!

5. Call the Office of the Inspector General (866)528-7364 anytime you observe non-nutritious items being sold at school- No food sales are to take place before, after, or during school hours.

6. Ask the principal about the School-site Coordinated School Health Committee or the Health and Safety Committee meetings- All schools are required to have a committee, participate and discuss your observations and ideas to enforce school food policies.

7. Get to know who your School Board representative is and ask that they enforce the school food policies- It’s this representative’s job to ensure all schools a) Give adequate time to eat during lunch, b) Have 2nd Chance Breakfast (nutrition), c) Have meal times scheduled at appropriate times; not too early or too late in the day, and d) Have alternative/non junk food related fundraising methods and avoid having students sell as a condition to participate in extracurricular activities at school.

8. At home you can support school food policy changes by modeling healthy eating and active living- Consume more vegetables, fruits and whole grains, avoid buying foods from street that are not nutritious, walk, run, hike with the entire family. Be consistent with changes.

9. Attend Healthy School Food Coalition meetings on the third Saturday of the month- For more information contact us.

10. Share this information with parents and adults who care for children. Get them involved!

The Healthy School Food Coalition is a Group of parents, students and community members committed to school food and nutrition policy development and implementation in LAUSD schools.

The Healthy School Food Coalition is a Project of the Urban & Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental College.

Please contact Elizabeth Medrano for more information at 323.341.5087 or emedrano@oxy.edu
## School Food Policy & Organizing Toolkit

### School Food and Nutrition Policy Implementation Survey

Date: _____________________  School ___________________  Grade ________

Name ____________________________________________________________

Parent □, Student □, Other □ _________________________________________

#### Food

1. Is breakfast offered?   Yes □, No □   At what time? _________
   How long is the period? _________ min

2. Is nutrition offered?   Yes □, No □   At what time? _________
   How long is the period? _________ min

3. How many lunch dishes were served today? __________________________
   How many lunch periods are there? _________________________________
   At what time(s) is lunch served? _________________________________
   How long is the lunch period? ___________ min

4. What sides/components (i.e. fruit, vegetables, etc.) were offered today?
   Which fruits were cut? ____________________________________________
   or Whole? ______________________________________________________

5. Was there at least one vegetarian option today?   Yes □, No □
   What was it? ____________________________________________________

6. Is there a salad bar in your school?   Yes □, No □

7. The food today was; Good □, So, so □, Not good □,
   Explain ________________________________________________________

8. Did food run out today? Yes □, No □
   If yes, which menu choices? ______________________________________
   Were alternative items available? Yes □, No □,
   If yes, what?` ___________________________________________________

9. Is there drinking water available in or near the cafeteria? Yes □, No □,
   Explain ________________________________________________________
   Where are there working drinking fountains in your school? ___________
   ________________________________________________________________

10. How is the costumer service in the cafeteria? Good □, So, so □, Not good □,
    Explain ________________________________________________________
**Layout and Lines**

1. Are there signs that tell you which food options are available in your lines? Yes □, No □

2. Are menus and nutritional content information posted Yes □, No □  
   Where? ________________________________________________________

3. Where did you buy your food today? Cafeteria □, Window □, Cart □, Other __________________________________________________________________________

4. How do students buy school food? Tickets □, No tickets □, Cards □, Other __________________________________________________________________________

5. How long did you wait before you got your food today? _________ min  
   Are lines supervised? Yes □, No □

6. Were there any problems with the line? (cutting, rushing, etc.) Yes □, No □, Explain __________________________________________________________________________

7. Is there enough sitting space for students to eat? Yes □, No □,  
   Explain __________________________________________________________________________

8. Is there a lot of food thrown or left on the tables? Yes □, No □,  
   Explain __________________________________________________________________________

9. Who do you speak to about school food? ____________________________

10. Is the cafeteria manager accessible to the school community?  
    Yes □, No □, I don’t know □  

*Developed by the Healthy School Food Coalition, 2008*

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**Other Food Available in the School**

1. How many snack and beverage vending machines are there in your school? _________________________________________________________________

2. Where are these located?  
   Snack __________________________________________________________________________  
   Beverage __________________________________________________________________________  
   Please list the products sold __________________________________________________________________________

3. Are machines on during the school day? Yes □, No □,  
   I don’t know □ ________________________________________________________________
4. Are machines timed to sell 30 min after school is out? Yes □, No □, I don’t know □ ________________________________________________

5. Is there a Student store? Yes □, No □, Where is it located? ________________________________________________
   Please list the products sold _______________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________

6. Are there other food products sold by school groups, clubs, parent centers, teachers, or students? Yes □, No □, When are these foods available? _______________________________________
   Please list the products sold _______________________________________

7. Are there people selling food from across the school fence? Yes □, No □, When? _______________________________________
   Please list the products sold _______________________________________

8. Are there people who bring food from outside? Yes □, No □, When? _______________________________________
   Please list the products _______________________________________

9. Has the school principal(s) or other staff provided assistance on non-food fundraising alternatives? Yes □, No □

**School Information and Administration Involvement**

1. Has the school principal(s) or other school administrators provided information to students and parents about school food regulations and changes? Yes □, No □

2. Are there health, nutrition education, or physical activity student clubs? Yes □, No □
   Please list ______________________________________________________

3. Is there a School Nurse on site? Yes □, No □ If yes, is the nurse available everyday all day? Yes □, No □, I don’t know □

4. Is this a Network for A Healthy California School? Yes □, No □, I don’t know □

5. Is there a Parent Center in your school? Yes □, No □, If yes, who is in charged _____________________________________________

6. Are there parent organizations, community organizations, and health related programs, such as mobile clinics, in your school? Yes □, No □,
   Please list ______________________________________________________
LAUSD Nutrition Changes Adopted by the School Board
Is your school implementing these changes?

Obesity Prevention Motion, October 2003

- “Junk Food” – high fat and high calorie snacks are not sold at school;
- Only “approved” snacks will be for sale at student stores and vending machines; (go to www.cafe-la.org for details)
- Provide at least one vegetarian option that includes a vegetable or fruit component in addition to the salad bar;
- Increase the variety, visibility, and accessibility of fresh fruit and vegetables at school sites through facility design, the creation of a site plan to promote fruit and vegetable consumption;
- Offer the second chance breakfast at all elementary, middle and high schools;
- Identify steps to increase the number of middle and secondary students selecting a full, complete meal each day with all offered meal components, including fresh fruits and vegetables;
- Provide a vegetable and fruit bar, where facilities permit, at all High Schools by 2005, at all Middle Schools by 2007, and at all Elementary Schools by 2009;
- Eliminate contracts and relationships with branded fast-food products (defined as companies primarily marketing high-fat, high calorie and high-sugar foods).

Cafeteria Improvement Motion, December 2005

- Parents may request that principals print and post at school sites cafeteria inspection reports that are on the district website;
- Ensure schools serve lunch at appropriate times, 12:30pm or before;
- Publish established customer service expectations for cafeteria staff;
- Incorporate student and parent input and the nutrition improvements specified in this and previous Board motions to develop a comprehensive program to market cafeteria meals to students;
- Post nutritional information for all entrees and a la carte items in the cafeteria and indicate visually which items are the healthiest so students can make informed selections;
- Ensure a variety of breakfast and lunch entrees, and fresh fruits and fresh vegetables and salad bars (where served) will be available throughout the meal period.

This Policy checklist was prepared by:

For more information contact Elizabeth Medrano 323.341.5097
LAUSD Launches Groundbreaking New Menu

You’ve probably heard the news that LAUSD has banned the sale of sugary flavored milk in their school cafeterias. But did you know that the district has made major improvements on the food that they serve, as well? With an emphasis on both increasing the nutritional quality of the school lunches and encouraging lifelong healthy eating habits in their students, LAUSD is pioneering an entirely new, healthy approach to school food. Read through the chart below to learn about some of the major changes to Café LA. Check out the new menu for yourself and provide feedback at [http://cafe-la.lausd.net](http://cafe-la.lausd.net). Most importantly, talk to your children about the importance of eating a nutritious lunch during the school day and encourage them to try out these healthy and delicious new options!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What’s New This Year?</th>
<th>2011 • 2012 Menu Specifics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Dishes</strong></td>
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</table>
| • Fresh vegetables have been included in most main dishes, doubling the amount of veggies in main dishes last year | **Examples From New Menu:**  
  • Teriyaki Beef Bowl with Broccoli & Brown Rice  
  • Jamaican Jerk Chicken w/ Veggies & Brown Rice |
| • Most breaded items were eliminated | • Greek Salad |
| • Amount of cheese was greatly decreased | |
| • Whole grains were increased | |
| • Sodium and fat was reduced | |
| • Greater variety: total of 42 main dishes this year versus 25 last year | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Side Vegetables</strong></th>
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</table>
| • A variety of side vegetables have been added to the menu, such as celery & zucchini sticks | **Examples From New Menu:**  
  • Heirloom Tomato Salad  
  • Garlic Green Beans  
  • Sweet Potato Fries |
| • All vegetables are fresh - new menu uses no canned or frozen vegetables | |
| • 50% of vegetables and fruits are locally sourced from farmers within 200 miles | |
### Fruit
- All fruits are fresh – there are no canned or frozen fruits being served
- There is an increased focus on serving seasonal fruit from local farmers

**Examples From New Menu:**
- Nectarines
- Plums
- Fresh Strawberries

### Vegetarian Options
- Vegetarian options were greatly expanded from 9 vegetarian main dishes last year to 25 this year
- There will be a freshly-prepared vegetarian option available every day (not PB&J)
- Vegetarian options include more fresh vegetables than last year’s vegetarian meals

**Examples From New Menu:**
- Asian Pad Thai with Spicy Peanut Sauce
- Quinoa and Veggie Salad
- Vegetable Curry w/ Whole Wheat Naan

### Diversity of Cuisines on Menu
This year’s menu draws from many different cultures from around the globe, in an effort to expose children to the many diverse cuisines of Los Angeles.

**Types of Cuisines From New Menu:**
- American
- Mexican
- Italian
- Jamaican
- Caribbean
- Mediterranean
- Japanese
- Thai
- Vietnamese
- Salvadorian
- Chinese
- Creole

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Learn more about school food! Get involved!
**Call us: 323.341.5097**

Join us at: www.facebook.com/healthyschoolfoodcoalition
## Reporting Form

**School:** ________________________________________________________________

**Name:** ________________________________________________________________

**Date:** __________  **Issue:** please circle the one that best applies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lines</th>
<th>Preparation</th>
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Ideas for Developing New Contacts & Building a Base

- Give members fliers they can use to organize on their own
- Go out together to do outreach
- Have one-on-one meetings at schools, parks or other central locations
- Ask members to establish a relationship with their Cafeteria Manager and do volunteer work in schools, so that they can have a clearer sense of the environment at the school site
- Plan activities members can participate in: conduct a school food policy training, set up meetings with the principal or Cafeteria Manager to discuss the needs at the school site, write a letter to an LAUSD Board Member, or attend an LAUSD Board meeting
- Give members articles to read and discuss them as a group
- Ask people to document (write, photograph, film, etc.) experiences and/or improvements in the cafeteria
- Invite contacts to other food and nutrition focused events, such as delegation visits to state legislators to ask for funding for school breakfast, or Hunger Action Day.
- Brainstorm with people about community centers and other venues that may be interested in a presentation on school food and nutrition.
- Help members schedule presentations for groups that may have members sympathetic to the cause, such as Peer Counseling, PTA, Title I, School Site Councils, Nutrition Advisory Councils, Healthy Start Collaborative meetings, Nutrition Network, health classes, student body meetings, Leadership, Student Body groups, clubs/organizations, and other groups.
- Hold smaller meetings at contact’s home, church, or community space.
- Have strategy meetings with members to make sure your organizing efforts are supporting your goals of improving nutrition and school food.
- Think about how your base can support other schools and sub-districts, and how you can all work together.

Healthy School Food Coalition • 323.341.5097 • emedrano@oxy.edu
# California and LAUSD Nutrition Standards * – Compliant Foods and Beverages in ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

(Applies ½ hour before school until ½ hour after school.)

## COMPLIANT FOODS:
The only foods that can be sold to elementary students are **full meals**, **exempt foods**, and **dairy or whole grain foods** that meet specific calorie, fat, saturated fat and sugar requirements.

### EXEMPT FOODS
These foods can be sold and do not have to meet calorie and fat limits; however, **they cannot have added sugars or fat** (check the ingredients list to ensure).

- Nuts, Nut butters (such as peanut butter), Seeds (such as sunflower seeds), Eggs, Cheese packaged for individual sale, Fruit/vegetables that have not been deep fried, Legumes

**NOTE:** A la carte entrees cannot be sold in Elementary Schools – only the reimbursable school meal may be sold.

## DAIRY & WHOLE GRAIN FOODS
Individually sold dairy or whole grain foods can be sold if they contain:

- Not more than 175 **calories**
- Not more than 35% of total calories from **fat**
- Not more than 10% of total calories from **saturated fat**
- Not more than 35% of total weight from **sugar** (natural and added)
- Not more than **600mg** of **sodium**

Acceptable portion sizes for dairy and or whole grain snack foods must meet the following requirements:

- Snacks and sweets: 1.5 oz
- Cookies/cereal bars: 2 oz
- Bakery Items (e.g. pastries, muffins): 3 oz
- Frozen desserts: 3 oz

## Whole Grain Foods Defined:

- The weight of the whole grains is at least 51% of the total grain weight of the product, or
- The label contains the statement: “Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol, may help reduce the risk of heart diseases and certain cancers”, or
- The first listed grain ingredient is a whole grain, or
- If the first listed ingredient is not identified as a whole grain, district/school must obtain documentation from the manufacturer within previous 12 months that lists a combination of whole grains that combined represent at least 51% of the weight of the total grains.

To determine if an individual snack or beverage meets California’s and LAUSD’s nutrition standards, check the Approved Foods List at [http://cafe-la.lausd.net/schools_and_offices/competitive_foods](http://cafe-la.lausd.net/schools_and_offices/competitive_foods) or contact the district’s Food Services Division at 213.241.3366.

**Please note!** Any foods containing artificial **trans CAN NOT** be made available to students ½ hour before school until ½ hour after school.

## COMPLIANT BEVERAGES:

( Applies ½ hour before school until ½ hour after school.)

The only beverages that can be sold to elementary students are:

- Fruit and vegetable-based drinks that are composed of at least 50% fruit or vegetable juice and have no added sweetener
- 1%, nonfat milk (cow’s or goat’s); soy milk, rice milk or other similar nondairy milk that contains Vitamin A, Vitamin D, and at least 25% of the Daily Value for calcium per 8 ounces, contains no added sweeteners exceeding 28 grams of total sugars per 8 ounces. Soy milk, rice milk, and other similar nondairy milk must contain no more than 5 grams of fat per 8 ounces.
- Water with no added sweetener

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* Based upon SB 12 and SB 965 enacted 2005. For more information, see CDE regulations at [http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sn/mbnsdnp082008.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sn/mbnsdnp082008.asp).
### California and LAUSD Nutrition Standards* – Compliant Foods and Beverages MIDDLE, JUNIOR, AND HIGH SCHOOLS

#### COMPLIANT FOODS: The only food that can be sold to students are full meals, exempt food, and dairy or whole grain foods that meet specific calorie, fat, saturated fat and sugar requirements
(Applies ½ hour before school until ½ after school.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Snacks (Generally regarded as supplementing a meal)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individually sold food items must meet the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not more than 250 calories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not more than 35% of total calories from fat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not more than 10% of total calories from saturated fat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not more than 35% of total weight from sugar (natural and added)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Exempt Snacks: Nuts, nut butters (such as peanut butter), seeds (such as sunflower seeds), eggs, cheese packaged for individual sale, fruits/vegetables that have not been deep fried, and legumes that do not contain added sugars or fat. They do not have to meet the above guidelines except for the limit of 250 calories or less. |

| NOTE: Food items for sale containing non-exempt foods or ingredients combined with fruits, vegetables, nuts, nut butters, seeds, eggs, or legumes shall comply with the restrictions for non-exempted foods (e.g. trail mix containing chocolate chips). |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entrees (Generally regarded as the primary food in a meal)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entrees shall:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Contain no more than 400 calories per item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Contain no more than 4 grams of fat per 100 calories (36% fat)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Entrees must contain:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 2 or more of the following groups: meat/meat alternative, grain/bread, vegetable/fruit (e.g. turkey sandwich, baked potato with chili, fruit and cheese platter) or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A meat/meat alternative alone (e.g. sausage patty, egg, chicken nuggets) excluding nuts, nut butters, seeds, cheese, and yogurt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To determine if an individual snack or entrée meets California's nutrition LAUSD's standards, check the Approved Foods List at: [http://cafe-la.lausd.net/schools_and_offices/competitive_foods](http://cafe-la.lausd.net/schools_and_offices/competitive_foods) or contact the LAUSD’s Food Services Division at 213.241.3366

#### Compliant Beverages (Applies ½ before start of school day until ½ after end of school day.)

The following may be sold:

- Fruit and vegetable-based drinks that are composed of ≥ 50% fruit or vegetable juice and have no added sweetener
- 2%, 1%, nonfat milk (cow’s or goat’s); soy milk, rice milk or other similar nondairy milk alternative that contains Vitamin A, Vitamin D, and at least 25% of the Daily Value for calcium per 8 ounces, contains no added sweeteners exceeding 28 grams of total sugars per 8 ounces. Soy milk, rice milk, and other similar nondairy milk must contain no more than 5 grams of fat per 8 ounces.
- Water with no added sweetener
- Electrolyte replacement beverages that contain no more than 2.1 grams of added sweetener per fluid ounce, list water as the first ingredient, contain between 10-150 milligrams of sodium and 10-90 milligrams of potassium per 8 ounces, and contain no added caffeine.

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* Based upon SB 12 and SB 965 enacted 2005. For more information, see CDE regulations at [http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sn/mbnsdsn082008.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sn/mbnsdsn082008.asp).
### Learn about your school food rights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Lunch must be served at a reasonable hour, and there should be enough time for students to eat.</strong></th>
<th><strong>All meals should be properly prepared.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I should have 20 minutes to eat once I’ve gotten my food. Lunch should be scheduled between 11 and 1. If my meal isn’t properly prepared, I will politely bring it to the attention of my Cafeteria Manager.</td>
<td>Hot food should be served hot, cold food should be served cold!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will speak to my Principal about it, since she sets the bell schedule. I can also ask a parent or teacher to do so for me.</td>
<td>If I don’t see fruit and vegetables in my cafeteria, I will ask the cafeteria manager to provide them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Breakfast must be offered at a time of the school day when all students have the option to participate.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Schools should no longer require meal tickets, or should be phasing them out.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I will speak to my Principal who will ensure that all students have the opportunity to eat in the morning.</td>
<td>LAUSD schools are eliminating the ticket system. If my school is not ticketless now, it will be soon!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn more at: facebook.com/healthyschoolfoodcoalition</td>
<td>I will encourage my friends to turn in their meal applications. The ticketless system makes eating in the cafeteria easier.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th><strong>Nutrition information for foods served in the cafeteria should be available to all students.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Nutrition information listing ingredients, calories, and levels of fat, sugar, and sodium should be on display to help me make better food choices.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>LAUSD schools are eliminating the ticket system. If my school is not ticketless now, it will be soon!</td>
<td>If I can’t find nutritional information, I will ask for it. Also, I can look it up here: <a href="http://www.schoolmenu.com">www.schoolmenu.com</a></td>
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<td>I will encourage my friends to turn in their meal applications. The ticketless system makes eating in the cafeteria easier.</td>
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