



## Child Nutrition Services

2024/25

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why are students encouraged to take a certain amount and variety of foods?

*As a participant in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), which provides funding for Solana Beach School District (SBSD) meal program operations, SBSD must abide by certain requirements and restrictions. The USDA has developed guidelines and recommendations concerning proper and appropriate meal pattern requirements for students. In order for the district to receive funds for each student's meal, the meal must include 3 of the following 5 components: protein, grain, fruit, vegetable, and milk. All meals must include a fruit or vegetable. Click [here](#) for a visual on meal component requirements.*

Why are school meals free?

*California was the first state in the nation to provide free meals for all. Currently every student in the state of California may receive a free meal at breakfast and at lunch. Click [here](#) for more information on Universal Meals.*

If school meals are free, why am I still asked to complete a Free/Reduced Meal application if my family falls below a certain income threshold?

*Federal and State requirements for the National School Lunch Program mandate school districts collect income information. For families meeting the qualifications, it allows for additional benefits (after-school programs, access to internet, scholarships, etc.). Click [here](#) for meal applications.*

How do I find the menu and how often do menu items change?

*Menus are available weekly and found on the SBSD website or via individual school site pages with the 'Lunch Menus' link. [SBSD / Carmel Creek / Skyline / Solana Highlands / Solana Pacific / Solana Ranch / Solana Santa Fe / Solana Vista](#) Menu items are added and rotated each month.*

How are meals prepared?

*Meals are prepared fresh daily at each school site based on standardized recipes and nutritional requirements using local ingredients when available.*

Are vegetarian meals available?

*Vegetarian entrees are frequently available and are noted on the menu. SBS D salad bars are available daily.*

What do I do if my child has food allergies or other health related diagnoses?

*Food allergens are listed on the weekly menus. If your child has a specific need, please contact the CNS office at (858) 794-7121 as well as the school site to discuss the possible options.*

Do any meals contain nuts?

*CNS does not serve food that contains nuts, however, we are not a true nut free facility. Items may be processed in facilities that also process nuts and other allergens. In the instance a recipe contains seeds or coconut, that will be noted on the weekly menu.*

Can my student still bring meals from home?

*Yes. Students may always bring meals from home.*

Can the kitchen heat my child's meal brought from home?

*Unfortunately, the kitchen staff is unable to reheat meals brought from home.*

What if my child isn't a fan of what's on the menu that day?

*If your child doesn't favor a particular menu item, we encourage a home prepared meal be sent to school that day.*

Why does SBS D serve chocolate milk?

*USDA requires that schools offer at least two types of milk. CNS serves both 1% low-fat white milk and nonfat chocolate milk.*

Can SBS D serve a milk alternative?

*SBS D is required to serve 'dairy' milk. If your child has a specific need, please contact the CNS office at (858) 794-7121 as well as the school site to discuss the possible options.*

Why does SBS D serve juice?

*100% fruit juice fulfills the USDA mandated fruit requirement. While we encourage the consumption of whole fruit items and offer a selection daily, a 4 ounce serving of 100% fruit juice is available to students.*

Is water available?

*Fresh water is available at filling stations adjacent to most cafeterias. Students are encouraged to bring reusable water bottles to school.*

**If my child is still hungry, how can they get more food?**

*Every student may receive, and the district is reimbursed for, one free breakfast and one free lunch entrée daily. These meals are based on recommended portion size and nutritional requirements. In addition, salad bars offer an unlimited selection of fresh fruits and vegetables and protein packed items such as legumes, hard boiled eggs and quinoa. Students are welcome to bring additional food items from home as desired.*

**How do students provide menu input?**

*Students are encouraged to ask questions and share opinions on the menu through daily interaction with kitchen staff, taste tests, point of purchase surveys, and during CNS supervisor site visits.*

**Why do students have to scan a meal card?**

*Schools are required to provide proper accounting for the Universal Meals program. An accurate number of meals served must be maintained for funding purposes. This is managed through the Point of Service system by entering or scanning a student's ID number.*

