

To: Parents and Students of the Moscow School District
From: Mimi Pengilly, Director of Student Nutrition Services

Date: March 2010

It's time to look at the changes in school meals made this school year. School meals remain an economical and convenient choice for students and parents. The State of Idaho has been a leader in adopting stricter nutrition standards for school meals, and we made some changes to comply with those standards. I wanted to take a moment to let you know the good nutrition that school meals have to offer.

In the breakfast program we offer a rotation of menu items throughout the week, including a main entrée and choices. All of our cereals are whole grain cereals. We offer whole grain toast and homemade muffins with at least 50% whole wheat. The pancakes, waffles and French toast also include whole grains. We offer fresh fruit as a choice to 100% fruit juice everyday. We continue to offer foods like coffee cake on a limited basis because they are student favorites but do not fit the nutrition standards and cannot be offered everyday.

The lunch program has seen many changes. We comply with the nutrition standards that limit how often we can offer prefried foods. We can continue to offer these foods, but not as often during each week. As we have featured for the past several years, there is a main menu each day and other entrée choices to fit student preferences. All meals come with side dishes including a fresh veggie bar, fresh fruits, and 1% white and fat-free chocolate milk. We have decreased how often we serve chips or prefried potatoes with the lunches. When we do serve chips, they are whole grain or baked chips. Many foods are now made with whole grains, including the pastas, tortillas, pizza crust, burrito shells, even the corn dog batter. We have introduced new foods to the menu this year including Turkey Carnitas (shredded turkey tacos) and Mandarin Chicken with rice and stir fried veggies. Low sodium turkey breast is used in the sandwiches. We continue to make many of the entrees in our school kitchens and still bake rolls from scratch. The nutrient averages are posted on the bottom of the menus each month. These show that the meals provide enough calories, vitamins, minerals and fiber for the growing student, with limited amounts of sodium and fat.

To offer economical and nutritionally balanced meals for the 2400 students and staff of the MSD each day are challenges that we face in the school meal program. Our cooks have worked hard to implement the nutrition guidelines and continue to serve foods that students will actually eat. They are to be commended for the work they do each day to keep students fuelled and ready to learn. If you have questions regarding the menu changes or the school meal program, please let me know! I can be reached at pengilly@msd281.org or by phone at 892-1123. There is additional information regarding school meals (including monthly menus) on the Moscow School District web site under the Finance and Operations tab.