

# Changes to Colorado School Meals

## New Standards Create Fresh Options

Schools participating in the USDA's School Meal Programs are **now** required to meet new nutrition standards for breakfast and lunch meals. This change is driven by the 2010 Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act signed into law by President Obama and as part of the First Lady's *Let's Move! Campaign* to improve the health of the nation. The standards will be implemented gradually, over multiple years, giving school district staff and students time to adjust to the changes. School meals will include more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains; contain less fat and sodium; and meet specific calorie ranges for children based on grade level.



### Changes include:

- Choices of low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk offered daily.
- A variety of fruits and vegetables offered weekly.
  - Students taking at least ½ cup of fruit and/or vegetable at every lunch.
  - Specific weekly amounts of dark green, red/orange, and starchy vegetables, as well as beans and/or dry peas (legumes) will be offered.
- More whole grain rich products offered weekly.

### Schools are limiting:

- Foods that contain added saturated fat and trans fat.
- Foods high in added salt/sodium.
- Foods high in added sugar.

## Students & Parents Benefit from the New School Meal Standards

School meals include a variety of fruits and vegetables, and whole grain items which provide students with needed nutrients to ensure they are ready to learn. Healthy school meals help to encourage and support healthy choices at home. School meals can cost less than home packed lunches and save parents time. Parents are more apt to encourage their children to eat at school when they know that healthy meals are being served!

## How are schools financing the new changes?

The USDA reimburses schools certified as compliant with the new school meal standards. The additional six-cent reimbursement per lunch meal is available to certified school food authorities beginning October 1, 2012.