

OSPI School Meal Programs Reference Sheet

Milk and Milk Substitutes

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) must offer students a variety of fluid milk, including at least two different choices.

Milk Requirements

- ✓ Schools **must** offer at least two fluid milk choices at breakfast and lunch, one of which must be unflavored.
- ✓ Milk must be low-fat (1%), fat-free (skim), lactose-free or lactose-reduced (1% milk fat or fat-free).
 - **NSLP Only:** Milk may be whole, reduced-fat (2%), low-fat (1%), fat-free (skim) milk, low-fat or fat-free lactose-free, and lactose-reduced fluid milk. This flexibility does not apply to the SBP, Afterschool Snack, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), or Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).
- ✓ Milk varieties may be unflavored or flavored. Flavored milk cannot exceed 10g of added sugar per 8 fluid ounces.
- ✓ The milk component credits as volume served and includes minimum daily portion size.
 - **NSLP Only:** Milk is excluded from saturated fat requirements. Milk is still included in the calorie and sodium requirements.
- ✓ All fluid milk **must** be pasteurized.
- ✓ All fluid milk **must** have vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
- ✓ All fluid milk must be consistent with State and local standards for milk.

Milk Substitute Requirements

- ✓ Milk substitutes **must** be provided to students with a [Request for Special Dietary Accommodations](#) signed by a medical authority.
 - **NSLP Only:** LEAs may provide a disability-related milk substitute based on a written request from a parent/guardian.
- ✓ Milk substitutes **may** be provided to any student if personal or family preference, religious, cultural, or ethical beliefs rule out the consumption of cow's milk.
 - LEAs **must** inform the State agency if it chooses to offer fluid milk substitutes other than for students with disabilities.



- Complete and submit the [Milk Substitute Notification Form](#).
- Milk substitutes **must** meet the following nutrition requirements:

Fluid Milk Nutritional Profile	
Nutrient	Per Cup (8 fl oz)
Calcium	276 mg
Protein	8 g
Vitamin A	500 IU
Vitamin D	100 IU
Magnesium	24 mg
Phosphorus	222 mg
Potassium	349 mg
Riboflavin	0.44 mg
Vitamin B12	1.1 mcg

- Documentation that demonstrates the milk substitute meets the nutrient requirements must be kept on file with other supporting menu documentation.
- Schools may make milk substitutes available to all students **or** may offer milk substitutes individually based on a written request from a parent/guardian or medical provider.
- Milk substitutes **must** be recorded on production records.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. We would like to only offer a nutritionally equivalent milk substitute for students who have a disability-related special dietary need. Is this an allowable practice?

LEAs must provide a reasonable modification that accommodates the child's disability. However, they are not required to provide a specific item, such as a particular milk substitute or juice, unless it's medically necessary. LEAs could use their discretion to offer a reasonable alternative that safely meets the student's needs.

2. Can LEAs opt to maintain the requirement for a signed dietary prescription for NSLP so the process remains consistent for both NSLP and SBP?

LEAs are encouraged to maintain their current procedures to require a Recognized Medical Authority (RMA) signature for disability related milk substitutes to simplify tracking of allowable milk substitutes for NSLP versus SBP. LEAs should communicate their special dietary accommodation procedures to households annually and make them publicly available on their website.

Reference

- [7 CFR 210.10](#) – NSLP
- [7 CFR 220.8](#) – SBP
- [SP 01-2026 Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act of 2025 – Implementation Requirements for the National School Lunch Program](#)
- [SP 07-2010 Q&As: Milk Substitution for Children with Medical or Special Dietary Needs \(Non-Disability\)](#)
- [Milk Substitute Notification Form](#)

Acronym Reference

- CFR – Code of Federal Regulations
- FDA – Food and Drug Administration
- LEA – Local Education Agency
- NSLP – National School Lunch Program
- OSPI – Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- RMA – Recognized Medical Authority
- SBP – School Breakfast Program
- SFSP – Summer Food Service Program
- CACFP – Child and Adult Care Food Program
- USDA – United States Department of Agriculture