



Benefits of the National School Lunch Program

Increases
Food
Access

Meals provided by the school meal program during the school year increases access to healthy foods.

Provides
Quality
Nutrition

Participating children are less likely to be deficient in nutrients and have better overall diet quality when compared to students who do not participate in the school lunch program.

Improves
Behavior

Behavioral, emotional, and mental health problems are more prevalent in children and adolescents eating nutrient-poor diets. Children and adolescents who eat meals that meet their nutritional needs have fewer absences at school, improved moods, and better classroom behavior.

Reduces
Risk of
Obesity

Participation in school meals is associated with a significantly lower BMI (Body Mass Index) among, low-income children.

Enhances
Learning
Environment

Academic problems are more prevalent among both children and adolescents whose nutritional needs are not met. Students who eat nutritious meals have improved memory and reasoning skills, higher test scores, and improved attention spans.



Nutrition Standards for the National School Lunch Program



Lunches provided by the National School Lunch Program meet 1/3 or more of recommended levels for key nutrients.



Since the 2012-13 school year, new nutrition standards have been introduced that have required an increase in vegetables, fruits, and whole grains served in school lunch programs.



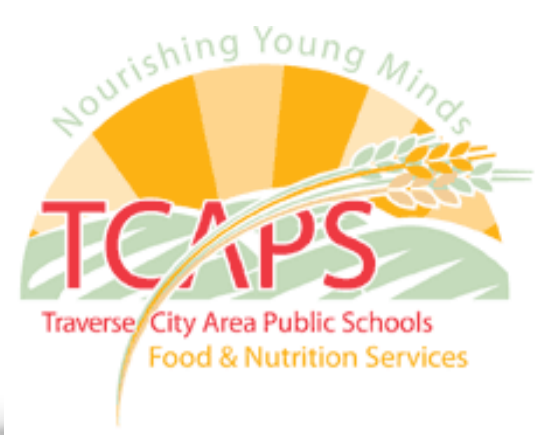
The nutrition standards for the National School Lunch Program permits beverages including plain or carbonated water, unflavored low-fat milk, flavored or unflavored non-fat milk, and 100% fruit/vegetable juice to elementary, middle, and high school students. Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages are available to high school students.



Smart Snacks in School are nutritional standards set by the USDA as a requirement by the National School Lunch Program. Grain products must have a whole grain as the first ingredient; or have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food; or be a combination food that contains at least a 1/4 cup of fruit and/or vegetable; and the food must meet the nutrient standards for calories, sodium, sugar, and fats.



The nutrition standards for the National School Lunch Program require entrée items to have less than or equal to 350 of calories, 480 mg of sodium, and 35% of weight from total sugar, less than 10% of calories from saturated fat, and 0 g of trans fat for each serving.



Benefits of TCAPS



All menus will promote fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, whole grain products and low-fat and fat-free dairy products. Every attempt will be made to eliminate unhealthy processed foods with healthy foods cooked from scratch.



Smart Snacks sold al la carte, at vending machines, and as a part of meals in Traverse City Public Schools meet the nutritional standards set by the National School Lunch Program.



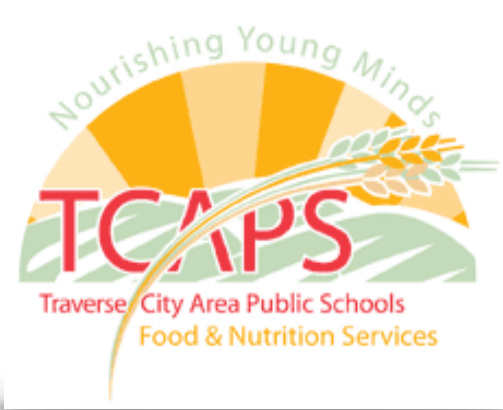
All menus will reduce and/or eliminate refined sugar, refined flour, excess saturated fat, and sodium by incorporating healthy scratch cooking to achieve the guidelines as determined by the USDA National School Lunch Program.



The TCAPS Food and Nutrition Department will make every effort to reduce and/or eliminate artificial food coloring (including red dye) and use high fructose corn syrup



All students will have affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to be healthy and to learn well. Traverse Heights and Blair Elementary Schools offer free breakfast and lunch for all students to ensure quality nutrition for academic success.



TCAPS Nutrition Services

Vending Machines

TCAPS has installed new vending machines in the cafeteria at Central and West High Schools as part of a pilot program. The vending machines contain healthy food items that meet the same federal nutrition regulations as all other food sold in the school cafeteria. Sample items include: salads, yogurt, sandwiches, fruit, and granola bars.

Breakfast

The School Breakfast Program is available to all students every weekday morning and includes servings of fruit, whole grain-rich items, and low-fat or fat-free milk. These breakfasts are well-balanced and follow standards backed by the best nutritional science available to nourish students for academic success.

Green Efforts

We take great pride in minimizing our environmental footprint in Traverse City by using washable trays in all schools.

10-Cent Program

TCAPS has piloted a local fruit and vegetable program for 5 years where the district will receive up to 10 cents per meal to purchase and serve Michigan fruits and vegetables. This program became a state piloted program in 2016.

Farm-To-School

Cherry Capital Foods of Traverse City and Michigan Farm Cooperatives continue to supply locally grown honey, tomatoes, celery, cucumbers, watermelon, broccoli, onions, blueberries, strawberries, green peppers, zucchini, squash, and frozen cherries.

FoodCorps Program

The Groundwork Center has worked with TCAPS to offer resources for locally-based food fundraisers, classroom-to-cafeteria educational curriculum, and classroom education through FoodCorps.