

# NEAT Fact Sheet

## “Mythbusters” School Nutrition Edition

During the 2016-2017 school year, the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) served an average of 28 million lunches per day! Overall, 5.05 billion lunches and 2.5 billion breakfasts were served among the nation’s participating schools.

### How does GCSNP compare?

**Myth #1: Public schools have always provided lunch and/or breakfast meal service.**

Few schools offered meal service prior to the 1946 National School Lunch Act. The Child Nutrition Act of 1966 expanded, and strengthened the school lunch program. This act also allowed for the pilot of breakfast meal service! The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 established the meal pattern for the breakfast and lunch you see in your



cafeteria.

**Myth #2: School lunches are not nourishing, as they are comprised of unhealthy foods.**

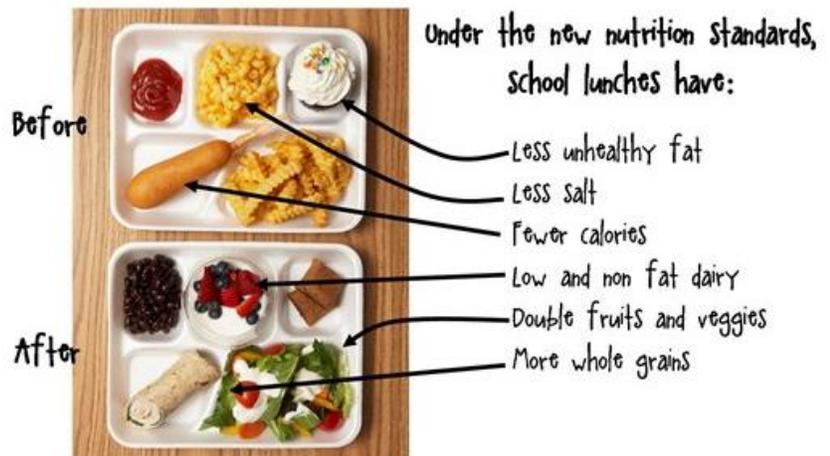
School meals stay within set calorie, fat and sodium limits. In addition, no trans fats are allowed to be served. By offering up a wide variety of foods, students not only receive a balanced plate, but have the opportunity to learn what components of a meal make it healthy. Hopefully, they can replicate the meal at home.

**Myth #3: School lunches may improve academic performance.**



Students eating school lunch are more likely to meet daily recommendations for servings of fruits, vegetables, grains, and dairy. Students meeting these daily requirements tend to perform better in school.

### The School Day Just Got Healthier!





**Myth #4: Frozen or canned fruits and vegetables are not as healthy as fresh fruits and vegetables.**

Research shows frozen, canned, dried, and juice forms of fruits and vegetables are equally as nutritious as fresh fruits and vegetables.

- Prior to the freezing process, fruits and vegetables are picked at peak ripeness; therefore contain the same amount of nutrients as fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Fruit canned in 100% juice provides the same nutrients as fresh fruits. Vegetables canned in water provide the same nutrients as fresh vegetables; canned vegetables can be rinsed to reduce salt intake.
- Dried fruits have been dehydrated, meaning they contain less water, so a smaller portion should be eaten compared to fresh forms.
- 100% fruit and/or vegetable juices contain less fiber than fresh fruits and vegetables, so they should be consumed in smaller portions and moderation.



**Myth #5: I have to put all items served on my tray.**

The Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 requires that a fruit or vegetable is taken with each meal. Milk, a fruit, a vegetable, a whole grain serving and meat are all required to be offered. *Students must have at least 3 of the 5 food groups—fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, and protein—on their tray.*

