

WHOLE GRAINS EXEMPTION



September 2018

Dear Mahopac Parent:

Welcome to a new school year! Healthy for Life™ is our commitment to create healthier environments and communities, by providing not only healthy foods but comprehensive nutrition and wellness education. The Mahopac's Food Service staff is looking forward to serving your children nutritious, great-tasting menus that support their achievements in school and promote healthy lifestyles.

We offer a variety of meal choices with one goal in mind: to provide outstanding service and high quality "kid-friendly" meals that meet or exceed the latest federal and state requirements. Mahopac's menus are designed to ensure that students receive a balanced meal, consisting of foods from all major food groups in the right proportions to meet calorie and other nutrient needs.

The products and the cooking methods we use conserve food quality and nutrients, while limiting the addition of fats, salt and sugar and eliminate frying. So although you may see popular items like pizza and chicken nuggets on your menus, be assured that your child's school meal selections contain healthy ingredients and are lower in fat and salt than what you find in grocery stores or restaurants. We will also be offering some different foods that your children may not have tried before, so please encourage your child to taste these items. They just might become a new favorite!

- More than half of the breads and grain products served are whole grain-rich, ensuring adequate fiber and other essential nutrients. Added Trans fats have been eliminated from all foods; and menus are planned to limit saturated fat and sodium to meet the new standards set by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for school meals.
- Both the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) meal pattern and nutrition standards ensure that meals provide age-appropriate calorie levels ; offer a wide variety of fruits and plenty of vegetables every day, with a focus on nutrient-dense dark green, red/orange and legume vegetable selections along with lean proteins.
- School meals are planned based on 3 grade groups (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12) that naturally align with children's nutrition needs for growth and health.

We will continue to post signs on each service line to show students how to select a reimbursable meal, as well as to help them understand how their choices fit into the key food groups needed to ensure a balanced approach to healthy eating. In addition, we try and use *locally grown foods whenever possible*.

We are proud to serve your child and encourage you to support our ongoing efforts to improve student health and well-being by participating in our Food Service program. For more information about our menus and programs, please visit: <http://www.mahopac.k12.ny.us> and to learn more about healthy school meals visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov> .

Thank you!