

# Menu Philosophy

The development of our menus at both the elementary and middle school levels is based on two main principles:

- 1) *We must offer foods that children want to eat.*
- 2) *We must offer foods that contribute to a balanced, nutritious diet.*

Regarding:

## 1) We must offer foods that children want to eat...

We monitor the participation of all the lunches we serve. We know that if we offer “tuna noodle casserole” – no matter how delicious it is, our participation at lunch goes down. We know when we offer “chicken nuggets,” our participation goes up.

If children do not participate in our hot lunch program, many of them just don't eat. **Our role is to provide the nutrition (nourishment) children need** so that when they go back into the classroom, they are indeed “nourished” and prepared to learn.

Kids eat familiar foods. This is one reason why you will note repetition in the menus. We know they like foods they can grab with their hands and eat quickly (Pizza, Burgers, Nuggets). Variety is also why we offer numerous daily hot and cold choices and we will continue to introduce new items (like fresh salads) and side dishes.

The side dishes are one area we work to offer variety and good nutrition. We offer a beautiful fruit and vegetable bar with a wide variety of fresh foods in every school, on every day. We compliment each meal with skim or 1% white or chocolate milk.

We care a great deal about the health and the nutrition of the students we serve. We also recognize that if we don't offer foods they want, they will not eat.

## 2) We must offer foods that contribute to a balanced, nutritious diet.

We are required, as part of the National School Lunch Program to provide meals that offer less than 30% of their calories from fat, less than 10% of calories from saturated fat and we must meet goals based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans in regard to meeting recommended quantities of nutrients including: Protein, Iron, Calcium, Vitamin A and Vitamin C. Our menus are nutritionally analyzed to make sure we are meeting these standards.

In meeting these standards, you will note we offer a beautiful fresh food bar at each school; we bake rather than deep fry all foods and we offer extra servings of breads and grains.

We offer a terrific variety of fresh and healthy foods to compliment each meal. However, we need your help and the help of the school community to set the example and to communicate the message that good nutrition means taking and eating all the components of a well planned meal...

**Healthy, fit, well-nourished children can learn - those who are not, can not.**

We are interested in your ideas and feedback...Please call us at 253.931.4972  
**Auburn Child Nutrition Services**