

## School Nutrition

The School Nutrition Program administers the school-based Child Nutrition Program on behalf of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The OPI paid reimbursements to Montana schools of more than \$33 million in federal funds for school meals served in FY2010. Montana's state match requirement for participating in the National School Lunch Program was \$645,934 in FY2010. The OPI uses the state match appropriation to pay the costs of storing and shipping USDA Foods for schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program.

The OPI School Nutrition Program includes the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Afterschool Snack Program, Special Milk Program, Summer Food Service Program, Food Distribution Program, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, Team Nutrition Program and Cooperative Purchase Program. These programs are in place to ensure that schools provide nutritious meals and promote healthy lifestyles to Montana's kids.

The School Nutrition Program:

- Provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free meals in 812 schools in Montana (approximately 80,500 lunches and 24,700 breakfasts each day). In Montana, half of the lunch meals and two-thirds of the breakfast meals are served to children free or at a reduced-price, based on their family's household income.
- Makes federal reimbursement payments to school districts for meals served.
- Reviews school districts for compliance with federal regulations and conducts trainings/provides technical assistance so school staff are informed of program requirements.
- Collects and compiles data for federal reporting.
- Administers the USDA Food Distribution Program that delivers a variety of healthful USDA Foods that account for 15 to 20 percent of food used by the school food service programs.
- Administers the Cooperative Purchase Program allowing small schools to take advantage of substantial cost savings on food items.
- Helps schools create meals consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the MyPyramid food guidance system.
- Works on increased program access and participation to end childhood hunger by making it easier for children to enroll in free school meals through direct certification, expanding access and participation in the School Breakfast Program, and feeding kids when school is out through the Summer Food Service Program.
- Supports student wellness and childhood obesity reduction efforts by ensuring nutrient rich school meals, increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables, expanding farm-to-school programs, and ensuring that food safety procedures are followed.