









In Person Meal Service Planning Checklist Scenario #2 B
Meals Served in the Cafeteria and Eaten in the Classroom
(Based upon [SNA's COVID-19's Thought Starters on Reopening Schools](#) resource)

Description: Students pick up their meals in the cafeteria; then return to the classroom for dining.

This checklist is meant to be a foundation for exploring topics and decisions related to implementing a cafeteria pick up and classroom dining meal service. It is not an all-inclusive list.

Overall Considerations:

-  Look at the positive aspects of Eating Lunch in the Classroom highlighted in this [short YouTube video](#)
-  How far away is the cafeteria from most classrooms? Does it necessitate travel up and down stairs? Elevators? How much time will be added to meal periods to accommodate small groups traveling to and from classrooms and the cafeteria?
-  Do you need to discuss the bell schedule with appropriate school personnel to ensure the schedule allows for adequate time for meal service? What is the schedule for lunch in the classroom? Does the current schedule need to change? Will recess be scheduled before or after lunch?
-  Do you have sufficient meal packaging supplies? Will you continue to use disposable grab and go bags; or reusable trays and/or utensils that must be returned for cleaning? How will this be managed? Will you provide a bus tub for classrooms or have bussing cart in hallway areas?
-  If you establish points of service from mobile kiosks that use hot/cold food wells and pay stations, are there electrical outlets nearby to power these?
-  Do you have existing equipment which can be used in an efficient way in this service model? Will you need to purchase more? What funds will be used for these purchases? Will this be a new item in your budget?
-  Where and how will students wash their hands before/after meals? How will students clean and sanitize their desks before and after eating? Develop protocols for students to remove, store and put masks back on safely during meal service.
-  Without share tables, do you need a policy to allow students to take individually wrapped, shelf stable food items and whole, fresh fruit home to eat at a later time?

Follow the [Montana School Safety Advisory Committee Guidance on School Re-Entry](#)²⁰ for Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3. Refer to [Montana's School Meal Service Procedures During a COVID-19 Pandemic](#) for specific food safety guidance. Developed June 16, 2020, by Montana OPI School Nutrition Programs and Montana Team Nutrition. The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. This project was funded using U.S. Department of Agriculture grant funds.

Menu Considerations:

- 🍏 How will you package the meals? All meal components in one package (paper boat or bag, tray, clamshell, box)? Will you use disposable or reusable packaging? How will you maintain your commitment to decrease food waste and packaging waste?
- 🍏 How will students transporting meals to the classroom affect your menu? Consider ease of transport to prevent spilling. Provide trays large enough to hold the entire meal (food and beverage) to allow for effective transport.
- 🍏 Utilize Offer vs. Serve to allow students choice as they go through the line. How will you do this without allowing students to touch uncovered food items?
- 🍏 In lieu of a traditional salad bar, consider offering entrée salads to meet meal standards for vegetable subgroups; Can you offer two choices of fruits and vegetables along the service line and the server asks students their choice before dishing up?
- 🍏 Staggering groups of students into the cafeteria for meal pick up will allow for social distancing, batch cooking, accurate forecasting and efficient production.

Administrative, Preparation and Service Considerations:

- 🍏 Develop a system to prepare and distribute meals safely – taking into account social distancing and enhanced food safety practices.
- 🍏 Do you have a backup plan in place in the event that planned menu items are suddenly hard to get? Have you given your food suppliers/vendors a list of acceptable substitute products? Do you have an “emergency” supply of packaged food items on hand to feed all students for at least 1 week? If you don’t need/use this emergency food supply, how will you incorporate this food into your existing menus/meal service to successfully use it?
- 🍏 What are your staffing needs for this meal service? School food service staff will handle all meal set up and service (trays, silverware, napkins, food and beverages, condiments). Students will not self-serve and/or touch service items (spoons, tongs).
- 🍏 Follow Food Safety Procedures in the cafeteria:
 - Install a wall-mounted hand sanitizer dispenser at the entrance to the cafeteria
 - Install plexiglass shields along the service line and at the cashier station
 - Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices will be followed
 - Use decals on floors to indicate the recommended social distances in the cafeteria
 - The service line, cashier station, and tables will be cleaned and disinfected before use, after each group of students leave, and upon the end of the meal service.
 - Self-serve food bars, salad bars and milk dispensing units are not recommended at this time.

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