

What is the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?

The National School Lunch Act was passed in 1946 on the principal of sound nutrition for school children. It all began back in the early 1930's during the Great Depression. There were millions of school children that were unable to pay for a meal at school, or had little to bring from home. Hmm. Does that sound familiar these days? Anyway, because families had such limited resources, the danger of malnutrition became a national concern. At the same time, farmers had a surplus of many agricultural commodities in the form of fruits, vegetables, meat and grains that they were unable to sell. As a solution to these problems, Congress provided that surplus commodities could be donated for the school lunch program.

Then during World War II nearly one third of young men were turned down for military service due to nutritional deficiencies. This led to the passage of the National School Lunch Act in 1946. The goal of the program is to safeguard the health and wellness of our nations children while at the same time encouraging the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities.

Over the years the program remains basically the same with some minor changes. In 1981 the School Breakfast Program was implemented.

Our district participates in the NSLP and follows a traditional meal pattern, Offer Versus Serve (OVS). This means that students are offered a meal consisting of 5 major components to the meal which include protein, fruits, vegetables, grains and fluid milk. This is called a "Type A lunch". To receive a "Type A lunch" a student must take at least three of the components but may take all five. This was established to reduce food waste.

Meals are offered at low cost to encourage participation in the program. Some families may qualify for free or reduced priced meals. The "Type A" rules apply to all meals regardless if a student is free, or pays reduced or full price.

Do you have questions regarding the program? Please contact Linda Snyder at 654-9005 x3114.