

Vegetable side dish	Recent lunch menu	10 points	Over 5-day period (points per day): 0 points: fried or high-fat vegetable <i>or</i> 2 points: fresh vegetable, steamed or low-fat vegetable dish (3g of fat or less per serving)
Fruit	Recent lunch menu	10 points	Over 5-day period (points per day): 0 points: canned pre-sweetened fruit 1 point: canned or fruit juice <i>or</i> 2 points: fresh or dried fruit
Wide variety of fresh fruits or fresh, steamed, or cooked low-fat vegetables served daily	Recent lunch menu	5 points	Over 5-day period (points per day) 1 point: 3 or more different options available each day
Nondairy beverage	Food service director	10 points	10 points: Nondairy beverage available daily to all students (à la carte or free) <i>or</i> 5 points: Available with note only

Nutrition Initiatives: 15 points

To promote health and ward off obesity, schools must teach children about good nutrition. This review evaluated districts on what steps they are taking to help children appreciate and choose healthy food and understand why diets built from fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes help prevent obesity and chronic diseases.

Schools received three points for having school gardens, salad bars, farm-to-school programs, or other innovative programs that encourage healthy eating. School districts that offered nutrition education through the food service department and in the cafeteria were also

awarded additional points. Education is critical to establishing healthy nutrition habits. Therefore, districts received three points for offering nutrition messages written on the school menus, nutrition classes taught by dietitians or in the food service department, and other creative means of education. Schools received an additional three points for specifically promoting plant-based foods by highlighting them on their menus or marketing them to children. Finally, three points were given to school districts that offered incentives to students who choose healthy meals.

School vending machines that sell unhealthy snack foods and beverages compete with healthier foods in a child's daily energy intake. To encourage healthful choices, school vending machines should sell only low-fat snack items, 100 percent fruit juice, water, and nutrient-rich snack items. PCRM's report awards one point to districts with vending machines if juice and water, rather than soda, were available; districts were given another point if snack foods were limited to low-fat items; and they received one point if fruit and vegetable snacks were sold. School districts also received full credit—three points—if there were no vending machines in the cafeteria at all.

Nutrition Initiatives: 15 points			
Subcategory	Data Source	Total Points	Formula
Innovative programs	Food service director	3 points	School garden Salad bar Farm-to-school Other
Nutrition education in cafeteria or through food service department.	Food service director	3 points	
Education about benefits of plant-based diets on menu	Menu	3 points	Written reference to vegetarian/vegan
Incentives for choosing healthy meals	Menu/ Food service director	3 points	Healthy meals cost less <i>or</i> Students get rewarded for choosing a healthy, balanced meal

Vending machines	<p>Food service director</p>	3 points	<p>1 point for only low-fat vending options</p> <p>1 point for fresh fruit or vegetable options</p> <p>1 point for only healthy beverage options</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p>Full credit (3 points) given to schools with no vending machines in cafeteria</p>
------------------	--------------------------------------	----------	--

[report card >](#)

[home](#) | [about us](#) | [contact us](#)

This Web site does not provide medical or legal advice.

This site is for information purposes only.

[full disclaimer](#) | [privacy policy](#)