Grab & Go

A grab & go menu features portable meal components that allow students to quickly pick up breakfast items outside of traditional cafeteria settings—such as in hallways, kiosks, or classrooms—while keeping service fast and efficient. These menus demonstrate how schools can maintain strong student appeal, operational efficiency, and nutritional integrity while aligning with the latest USDA standards for healthier school meals.

When it works best:

Grab & go menus are ideal for increasing access and participation, especially in schools where students skip the cafeteria due to time constraints or social preferences.

SMART SWAPS

To help school nutrition professionals prepare for the updated **school breakfast nutrition standards** for added sugars and sodium, set to take effect in School Year 2027–2028, this resource offers three types of breakfast menus—Grab & Go, **Heat & Serve**, and **Speed Scratch**—designed to inspire compliant, practical meal planning. Our goal is not only to provide standardized recipes that meet USDA guidelines, but also to create menus that spark excitement and encourage students to participate in your school nutrition program.

WEEK 1	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
ENTRÉE 1	Breaded Chicken Biscuit[WG, IW]	Egg & Cheese Croissant[WG, IW]	Bento Box w/ Nutty Yogurt Dip[WG]	Cherry Lime Smoothie Bowl[WG]	Mini Maple Pancakes[WG, IW] w/ Peaches n' Cream Dip
ENTRÉE 2	Cereal[WG] & String Cheese	Apple Pie Overnight Oats[WG]	Cereal[WG] & String Cheese	Bagel[WG] w/ Cream Cheese	Cereal[WG] & String Cheese
FRUIT	Grapes Cubed Honeydew Melon	Bananas 100% Fruit Juice	Apple Slices Orange	Banana Strawberries	Frozen Mixed Berry Cup 100% Fruit Juice
MILK	1% Milk 1% Chocolate Milk 1% Lactose-free Milk	1% Milk 1% Chocolate Milk 1% Lactose-free Milk	1% Milk 1% Chocolate Milk 1% Lactose-free Milk	1% Milk 1% Chocolate Milk 1% Lactose-free Milk	1% Milk 1% Chocolate Milk 1% Lactose-free Milk
DAILY CALORIES & SODIUM	K-8: 431 kcal, 624 mg 9-12: 469 kcal, 610 mg	K-8: 537 kcal, 505 mg 9-12: 564 kcal, 506 mg	K-8: 354 kcal, 458 mg 9-12: 404 kcal, 410 mg	K-8: 492 kcal, 362 mg 9-12: 512 kcal, 362 mg	K-8: 412 kcal, 409 mg 9-12: 441 kcal, 402 mg

WG = Whole Grain **|** IW = Individually Wrapped

Portion sizes adjusted for grade level **|** For 9-12, increased cereal from a 1 grain to 2 grain option and removed the string cheese

DIETARY SPECIFICATIONS AVERAGE FOR WEEK 1	Grades K-8	Grades 9-12
CALORIES (KCAL)	445	478
SATURATED FAT (% OF TOTAL CALORIES)	7.7%	6.2%
ADDED SUGARS (% OF TOTAL CALORIES)	8.3%	9.0%
SODIUM (MG)	471	458

SAMPLE BREAKFAST MENU: **GRAB & GO**

WEEK 2	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
ENTRÉE 1	Sausage Biscuit[IW]	Breakfast Quesadilla[WG]	Strawberry Pancake Yogurt Parfait[WG]	Peachy King Smoothie w/ Graham Crackers[WG, IW]	Chicken & Waffles[WG] w/ Honey Mustard Yogurt Sauce
ENTRÉE 2	Cereal[WG] & String Cheese	Very Berry Overnight Oats[WG]	Cereal[WG] & String Cheese	Blueberry Muffin[WG, IW]	Cereal[WG] & String Cheese
FRUIT	Grapes Cubed Honeydew Melon	Bananas 100% Fruit Juice	Apple Slices Orange	Banana Strawberries	Frozen Mixed Berry Cup 100% Fruit Juice
MILK	1% Milk 1% Chocolate Milk 1% Lactose-free Milk	1% Milk 1% Chocolate Milk 1% Lactose-free Milk	1% Milk 1% Chocolate Milk 1% Lactose-free Milk	1% Milk 1% Chocolate Milk 1% Lactose-free Milk	1% Milk 1% Chocolate Milk 1% Lactose-free Milk
DAILY CALORIES & SODIUM	K-8: 387 kcal, 579 mg 9-12: 429 kcal, 570 mg	K-8: 564 kcal, 476 mg 9-12: 610 kcal, 479 mg	K-8: 339 kcal, 437 mg 9-12: 378 kcal, 421 mg	K-8: 478 kcal, 273 mg 9-12: 553 kcal, 323 mg	K-8: 393 kcal, 506 mg 9-12: 463 kcal, 493 mg

WG = Whole Grain | IW = Individually Wrapped

Portion sizes adjusted for grade level | For 9-12, increased cereal from a 1 grain to 2 grain option and removed the string cheese

DIETARY SPECIFICATIONS AVERAGE FOR WEEK 2	Grades K-8	Grades 9-12
CALORIES (KCAL)	432	481
SATURATED FAT (% OF TOTAL CALORIES)	8.5%	6.6%
ADDED SUGARS (% OF TOTAL CALORIES)	8.7%	9.5%
SODIUM (MG)	454	457

Menu Efficiency

STANDARDIZE MENU COMPONENTS

Rotate core items (whole grain cereal, smoothies, breakfast sandwiches) with different sides to simplify production and ordering.

PRE-PACKAGED COMBOS

Assemble reimbursable meals in bags or boxes; use color-coded labels to reduce confusion.

DIGITAL TOOLS

Use menu software for nutrient analysis and scaling; add QR codes for student-facing nutrition info.

Keeping Milk Cold & Safe

INSULATED CONTAINERS

Use high-quality coolers with pre-chilled milk and ice/gel packs.

MOBILE MILK COOLERS

Position in high-traffic kiosk or hallway areas.

TEMPERATURE CHECKS

Use digital thermometers to monitor milk temperature and maintain logs. Serve milk between 35–40°F.

TIME LIMITS

Pack just before service and monitor how long milk is out.

SMART SWAPS