SMARTER LUNCHROOMS SCORECARD FAQS

WHY SHOULD I USE THE SCORECARD?

It offers research-based strategies that can increase participation in school meal programs, reduce food waste, and increase consumption of healthy foods. It provides a snapshot of how many strategies are currently in place in a lunchroom and which ones the lunchroom can work toward. The Scorecard can be filled out repeatedly to measure improvement over time.

WHO SHOULD COMPLETE THE SCORECARD?

The Scorecard is a valuable tool for school nutrition professionals to use in their own lunchroom(s). School nutrition professionals are encouraged to welcome stakeholders such as students, administrators, PTO members, and outside professionals to complete a Scorecard to give diverse perspectives. Always ask permission before completing a scorecard in a lunchroom that is not your own and always provide results and feedback to the lunchroom leaders afterwards.

HOW CAN I MAKE THE SCORECARD WORK FOR MY SCHOOL?

Each school is unique and may not be able to implement all the items on the Scorecard – that's OK! Mark off items that currently reflect the lunchroom and use the Scorecard as a list of items to consider for the future.

WHAT IF A STRATEGY IS ONLY HALF TRUE FOR THE SCHOOL?

Only mark an item if it is completely true for the school. Consider partially true strategies to be prime candidates to implement first!

IS THE SCHOOL NUTRITION STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING ALL OF THE STRATEGIES ON THE SCORECARD?

The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement was designed to include support from students, administrators, and the wider school community. These stakeholders can assist with some strategies, especially those in the Student Involvement and School Community Involvement sections.

THE SCORECARD ITEMS WITH ASTERISKS * ARE NOT OBSERVABLE. HOW DO I KNOW IF I SHOULD CHECK IT OFF OR NOT?

Check in with the school nutrition director, teachers, or administrators for input on items that are not easily visible.

HOW LONG SHOULD I OBSERVE WHEN COMPLETING THE SCORECARD?

Arrive 20 minutes before the first meal service begins and plan to stay for at least one entire lunch period. The best practice is to stay for at least two lunch periods.

MY SCHOOL DOESN'T HOLD RECESS. HOW WILL THAT AFFECT MY SCORECARD TOTAL?

Recess before lunch results in kids eating more fruits and vegetables! However, many middle and high schools don't have recess. If your school doesn't hold recess, do not check off this box. It will not prevent the school from achieving the gold award level.

WHAT IF ONLY HALF OF THE STUDENTS GO TO RECESS BEFORE LUNCH AND THE OTHER HALF GO AFTER?

Only check off a strategy if it is completely true for all students. If only half the students get recess before lunch, do not check off the strategy.

WHAT IS AN EXAMPLE OF A GRAB-AND-GO MEAL?

A grab-and-go meal at an elementary school might consist of a turkey sandwich, apple, carrots and ranch, and milk. A grab-and-go meal at a middle or high school might include a grilled chicken salad with whole grain crackers, an orange, and milk. The grab-and-go meal should be pre-packaged for quick service and, ideally, be branded with a creative name and/or image. These meals may be served from a special line, window or cart for added speed and convenience.

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