

FOOD AND NUTRITION PROCEDURES

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

C15

Subject: **SHARE TABLES FOR STUDENTS (DURING MEALS)**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to reduce food waste by allowing students to place unwanted, unopened nonperishable food items on a Share Table for other students to consume at no cost in a safe and sanitary manner.

PROCEDURE

It is the Department of Food and Nutrition's goal to continually reduce food waste and overall waste in M-DCPS food service programs. A significant component of reducing waste and providing students with choices during meal service is the implementation of "Offer versus Serve" in the federal child nutrition programs. Students are offered choices of different menu components but may decline items they do not intend to eat.

Although Offer versus Serve is designed to reduce food waste, it is apparent that some menu items may not be consumed. Share Tables encourage the redistribution of previously served, whole and/or unopened nonperishable food items to students. To ensure student safety, only non-potentially hazardous wrapped food with no exposure of the product until unwrapped for consumption may be placed on Share Tables.

Share Tables

Share Tables provide the opportunity for students to take an additional item at no cost while also contributing to the reduction of food waste at the school sites. Collaboration between school administration must exist for the Share Table Program to be viable since monitoring and supervision by school staff is required.

Below are the procedures for establishing a Share Table:

- A. Each school that wishes to participate in the Share Table Program must contact the Wellness Supervisor to review the procedure and determine if a sharing table is a viable option for the school.
- B. Placement of the Share Table is to be in the dining room and after the point of service stations. Location is to be determined by the school administration and school staff for easy access and traffic flow.

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- C. Prior to implementing a Share Table, determine what individually wrapped, single serving items may be placed on the table. The following nonperishable, packaged items are recommended: cereal, cereal bars, crackers, pita chips, raisins, whole fruit with non-edible skin, etc. ([Attachment](#))

Examples of foods not allowed include: food required to be temperature controlled such as milk, juice, meat sandwiches, salads (leafy greens) or cut tomatoes, cut fruit, and chilled fruit cups; fruit with edible skin, etc.

- D. Food taken from the Share Table must be consumed during the meal period. These are intended for students only; adults should not be permitted to take these items.
- E. Food brought from home is not permitted to be placed on the Share Table.
- F. No food from the Share Table may be returned to the food preparation, food service, or food storage areas for use by the food service operation.

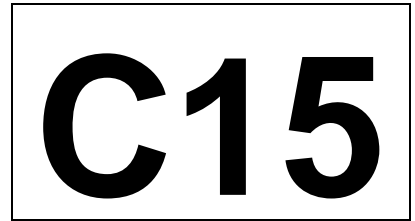
School Administration Responsibilities

- A. Provide Share Table.
- B. Assign non-food service staff to monitor Share Table during meal service and provide this information to the Wellness Supervisor.
- C. Custodial or assigned non-food service staff must clean the table daily. Any Share Table items leftover at the end of the week, may be donated according to Food and Nutrition Procedure C-22 Food Recovery and Donation to Non-Profit Organizations or placed in a school food pantry, if applicable. Share Table items must not be returned to the food service area.
- D. Inform students prior to the initiation of the school policy.
- E. After school meal programs may implement student Share Tables following these procedures with principal's approval.

Food and Nutrition Responsibilities

- A. Provide meal service in accordance with guidelines established by USDA for school meals.

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- B. Follow Offer versus Serve to permit students at breakfast and lunch to decline food items they do not intend to eat. Student must take at least 3 components including one (1) vegetable or fruit.

Student Responsibilities

- A. Follow Offer versus Serve. Students should only take items that they plan to eat. **Milk is a healthy option but is not a meal requirement.**
- B. Place unopened, non-perishable items not intending to eat on Share Table.
- C. Follow school procedures regarding getting up to select food items from Share Table.
- D. Items taken from Share Table must be consumed during meal period.

Assigned Monitor Responsibilities

- A. Maintain Share Table clean and free from temperature-controlled perishable food items.
- B. Monitor non-perishable food items placed on the Share Table to ensure they are unopened.
- C. Ensure food items from home **are not** being placed on Share Table.
- D. Inform students of the option of placing unwanted non-perishable food items on the Share Table rather than to discard items.

For Action By: School Site Administration, Food Service Managers, Satellite Assistants

Refer Questions to: Department of Food and Nutrition

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