

# What's for Lunch?

## Ideas for Good Nutrition in the Cafeteria

### **Purchased school lunches:**

- Lunches sold in the cafeteria must meet minimum nutrition standards.
- Baltimore City has improved lunches by offering more whole grains, lean meat, and fruit and vegetable options.
- Students cannot be forced to take items from the line. Fruit and vegetable options are available, so encourage your child to take them!
- For questions about Free and Reduced Meals, see Ms. Howell in the main office.

### **If you choose to pack a lunch for your child...**

- Pack lunches at night for the next day to avoid the rush. You will be less likely to throw processed foods in the bag.
- Processed foods are high in salt, sugar, and fat, and can also be high in saturated and trans fats.
- Choose lunch meats wisely: diets high in processed meats are associated with higher cancer risk. Look for low-fat, low-sodium lunch meats, and limit the serving size.
- Keep food safe: if packing tuna fish, lunch meats, or anything with mayonnaise, pack in an insulated bag with an ice pack.
- Pack a balanced lunch: include all or most of the food groups, focusing on fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- The best drink options are milk or water. 100% fruit juice is okay, but the sugar (even natural sugar) can add up. Whole, fresh fruit is a better option.
- Ideas for healthy, delicious, packed lunches:
  - Vegetable soup (homemade or low-sodium canned) packed hot in a thermos, whole grain bread, fresh fruit
  - Whole wheat bread with turkey with cheese, lettuce & tomato, fresh fruit
  - Low-fat yogurt, whole grain cereal to mix in, baby carrots
  - Hummus with veggies for dipping, low-sugar/fat granola bar, low-fat milk
  - Green salad with tuna, fresh fruit, low-fat pudding
  - Leftover pasta salad (see attached recipe)

## Leftover Pasta Salad

### Ingredients:

- 3 cups leftover cooked pasta (spaghetti, rotini, ziti), preferably whole wheat
- 1 cup broccoli florets, chopped
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 red or green bell pepper, chopped
- ¼ cup low-fat vinaigrette or Italian salad dressing
- ¼ cup reduced fat mozzarella or feta cheese

### Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl.
2. Stir.

Store in the fridge in a sealed container. Pack a portion for lunch each day of the week!