

## SHOULD STUDENTS HAVE TO TAKE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES DURING SCHOOL LUNCH?

Chicken tenders? Check. Tater tots and ketchup? Check. Green beans? Umm... but before you can say “no,” a lunch server plops a giant scoop onto your tray. Federal guidelines mean that over 29 million kids across the nation are required to take a serving of fruit and veggies at lunch. After all, science shows that eating healthy can result in increased energy, stronger bones, and improved mental health. But students don’t always want those fruits and veggies, which means a lot of food ends up in the trash. That leaves many wondering: should students have to take fruits and veggies during school lunch?



On average, students waste over 27% of food per plate!

### What could your school do?

**Donation:** Schools can send leftover food to food banks.

**Longer lunch:** Giving students more time to eat can reduce waste.

**Share tables:** Students can share the food they aren't going to eat.

### YES, THEY SHOULD BE REQUIRED

Requiring students to take fruits and veggies encourages kids to eat a more balanced diet. Some kids may not have access to healthy food at home, so it is important that they get it at school. Schools can introduce kids to a wide range of new foods like spinach, avocado, and kale. Such variety is important because fruits and vegetables are packed with nutrients like vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants! Eating healthy helps protect kids against getting sick and helps their overall well-being.

### NO, THEY SHOULDN'T BE REQUIRED

Many kids end up throwing them away after lunch. Schools have a lot of students, so this wasted food adds up! All of that food in the trash could have gone to better use, like a community food bank or homeless shelter. Also, kids should be able to decide for themselves what they want to eat. If a student doesn't like the fruits and veggies that are being served, they shouldn't be forced to take them! Ultimately, we should trust kids to make decisions about their health, like how much and what kinds of foods they eat.



By: Kyle Young