

Goal 5



Average Daily Participation

Challenge Requirements

The school must have an Average Daily Participation (ADP) of 70% of school enrollment or higher.

Description

Calculation to determine ADP of school enrollment:

Step One:

$$\frac{\text{Meals served in October}}{\text{\# operating days in October}} = \text{ADP}$$

Step Two:

$$\frac{\text{ADP}}{\text{School enrollment}} \times 100 = \% \text{ of ADP to Enrollment}$$

Example:

20,000 reimbursable lunches served in October
20 operating days in October
1,200 students were enrolled in the school in October

$$\frac{20,000 \text{ meals}}{20 \text{ operating days}} = 1,000 \text{ ADP}$$

$$\frac{1,000 \text{ ADP}}{1,200 \text{ students enrolled}} \times 100 = 83\%$$

This number must be above 70%

October numbers should be used to determine ADP%. If the school uses another month's numbers it must provide justification as to why October did not meet the requirement.



Gooding Elementary National School Lunch Week Celebration



Goldie's Tips

The best way to increase ADP % is to celebrate National School Lunch Week, National Nutrition Month, Healthy Harvest, etc.

Also provide a brochure to parents explaining lunch program, prices, charging policy, etc. at the beginning of the year and at parent/teacher conferences to market child nutrition programs.



Gooding Elementary Healthy Harvest Celebration



Write ADP % on page 3 of the application.

Common Questions Answered

Why was the school lunch average daily participation (ADP) criterion set at 70 percent?

Data from the *School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study II* (July 2001) indicated that the average daily participation, based upon enrollment, of elementary schools randomly selected for this national study was 67%. It was determined that an elementary school being nationally recognized as having an excellent school nutrition program should exceed this national average.

Our school has a low percentage of students approved for free and reduced meals, thus our participation is low. Will USDA make allowances for lowering the ADP for such schools?

No. The USDA school meals programs are for all children, not just the needy. USDA believes that any school recognized as having excellence in nutrition should exceed the national average of school lunch participation. Meals that are planned and prepared to meet quality standards should be appealing to all children in the school. Our studies indicate that school meal participation is inversely related to a la carte sales, i.e., schools with the highest levels of NSLP participation reported the least a la carte revenue and schools with the lowest levels of NSLP participation reported the most a la carte sales. Your school may find that by reducing the number of a la carte sales, your NSLP participation increases.

The criterion states that October is a typical month of operation and to use it for calculating ADP; however, my school does not meet the 70% ADP for October but is now meeting it in February. Does our school have to wait until after next October to apply for the *HealthierUS School Gold or Silver* certification?

No. If you can document that in recent months this school has actually increased participation and submit it with your application, it is likely your State agency will concur that the school can be recognized for its efforts.

In my school, kindergarten students do not stay for lunch. Must I include these students in my enrollment in order to calculate my ADP?

It depends. If school lunch is not accessible or available for kindergartners, e.g., transportation picks them up prior to lunch, then you could eliminate them in the participation data.