

# Eating Gluten-Free for Free at School



Massachusetts schools (and 7 other states) provide free breakfast and lunch to all students – including safe gluten-free (GF) options to those requiring a GF diet. In the other 42 states, school meals are often an affordable option for your family.

Follow these tips to make sure your family doesn't miss out on this valuable benefit:

- Menus and general food services information that is sent home or available on school websites may not have information specific to GF – but accommodating GF is required and you should ask for details.
- The school cafeteria manager or the district's food and nutrition services department are the best resources to talk to about what GF options are available and how they are prepared and served safely. While school administration, nurses, and teachers can be helpful, they may not have accurate information.
- Don't be shy about any safety concerns. Ask for a tour of the cafeteria to see the precautions taken by the food services team.
- If your child does not have a 504 plan, all that is required to receive GF accommodations is a Meal Modification Form.\* It's easy to fill out – just ask the cafeteria manager for a copy.
- To get the meal for free, your child needs to take 3 items. This leaves you flexibility to get basics like milk and fruit from school and provide your own GF favorites from home if that is a better option for your family.



*\* We believe a 504 plan is the best way for a student with Celiac Disease to receive appropriate accommodations beyond the cafeteria at school.*