NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM: PARTICIPATION AND LUNCHES SERVED						
Data as of October 9, 2026						
Fiscal Year	**Free Average Participation** *(millions)*	**Reduced Price Average Participation** *(millions)*	**Full Price Average Participation** *(millions)*	**Total Average Participation** *(millions)*	**Total Lunches Served** *(millions)*	**Percent Free/RP of Total**
1969	2.9	1]	16.5	19.4	3,368.2	15.1
1970	4.6	1]	17.8	22.4	3,565.1	20.7
1971	5.8	0.5	17.8	24.1	3,848.3	26.1
1972	7.3	0.5	16.6	24.4	3,972.1	32.4
1973	8.1	0.5	16.1	24.7	4,008.8	35.0
1974	8.6	0.5	15.5	24.6	3,981.6	37.1
1975	9.4	0.6	14.9	24.9	4,063.0	40.3
1976	10.2	0.8	14.6	25.6	4,147.9	43.1
1977	10.5	1.3	14.5	26.2	4,250.0	44.8
1978	10.3	1.5	14.9	26.7	4,294.1	44.4
1979	10.0	1.7	15.3	27.0	4,357.4	43.6
1980	10.0	1.9	14.7	26.6	4,387.0	45.1
1981	10.6	1.9	13.3	25.8	4,210.6	48.6
1982	9.8	1.6	11.5	22.9	3,755.0	50.2
1983	10.3	1.5	11.2	23.0	3,803.3	51.7
1984	10.3	1.5	11.5	23.4	3,826.2	51.0
1985	9.9	1.6	12.1	23.6	3,890.1	49.1
1986	10.0	1.6	12.2	23.7	3,942.5	49.1
1987	10.0	1.6	12.4	23.9	3,939.9	48.6
1988	9.8	1.6	12.8	24.2	4,032.9	47.4
1989	9.7	1.6	12.9	24.2	4,004.9	47.2
1990	9.9	1.7	12.6	24.1	4,009.0	48.3
1991	10.3	1.8	12.2	24.2	4,050.7	50.4
1992	11.2	1.7	11.7	24.6	4,101.4	53.1
1993	11.8	1.7	11.4	24.9	4,137.7	54.8
1994	12.2	1.8	11.3	25.3	4,201.6	55.9
1995	12.5	1.9	11.4	25.7	4,253.3	56.4
1996	12.7	2.0	11.3	25.9	4,313.2	56.9
1997	13.0	2.1	11.3	26.3	4,409.0	57.6
1998	13.1	2.2	11.4	26.6	4,425.0	57.8
1999	13.0	2.4	11.6	27.0	4,513.6	57.6
2000	13.0	2.5	11.9	27.3	4,575.0	57.1
2001	12.9	2.6	12.0	27.5	4,585.2	56.8
2002	13.3	2.6	12.0	28.0	4,716.6	57.6
2003	13.7	2.7	11.9	28.4	4,762.9	58.5
2004	14.2	2.8	12.0	29.0	4,842.4	59.1
2005	14.6	2.9	12.2	29.6	4,976.4	59.4
2006	14.8	2.9	12.4	30.1	5,027.9	59.3
2007	15.0	3.1	12.6	30.6	5,071.3	59.3
2008	15.4	3.1	12.5	31.0	5,208.5	60.1
2009	16.3	3.2	11.9	31.3	5,186.0	62.6
2010	17.6	3.0	11.1	31.8	5,278.4	65.3
2011	18.4	2.7	10.8	31.8	5,274.5	66.6
2012	18.7	2.7	10.2	31.7	5,214.9	68.2
2013	18.9	2.6	9.2	30.7	5,097.6	70.5
2014	19.2	2.5	8.8	30.5	5,020.4	71.6
2015	19.8	2.2	8.5	30.5	5,005.4	72.6
2016	20.1	2.0	8.2	30.4	5,053.0	73.3
2017	20.0	2.0	8.0	30.0	4,891.5	73.6
2018	20.2	1.8	7.7	29.7	4,865.7	74.4
2019	20.1	1.7	7.7	29.6	4,866.8	74.1
2020	15.9	1.1	5.4	22.4	3,209.4	76.9
2021	10.9	0.0	0.1	11.0	2,153.7	98.9
2022	30.0	0.1	1	31.0	5,091.2	95.5
2023	19.0	1.1	8.5	28.6	4,661.8	70.8
2024	20.6	0.9	8.4	29.9	4,858.6	72.5
2025	21.3	0.8	8.1	30	4,870.7	73
All data are subject to revision.						
Participation data are 9 month averages (summer months are excluded).						
1] Included with free meals.						
** In SY 2020-2021, many schools served meals through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) due to the COVID-19 waivers. The COVID-19 waiver which allowed schools to serve meals through the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) and report separately started in SY 2021-2022. FY 2021 - 2022 data includes meals served through the SSO.						

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