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Written Debate Paper Grading Rubric

Developing (0.5)	Goal-oriented (1)	Mastery (1.5)
Introduction		
I. Identifies the issue, though some aspects are incorrect, incomplete, or confusing	I. Clearly identifies the issues and key details are included in a comprehensive manner	II. Analyzes the issue and presents in a comprehensive and scholarly manner
II. Demonstrates adequate skill in searching, selecting, and evaluating sources to meet the information need	III. Evidence of search, selection, and source evaluation skills	IV. Identifies and selects information directly related to paper topic
Organization		
I. Basic organization is apparent: evidence of logical organization of various topics within the paper	II. Organization is clear; consistent use of appropriate format with key components are being discussed	III. Organization is clear, consistent use appropriate format; transitions between ideas are present
Content of Paper		
I. Distinguishes causality from correlation, through presentation may be flawed. Appropriate data/evidence or sources provided	I. Examines evidence and its source; questions its accuracy, relevance, and completeness	I. Content of the paper reflects originality, evidence of synthesis and analytical discussion of results with appropriate conclusions
II. Relates alternative views to qualify analysis	II. Analysis of positions is thoughtful and mostly accurate	II. Position or hypothesis demonstrates sophisticated, integrated thought.
III. Integrates multiple view points and comparison of ideas or perspectives	III. Clearly justifies own view while respecting others	III. Clearly justifies own view while respecting others; qualifies or integrates contrary views or interpretations
IV. Ideas are investigated but in a limited way	IV. Presents conclusions as relative and loosely related to consequences	IV. Conclusions are qualified as the best available evidence; implications are developed and ambiguities are considered
V. Conclusions consider or provide evidence of consequences extending beyond a single issue	V. Includes connections to conclusions	
Writing Mechanics		
I. In general, language does not interfere with communication	I. Language clearly and effectively communicates ideas	I. Language clearly and effectively communicates ideas, often eloquent
II. Errors are not distracting or frequent	II. Errors are minimal	II. Errors are barely present
III. Some problems with more difficult aspects of style and voice	III. Style is appropriate for audience	III. Consistent use of sources with appropriate format
IV. Most sources are cited and used correctly	IV. Consistent use of sources with appropriate format	IV. All sources are cited and used correctly

Introduction: 1.5 points x 8 = 12

Organization: 1.5 points x 8 = 12

Content: 1.5 points x 9 = 13.5

Writing Mechanics: 1 points x 9 = 9

+ 24

Melissa Vigdor
Group 6 Debate
HHS8000
10/16/12

National School Lunch Program Counterargument

Although developed with good intentions, The National School Lunch program is costly and fundamentally flawed. The most recent changes that ~~have gone~~^{went} into effect for the 2012 school year have already exposed issues that must be resolved in order to make this program effective in the future.

As a part of the 2010 Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act, and in an effort to curb childhood obesity, a series of new regulations and guidelines were developed for the National School Lunch Program requiring schools to provide healthier lunches to their student ~~bodies~~. Although approved in 2010, the changes didn't take effect until the 2012 - 2013 school year (1). Schools all over the country are reporting stories of discontented students. The major cause of the dissatisfaction is due to the increase in cost for a smaller meal. In Cobb County, Georgia, school lunches have increased \$.50 (2), \$.25 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (3) and \$.10 in Farmington, New Mexico (4). Though the increase varies from school to school, the cause is the same across the board. Schools are now required to provide more nutritious meals with calorie limits containing more fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lower sodium content (2). To account for the calorie differential, lunches will consist of about half fruits and vegetables and ~~the~~ servings of meat and bread will be smaller (5). In order to provide healthier school lunches that meet the new requirements, schools are forced to charge the students more (2).

Each year the cost of the National School Lunch program rises, as it caters to more students. When the program started in 1947 it cost 70 million. ~~In~~^{By} 2011, it had ~~jumped~~^{had} to 11.1 billion (6). The USDA estimates that over the next 5 years, the new standards will cost additional \$3.2 billion. However, this time it is not solely attributed to serving more students, but instead due to the stringent regulations and cost of the food required to be served (1). For example, schools are now required to offer "all vegetable subgroups established in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans." These subgroups include: dark green, red/orange, legumes and starchy vegetables. The government has outlined minimum quantities of each vegetable group per week as well (7). In a conversation with Janet Stone, School Nutrition Coordinator for the DeKalb County School District (September 2012), she confirmed that it has been difficult to meet the weekly serving requirements for vegetables as well as whole grains. Additionally, the federal government only reimburses schools \$2.86 for every free lunch and \$2.46 for a reduced priced lunch (8). Schools

why? cost?

will receive an additional six cents per lunch if they are able to prove they have complied with the new requirements. If schools do not follow the guidelines, they will not receive the additional reimbursement money that they desperately need (6). Some districts are worried that reimbursements won't cover the cost of the food, and definitely will not cover operational costs (9). Additionally, the poor economy over the last few years and droughts in the Midwest this year have caused produce and wheat costs to continue increase, putting even more financial burden on schools (10).

Moreover, even with the price increase the new healthy lunch standards aren't as healthy as they could be. Interestingly, pressure in Congress from potato growers and frozen pizza manufacturers impacted the original proposed law. This resulted in tomato paste on pizza counting as a vegetable serving, and the allowance of potatoes to be served as often as a school desires which may tempt students to choose French fries and pizza over a more healthy vegetable option, and still remain in compliance with the new standards (11). Janet Stone shared that "there are some things [she] would like to see come off the menu – like nachos, which is served as an entrée." Items like pizza, French fries and nachos are good sellers, so the county ^{did not} ~~doesn't~~ take them off the menu. Janet said most of the food is not made from scratch due to time constraints. This means much of the food is still frozen and or processed.

The quality of the food served to students is also an issue. A high-school student dissatisfied with the quality of the fruit in his Pittsburgh school said, "Fruit options come in sealed plastic containers, and fresh grapes were "sour and soggy." He also remarked that "a lot of the better fruit options, which students are required to take under the new requirements, run out quickly because if you have to take one, you're not going to take the nasty fruit." This student began packing his lunch as a result, which means less revenue going back into the program and an increased likelihood of his packed lunch including processed, unhealthy foods. In fact, students at this school started a brown bag 'movement' on Twitter to protest the new school lunches posting pictures of items like Pop-Tarts, Hostess mini muffins and Lunchables which they intend to pack for lunch (3). I teach in the After-School All-Stars program at the Sandy Springs Middle School. My students do not know what a whole grain is, and when we talked about the changes to their school lunches many of them made faces explaining the wheat bread is "all squishy and disgusting."

Maintaining high quality foods in the cafeteria is not a symptom of growing pains. Over the years, quality has come up as an issue several times for the National School Lunch Program. In 2009, USA Today uncovered that the government had supplied schools with beef and chicken below the standards of fast-food restaurants. The USDA reportedly tested ground beef for dangerous foodborne pathogens five to ten times less than several fast-food restaurants. Chicken

sent to schools came from “old birds that might otherwise go to compost or pet food.” Students and their families trust the government to provide them with safe food to eat. During my conversation with Janet Stone, she mentioned that the cafeteria workers in Dekalb county are resisting the NSLP changes. These employees “used to do whatever they wanted to do,” and now they are supposed to follow the new guidelines. She also added that she has heard many schools threaten to drop out of the program completely because they cannot afford to keep up with the regulations. With all of the strict new regulations, one wonders if food safety regulations and requirements will be able to be met (12).

Recommendation:

While the National School Lunch Program may be making steps in the right direction, I believe it has a long way to go in order to get students on board with the changes, and begin to control the childhood obesity epidemic.

The recent guidelines and regulations are very reactionary. They want to have an immediate effect, however, it takes time to fix problems and many of the rules the program implemented are extremely strict, costly and may be difficult for school systems to follow all at once.

Furthermore, based on my research, students and cafeteria employees are not adjusting to the changes well and they do not understand the value of good nutrition. I recommend a tiered approach to slowly implement the changes over five years. During the first year, schools should begin to educate students on the importance of healthy eating. They should introduce them to fruits and vegetables they may not have heard of or seen before, and allow them to taste a variety which will help them get comfortable with these new foods. Training programs for cafeteria workers should also be implemented. Once the students understand why they should be eating healthy, and employees understand the value behind the changes and effective ways to execute the regulations, schools should begin to eliminate unhealthy foods and start to offer a wider variety of fruits and vegetables for students to choose from. The mandate forcing students to choose a fruit/vegetable to go with each meal should not be put on students until they are educated and used to seeing them as a part of a complete lunch. The standards for vegetables are currently very strict, outlining minimums for certain colored vegetables. This guideline is difficult for schools to follow, and while it may make sense in the future, I believe schools should start by eliminating processed foods like pizza, nachos and French fries and focus on providing high quality, fresh food. This solution would also help with the significant price increase. If the cost of a school lunch went up a few cents each year, it would be more palatable for families who must buy lunch for two and three children. Finally, it may allow school lunch food manufacturers to catch up to the regulations. For example, whole grain rolls may be easier to find than they are currently since many manufacturers are not currently producing them.

Long Paragraph

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