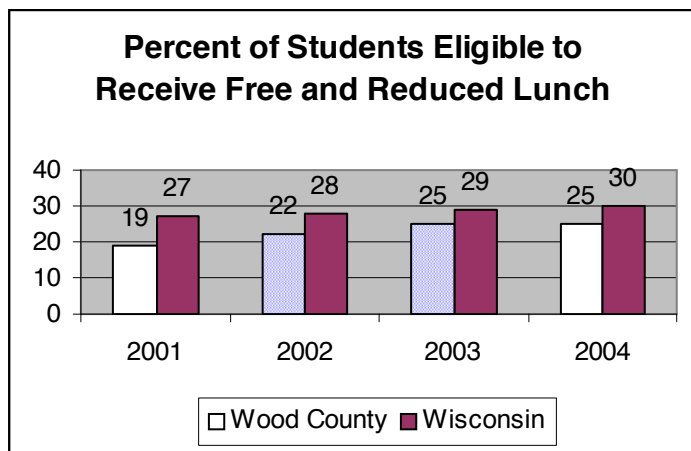


School Lunch Eligibility Helps Measure Number of Low-income Children



Key Facts

- The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in over 94,000 schools and residential child care institutions. The program provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to more than 28 million children each school day.
- Of the 14,667 students in Wood County’s public and private schools, 25 percent, or 3613, were approved for free or reduced price lunches in 2004.
- School lunches must meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which recommend that no more than 30 percent of an individual’s calories come from fat, and less than 10 percent from saturated fat.

Why is this Information Important?

Nutritional intake influences a student’s health and ability to learn. Hunger and poor nutrition can lead to nervousness, irritability, lack of interest in learning, and inability to concentrate. Studies have shown that students who have proper nourishment will have better attendance, be more attentive, and have more energy throughout the day.

Participants in the National School Lunch Program receive nutritionally balanced meals that enhance health, learning, and quality of life.

The National School Lunch Program

The National School Lunch Program is a federally regulated program that provides nutritious food to students. The program provides free and reduced price lunches to families that meet income eligibility guidelines. Families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty level qualify for free meals. Those between 130 and 185 percent of the poverty level qualify for reduced price meals. In 2005, 130 percent of the poverty level was \$25,155 for a family of four; 185 percent was \$35,798.

Sources: United States Department of Agriculture; Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Food and Nutritional Services