

# Lunchroom Digest

## School Cool Style

Student Choice  
Orange Juice



Boycott Bagel

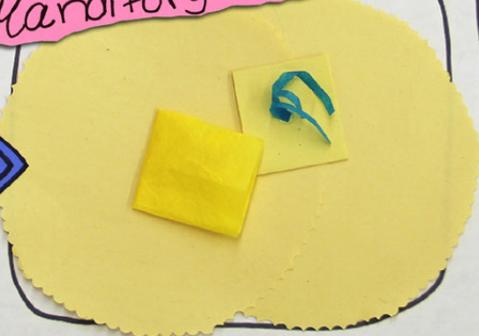
Students are not required to eat their school meal and can opt out of any of the dishes served.

Mandatory Bacon

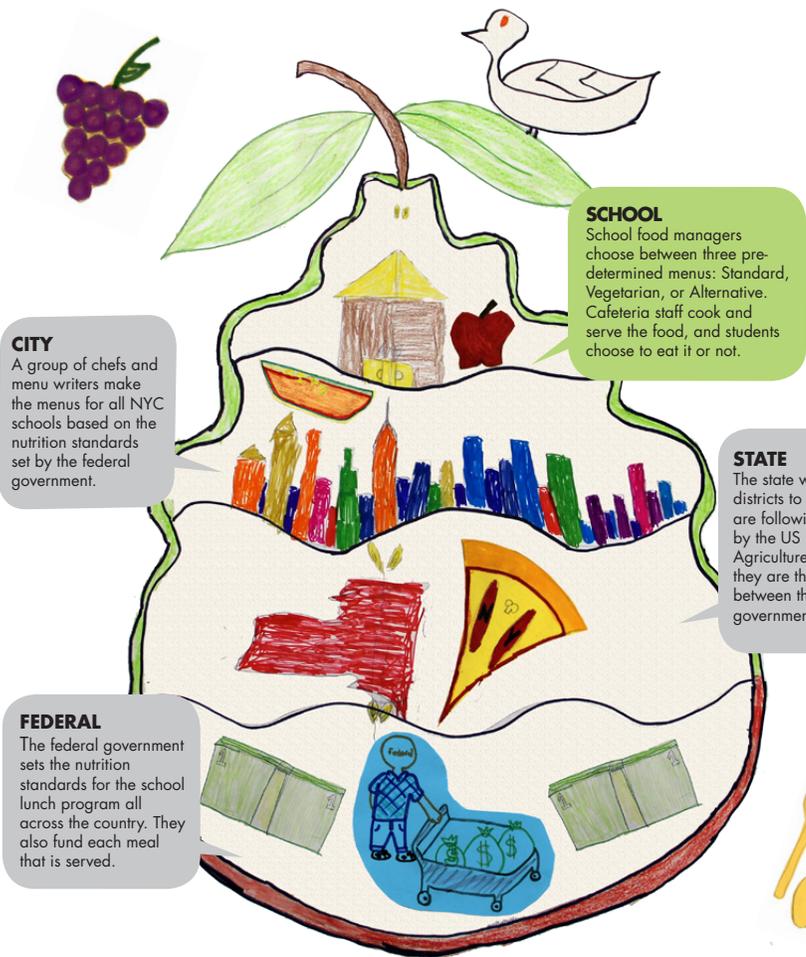


Learn, Read & Eat  
Omelette

Students have a harder time learning on an empty stomach.



Get Smart Pancake



**CITY**  
A group of chefs and menu writers make the menus for all NYC schools based on the nutrition standards set by the federal government.

**SCHOOL**  
School food managers choose between three pre-determined menus: Standard, Vegetarian, or Alternative. Cafeteria staff cook and serve the food, and students choose to eat it or not.

**STATE**  
The state works with the districts to make sure they are following the rules set by the US Department of Agriculture. Essentially, they are the middlemen between the federal government and schools.

**FEDERAL**  
The federal government sets the nutrition standards for the school lunch program all across the country. They also fund each meal that is served.

"Technically, you guys - young people, community members, parents - are supposed to have a say. Because the school lunch program is so large, it doesn't always happen that way."  
*Beatriz Beckford, WhyHunger*



## Who makes decisions about school food?

A group of students in Aisling Roche's film studies class at the Academy of Urban Planning (AUP) worked with the Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP) and CUP teaching artist Lindsay C. Harris to find out who makes decisions about school food at the school, city, state, and federal levels. Students interviewed each other, school staff, family members, and professionals working in food justice and the Department of Education. Based on their responses, students designed school meals visualizing the factors considered at each level.

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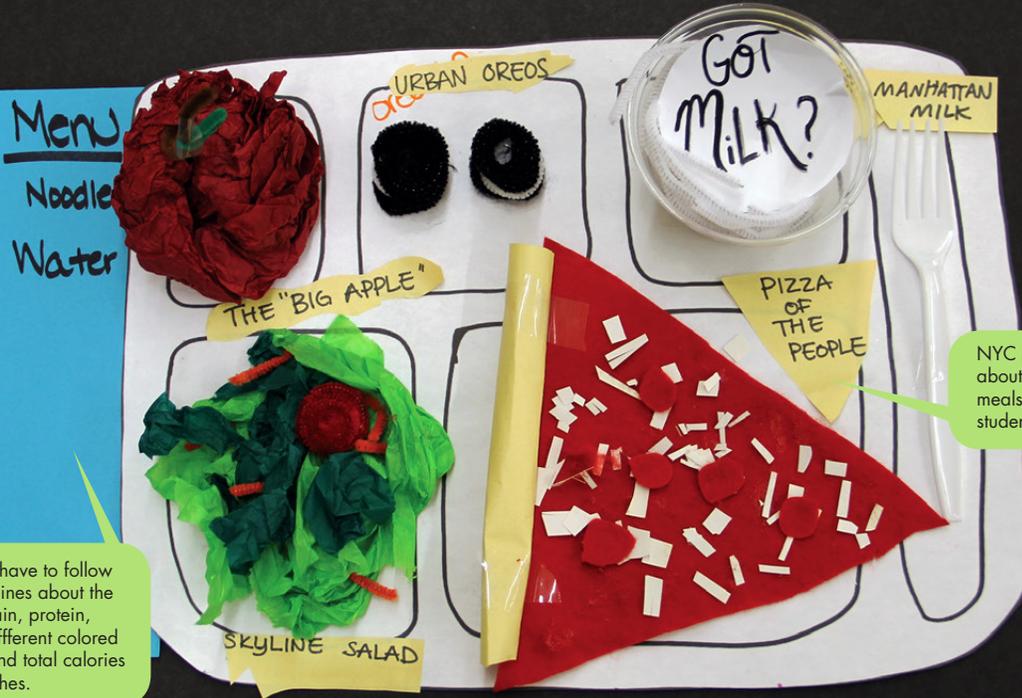
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There is a team of menu writers and chefs that make menus based on the federal standards.

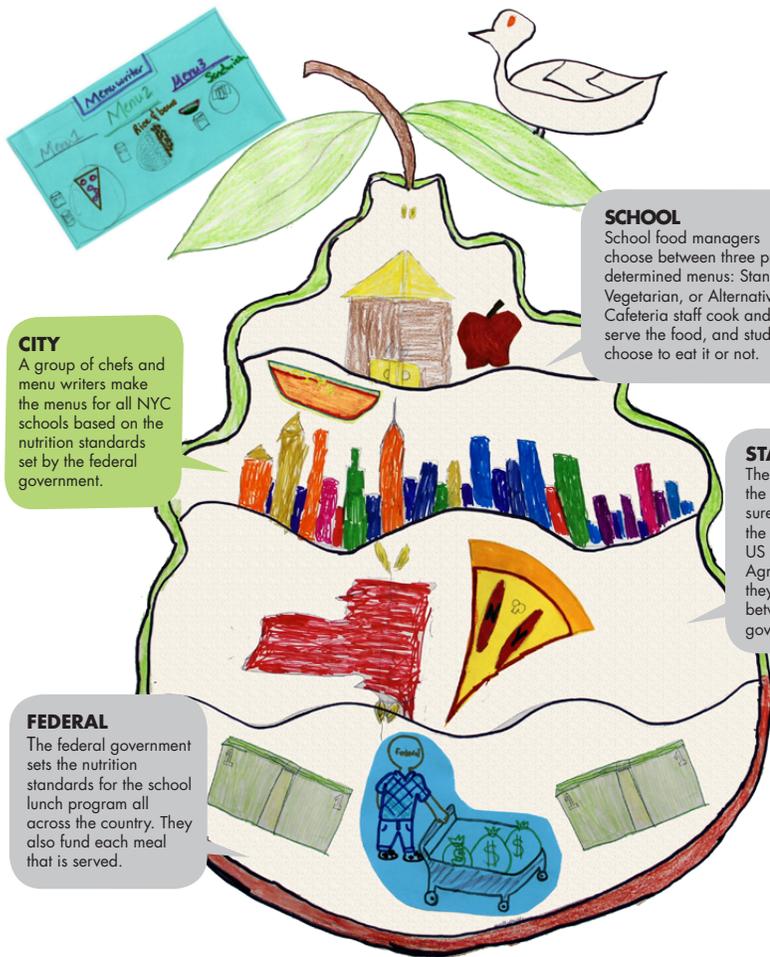
Milk  
Salad  
Oreo's  
Cherry's  
Pizza

Menu writers have to follow federal guidelines about the amount of grain, protein, fruits, milk, different colored vegetables, and total calories in school lunches.

## NYC PLANNING PLATE



NYC provides about 850,000 meals a day to students.



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**STATE**  
The state works with the districts to make sure they are following the rules set by the US Department of Agriculture. Essentially, they are the middlemen between the federal government and schools.

"The biggest challenge is trying to balance the cost, what kids want to eat, and the nutrition standards."  
*Chef Jorge Collazo, NYC Department of Education*



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## The State of Health

Red Rule

US Department of Agriculture representatives for each state approve the districts for federal reimbursement.

Dollar greens

Low Fund Smoothie

If schools follow new nutritional guidelines, they will get an additional 6¢ per meal.

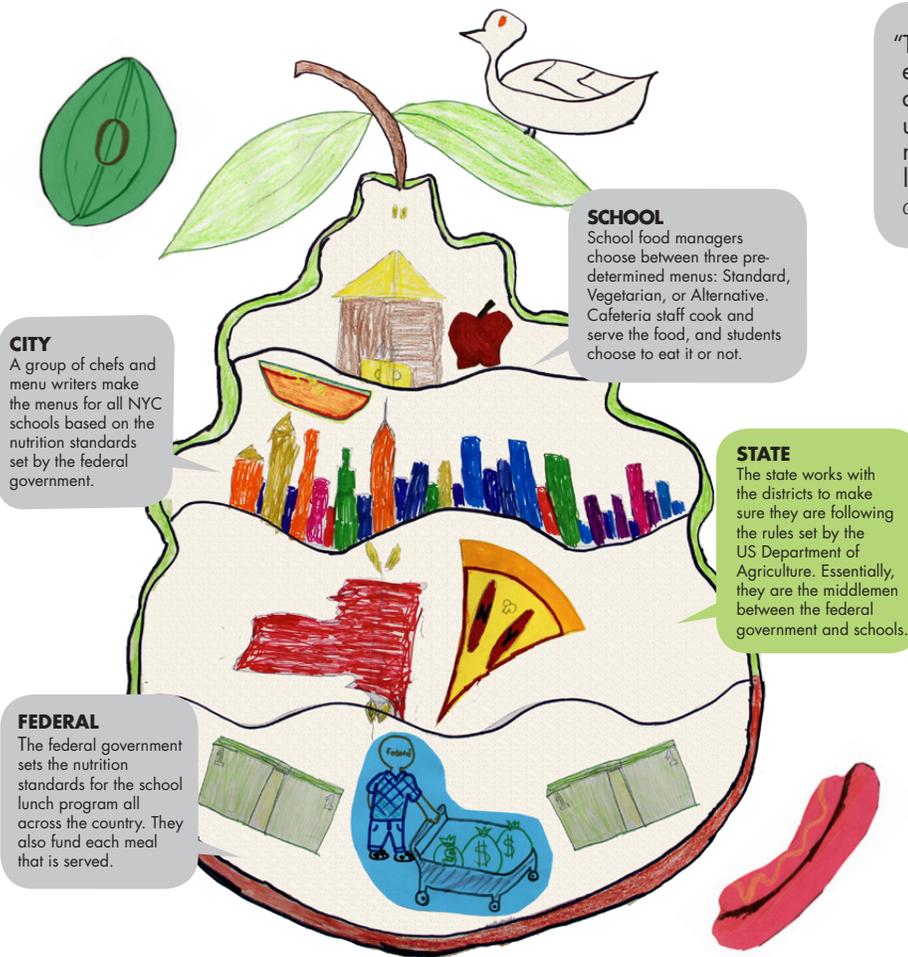
District of the corn

The state monitors the districts to make sure they comply with the federal nutrition standards.

"Ham Cam" Burger

Money wrap





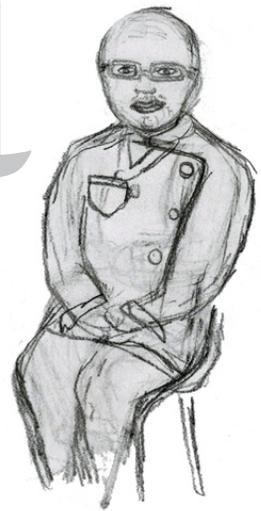
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"There are USDA representatives in every state - they're the ones that approve us for reimbursement. We used to have more flexibility, but now we have very strict guidelines."  
*Chef Jorge Collazo, NYC Department of Education*



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## THE FEDERAL BOWL

The US Department of Agriculture creates nutrition standards that school cafeterias have to follow.

PUBLIC SCHOOL POPULATION RICE

The National School Lunch Program offers free or low cost meals to students in public or nonprofit schools.

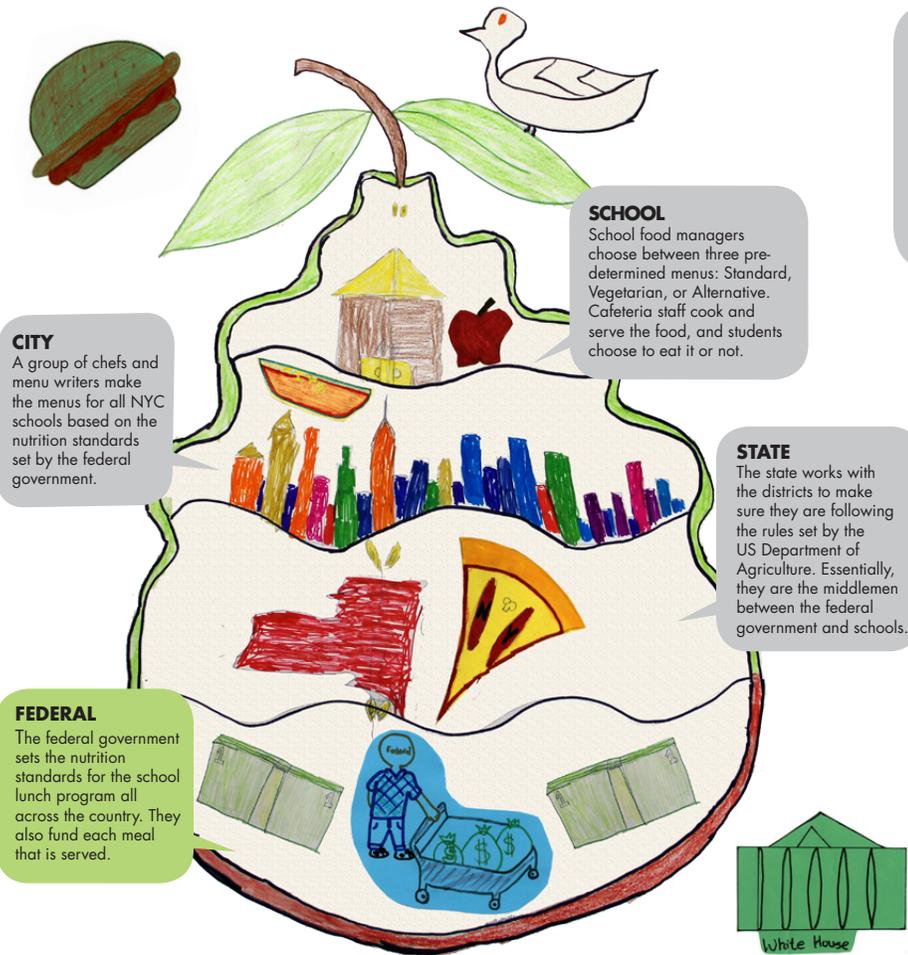
"STANDARD" GRAPE

50 STATE VEGETABLE BOWL

DOLLAR AND CENTS SPAGHETTI

Schools get money from the federal government for each meal they serve. After expenses, schools have a little over \$1 to spend on each meal.





"It's a federal program and despite its dysfunction, it's really one of the most beautiful programs in the country - the merger of education needs, agriculture needs, and feeding children so they can be successful."

*Beatriz Beckford, WhyHunger*



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