

How to help kids choose an extracurricular activity

Today's kids are busier than ever before. Commitments in the classroom coupled with a full slate of extracurricular activities have ensured that many of today's school-aged children don't have a minute to spare.

While it's important for kids to embrace extracurricular activities, parents know it's not always easy helping kids find the right activity that allows them to grow outside the classroom while still focusing on their responsibilities inside it. In addition, kids' interests tend to change at the drop of a hat, so something they want to do today might bore them come tomorrow. To help kids choose and manage their extracurricular activities, consider the following tips.

- Emphasize that schoolwork must come first. Kids get excited about extracurricular activities, especially ones involving sports where they get to spend time playing with their friends. But parents should emphasize that school still comes first and that, if schoolwork starts to suffer, participation in extracurricular activities will be put on hold until kids get their studies back on track.

- Go over coursework at the start of the school year. Examine a child's course load before choosing an extracurricular activity. It's important to do this each year, as coursework gets more difficult as children get older. Just because a child could handle a couple of afterschool activities a week when he or she was in fifth grade does not mean such a schedule will be as manageable when the same child reaches high school. Go over coursework and requirements as early as possible, preferably before the school year starts, so you and your child can get a grip on what can and can't be handled with regards to extracurricular activities.

- Get a grasp of the commitment required of a given activity. Extracurricular activities require various levels of commitment.



Varsity sport participation, for example, typically requires daily commitment and often requires kids to participate on weekends or even the sport's "off-season," which may include summer vacation. However, volunteering with a local charity likely won't require such a large commitment and

such charities often allow volunteers to choose their own schedules. Parents and their children should consider the level of commitment an extracurricular requires and choose the activity they're most comfortable with.

- Don't overlook the social benefits of extracurricular activities. When helping kids choose an extracurricular activity, it's important to leave the ultimate decision in their hands. After all, kids won't get much of the experience if they're reluctant to participate. However, parents should not overlook the social benefits of extracurricular activities. Consider those benefits when helping kids choose activities, especially if they're likely to choose solitary activities like learning a musical instrument. It's good to encourage such interests, but also try to encourage a balance between solitary activities and ones that encourage socialization with peers, such as a sports team, debate club or volunteering with other students at a local charity.

- Don't forget the fun factor. Extracurricular activities are not just supposed to instill character, they're also supposed to be fun. If kids aren't having fun or showing any interest in a given extracurricular activity, then help them find another one. Kids need time to have fun away from school just like adults need time for fun away from the office. Weigh how enjoyable a given activity figures to be for your youngster before signing them up.

South Lane Schools Food Service

South Lane School District serves nutritious meals daily that meet standards set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Recent changes to the meal program require ALL LUNCHES must include one 1/2 cup serving of FRUIT or VEGETABLE.

The cost is:

	Elementary	Middle	High School	Reduced	
Breakfast*		\$ 1.40	\$1.40	\$1.40	FREE
Lunch**	\$ 2.50	\$2.75	\$3.00	FREE	
Milk***	\$.50	\$.50	\$.50	\$.50	

*Breakfast price is for a complete meal, may decline 1 food component. (e.g. bread, meat, milk) At least 1/2 cup of either a fruit or vegetable must be selected.

**Lunch price is for a complete meal, may decline 2 food components. (e.g. bread, meat, milk, fruit, vegetable) but must select at least 1/2 cup of either fruit or vegetable.

***Milk is included in Breakfast and Lunch prices. (no free milk program available)

September Advanced payment rates:

	Monthly Breakfast	Monthly Lunch	Weekly Breakfast	Weekly Lunch
Elementary	\$28.00	\$50.00	\$7.00	\$12.50
Middle	\$28.00	\$55.00	\$7.00	\$13.75
High	\$28.00	\$60.00	\$7.00	\$15.00
Reduced	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE

Daily payment is acceptable, but prepayment is much appreciated. Prepayment of meals allows the lines to go faster. Charges are not acceptable, they will be allowed only in an emergency. Please send money for meals the first day of school. Online payments with debit or credit card can be made at <http://www.mymealtime.com>. First time users will need to call 541-942-3381 ext. 125 to receive a pass code.

Your child(ren) may be eligible to receive meals free or at a reduced price if:

- 1) Your family is receiving:
 - a) Food Stamps; or
 - b) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); or
 - c) Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations; or
- 2) Your household income is at or below the amount on this income chart:

Household size	REDUCED		FREE			
	Annual	Month	Week	Annual	Month	Week
-1-	\$21,775	\$1,815	\$419	\$15,301	\$1,276	\$295
-2-	\$29,471	\$2,456	\$567	\$20,709	\$1,726	\$399
-3-	\$37,167	\$3,098	\$715	\$26,117	\$2,177	\$503
-4-	\$44,863	\$3,739	\$863	\$31,525	\$2,628	\$607
-5-	\$52,559	\$4,380	\$1,011	\$36,933	\$3,078	\$711
-6-	\$60,255	\$5,022	\$1,159	\$42,341	\$3,529	\$815
-7-	\$67,951	\$5,663	\$1,307	\$47,749	\$3,980	\$919
-8-	\$75,647	\$6,304	\$1,455	\$53,157	\$4,430	\$1,023
For each additional family member add	+\$7,696	+\$642	+\$148	+\$5,408	+\$451	+\$104

To apply for free or reduced price meals online at <https://district.ode.state.or.us/apps/> or contact the Food Service Department at the District office, 541-942-3381 ext. 124 for a paper copy. If you qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch you also qualify for Free Breakfast. The Oregon legislature recently provided funding to eliminate the reduced price payment for School Breakfast. Breakfast will be accessible at no charge to students who qualify for reduced price lunches. South Lane School District is an equal opportunity provider.