

Some school districts quit healthier lunch program

August 27 2013, by Carolyn Thompson

After just one year, some schools around the country are dropping out of the healthier new federal lunch program. They say so many students refused the meals packed with whole grains, fruits and vegetables that their cafeterias were losing money.

Federal officials say they don't have exact numbers but have seen isolated reports of schools cutting ties.

Dr. Janey Thornton is deputy undersecretary for USDA's Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services, which oversees the program. She says she is still optimistic about its long-term prospects as students get used to smaller portions and unfamiliar foods.

Districts with high numbers of students who get free and discounted lunches can't afford to quit because they would lose the program's cash reimbursements.

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