



MACI WEIGEL (above) smiled while eating lunch at Oberlin Elementary School on Monday. Gage Scott (below) drank his milk.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Grade-school lunches get the kids' approval

Kids scooped pineapple chunks, broccoli, carrots, salad and orange slices onto their plates.

They had already had the chance to take a biscuit and a tater-tot casserole before heading to the salad bar, which has fresh vegetables and fruits.

Lunch at Oberlin Elementary School starts at 11:30 a.m. Monday through Friday. The first shift — kindergarten and first to third grades — comes through. When they head off to recess, the older kids — fourth through sixth grades — pass through the line.

Principal Duane Dorshorst said the students have to take three servings of at least two different food groups for their meal.

The grade school serves on average 160 lunches a day, he said. About six students bring a sack lunch and the school averages around seven absences.

The students, said Mr. Dorshorst, seem to like most of the meals.

"It would be hard to pick out a favorite," he said: "cheeseburgers, fries, burritos, spaghetti."

The school always offers lettuce salad on the salad bar, the principal said, along with fresh carrots and at least one other raw vegetable and one cooked vegetable. There's fresh and/or canned fruit daily.

Each morning, Mr. Dorshorst said, he announces what's on the menu. At one of the principals' meetings he attended this summer, he said, he talked with a principal from Louisiana who also does the morning announcements. Mr. Dorshorst said that principal also played a song about the food they were having for lunch that day.

So, Mr. Dorshorst said, he started researching food songs and has found one for almost every meal the schools serves. For instance, he said, when they have cheeseburgers, he plays an excerpt from Jimmy Buffet's "Cheeseburger in Paradise," or some from the Veggie Tales' "My Cheesebuger" song.

"The kids seem to really enjoy that extra bit of fun in the morning," he said.



KELYNN JACOBS put her silverware in the correct buckets after lunch Monday at the grade school before heading out for recess.

