Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga
Ministry of Education

Te Mahau

Case Study:

Efficient lunch distribution for Composite Schools

School profile

- **Type:** Composite School (Years 0–13)
- **Roll Size:** 360
- **Location:** Central North Island
- **Supplier:** School Lunch Collective (SLC)

Distribution model

- **Model:** Grab and Go from central drop points around the school
- **Sites:** two, a main site with 120 students and a satellite classroom block with 60 students
- **Delivery Model:** External

Distribution method – Grab and Go model

Approach:

- **Years 0–6:** Classroom box delivery
- **Years 7–13:** Grab and Go model at two separate sites, one for the year 7-8, one for year 9**+.**

Logistics:

- Meals are dropped off by SLC at a single delivery point outside the Whare Kai
- A designated lunch coordinator is employed part-time (3 hours/day) to manage distribution and waste, relieving teacher aides and admin staff from this responsibility

Operational breakdown

Task	Responsible party	Time allocated
Receiving and sorting deliveries	Lunch Coordinator	30 minutes
Packing classroom boxes (Years 0–6)	Lunch Coordinator + student helpers	30 minutes
Grab and Go setup (Years – 7-13)	Lunch Coordinator	30 minutes
Waste and surplus collection	Lunch Coordinator + student helpers	45 minutes
Cleaning and reset for next day	Lunch Coordinator	45 minutes

Total daily staff time: 3 hours (single staff member)

Student involvement: Years 6–8 students assist with classroom box return and basic cleaning routines. Year 9+ student leaders support by encouraging students to return lunch waste to designated locations.

Efficiency measures

- **One point delivery:** Streamlines SLC drop-off to a single location
- **Split model (Classroom + Grab and Go):** Balances efficiency and student autonomy based on age group
- **Dedicated coordinator:** Avoids overloading teaching/admin staff
- **Reuse and cleaning:** Classroom boxes and grab stations are reused and cleaned daily to manage hygiene and reduce packaging waste

Equipment used

- Trestle tables for Grab and Go stations
- Cambro boxes and bins for classroom delivery
- Forks, gloves, rubbish bags, and cleaning supplies
- Hand cart for transportation

Funding Source: Ka Ora, Ka Ako Distribution Grant

- Roll-Based Entitlement: 150 hours per term, or 3 hours per day
- Supplemented with student support

Outcomes

Staff efficiency: Reduced reliance on teacher aides and administration staff

Student engagement: Older students take responsibility for return of equipment and encourage students to return waste to the right location

Reduced risk: Consistent staffing ensures smooth distribution of meals, dietary meals and snacks, and timely waste management

Sustainability: Food surplus redistributed for second intake or to whānau; waste sorted into compost, landfill, and pig buckets

Key insights

- Composite schools benefit from hybrid distribution models tailored to age-specific needs
- Hiring one part-time coordinator significantly enhances distribution efficiency and frees up school staff
- Clear processes for waste and surplus improve sustainability and reduce clutter

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Case Study:

Effective lunch distribution at Full Primary Schools

School profile

- **Name:** Full Primary, Years 1–8
- **Roll Size:** 350 students
- **Location:** Regional town setting

Overview

This Full Primary School has refined its lunch distribution process using a classroom delivery model that balances efficiency, student participation, and staff workload.

Distribution method – classroom delivery

- **Model:** Classroom delivery model
- **Sites:** Single site for sorting and distributing, 16x classes
- **Delivery model:** external (local provider)

Daily process

1. Lunches are delivered by the external provider at approximately 11:00am (6 Cambro boxes) to the hall.
2. At 12:30pm, one staff member begins sorting the meals into class crates. The school has a list on the wall that has room numbers, how many standard lunches and how many special diet lunches are required for each class.
3. Sporks and rubbish bags are also added to the crates.
4. Around 6 students (on class rotation) collect the crates and deliver them to classrooms by 1:00pm.
5. Lunch is eaten from 1:10pm to 1:30pm in classrooms under teacher supervision.
6. Teachers supervise scraping of waste and containers into appropriate rubbish bags
7. Students return the crates and waste to the kitchen area at approximately 1:30pm.
8. The staff member sorts waste and surplus back into the Cambro boxes, which are left outside for collection the following morning.

Wet weather plan

Same process as above

Staffing & resourcing

- **Student involvement:** Around 4 students (senior students)
- **Time required:** ~1 hour
- **Staff involved:** One teacher sorting lunches, classroom teachers supervising eating and waste management.
- **Equipment:** Foldable crates, trolley

Key efficiency gains

Distribution model	**Classroom delivery**
Staffing time	~1 hour per day for 340 students
Additional hires	None
Waste	All sent back
Surplus meals	Sent back with waste
Equipment needed	Foldable crates, trolley to help move-in school-owned cambros into kitchen space from hall
Insights	• Streamlined operations make everything run smoothly, with a predictable and efficient setup that supports daily routines • Students play a key role in distributing lunches, giving them a chance to grow as leaders and contribute meaningfully • By delivering to classrooms, disruptions are kept to a minimum • Up-to-date class numbers and accurately labeled special diet meals with class numbers help streamline the process

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Case Study:

Effective lunch distribution for Intermediate Schools

School profile

- **Type:** Intermediate School (Years 7–8)
- **Roll Size:** 545 students
- **Location:** Urban

Overview

This case study looks at the Hub Delivery model for school lunch distribution that has proven both efficient and effective for intermediate schools with large rolls.

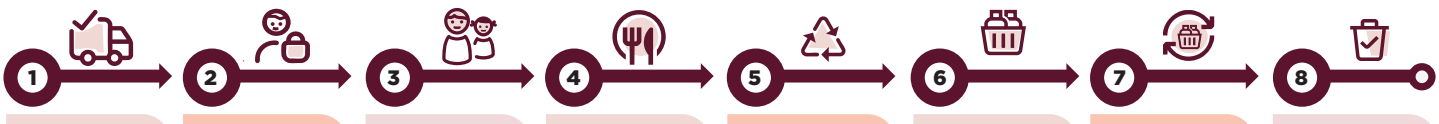
The Hub Delivery model is a streamlined, student-led lunch distribution model that emphasises simplicity and leadership development of students to minimise staff workload.

With a hub-based delivery system and strong student involvement, this intermediate school has created a sustainable and inclusive approach to lunch distribution.

Distribution method – hub delivery

- **Model:** Hub Delivery
- **Sites:** Nine distribution hubs. A hub is defined as a shared two-classroom open-plan learning space or a two-classroom block where students can access lunches easily without needing to walk much distance.
- **Delivery model:** External

Daily process



1. Lunches are delivered to the school at the start of the day and kept hot in insulated cambro boxes provided by the supplier.
2. Under supervision, a trained group of six students sort special dietary meals into bags. Bags and cambros are then labelled ready for collection.
3. Just before lunch cambros are collected by students of each hub.
4. Students eat in their classrooms under teacher supervision.
5. Classroom teachers oversee waste scraped off the aluminum trays into bags and return of the aluminum trays to the cambros.
6. Students return cambros to the central collection point at the end of the lunch break.
7. Surplus meals remain in the cambro boxes and are available again during the second lunch break.
8. Waste, aluminum trays and surplus meals are collected by the supplier the following day when lunches are delivered.

Wet weather plan

The same process is followed regardless of weather, with potential future consideration for using the canteen or hall kitchenette as a distribution location.

Staffing & resourcing

- **Student involvement:** Six trained students (Years 7–8)
- **Time required:** ~1 hour oversight and classroom support. Plus 10 minutes on days when snacks are provided
- **Staff involved:** One staff member who is the distribution lead, plus classroom teachers for support as required to oversee eating and waste management at each class hub
- **Paid staff time:** Distribution lead paid for 1 hour a day from distribution funding. Other teacher support is absorbed into current roles
- **Equipment:** No additional equipment required except for bags used for labelling special diet meals

Key efficiency gains

Distribution Model	Hub delivery
Staffing Time	~1 hour per day for 545 students
Additional Hires	None, but 1 hour paid to teacher aide who is the distribution lead
Waste	Effective in-class sorting and centralised collection reduce effort for managing food and packaging waste
Surplus meals	Meals remain in cambro boxes and are re-offered at second lunch break
Equipment needed	Minimal – no new purchases required, just bags for labelling meals
Insights	• Minimal staff involvement required beyond oversight and classroom support • A consistent, repeatable process that adapts well to daily school routines • A straightforward process is easier to manage and replicate • Student-led systems reduce staff workload and build leadership skills • Teacher buy-in and communication between classrooms are key to success.

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Case Study:

Efficient lunch distribution at Secondary Schools

School profile

- **Type:** Secondary School Year 9-15
- **Roll Size:** 895 students
- **Location:** Urban

Overview

This secondary school developed a streamlined lunch distribution system using the Grab and Go method.

Distribution method – Grab and Go model

Model: Grab and Go

Sites: Canteen

- Lunches collected from the canteen

Daily process

1. Lunches are delivered to the canteen at the start of the day at 9:30am.
2. At 10:30am one staff member sorts the dietaries into groupings of the same requirement, gets the cambro boxes with standard meals ready for service, lifting lids and getting sides and cutlery ready.
3. At 11:00am (first lunch break), a second staff member joins the first one in the canteen to supervise students collecting lunches and also manage student flow.
4. Students form two lines; one for standard lunches and one for special diets.
5. Surplus meals remain in cambros and are available again at the second lunch break from the canteen. Any remaining surplus meals after the second lunch service are left in the cambros and are picked up by the supplier the following day when lunches are delivered.

Wet weather plan

The same process is followed regardless of the weather.

Staffing & resourcing

- **Student involvement:** None
- **Time required:** 1.5 to 3 hours
- **Staff Involved:** One staff member sorting and getting ready for service, second staff member helping supervise
- **Equipment:** None required as everything is distributed from canteen window.

Key efficiency gains

Distribution model	Grab and Go
Staffing Time	1.5 – 3 hours per day for 895 students
Additional Hires	None but an extension of hours for main staff member
Waste	School bins
Surplus meals	Meals remain in cambro boxes and are re-offered at second lunch service. The remaining surplus meals are collected by the supplier the following day
Equipment required	None
Insights	**For schools this size, the Grab and Go model provides several benefits:** • Uptake is consistently high as meals are easy to access • Students have independence • Waste is reduced as a direct result of increased uptake • Additional staff time comes from distribution funding • Operational simplicity: Grab and Go is repeatable and suitable for daily school routines • Uses existing school spaces and resources to minimise infrastructure investment • No wet weather adaptation required