



## Nutrition Guidelines for Schools

### What are healthy eating and nutrition guidelines?

Nutrition guidelines are a written document, outlining the rationale, goals and/or procedures that a school or district plans to implement for its school community, including students, parents and staff, regarding food and nutrition.

- The most effective guidelines are those tailored to the specific needs of an individual school or district. Although there are many commonalities, school nutrition guidelines may vary.
- School nutrition guidelines vary from comprehensive to brief. Some include specific nutrient standards, while other provide an overall vision with general guidance and leave more room for later interpretation.
- School nutrition guidelines are not static documents. They may start with a few simple goals related to vending or a la carte food sales – and later expand to include standards for everything food-related, from classroom nutrition education to catering at special events. They need to be reviewed and revised annually to ensure effectiveness, consistency, and accuracy.
- Written nutrition guidelines need to guide program implementation. The school community should be informed of the guidelines and guidelines need to promote consistent, accurate nutrition messages throughout the school campus. In a “best practice” scenario, school district nutrition guidelines should be adopted by the local board of education.
- Nutrition guidelines are part of comprehensive school health planning. In a “best practice” scenario they are aligned with policies related to physical activity, staff wellness, and other components of a coordinated school health approach.

### What are the benefits of school nutrition guidelines?

Healthy eating guidelines offer many benefits to a school or district – starting with bringing people together to develop a policy.

- The process of planning school nutrition guidelines is one effective way to **build partnerships and gather support** for the changes that will be made once the policy is put into place. The development process is also an excellent time to **assess the current nutrition environment** – and to **prioritize concerns** that are most important to a particular school or district.
- Nutrition guidelines can be **used as an educational tool**. Improving school nutrition environments requires that many stakeholders be informed about the underlying issues. Guidelines can **condense need-to-know information** about health, nutrition and education into a document for school staff, administrators, teachers, students, and parents; community leaders, vendors, politicians, and other involved in making changes.
- Changing a school nutrition environment often requires more than just education. The need for change must be ‘sold’ to potential supporters, opinion leaders and opponents within the school and the community. Nutrition guidelines can **become a tool for marketing the needed changes**.
- One obvious benefit of nutrition guidelines is that they **provide criteria for making decisions**. The more specific the guidelines are, the easier it is to make decisions about food and nutrition issues as they arise.
- Finally, as changes are made in a school, nutrition guidelines also **become a way to evaluate progress** toward a healthy nutrition environment.

# Sample Nutrition Guidelines for Schools

On the following pages are examples of school district and state-level nutrition guidelines, representing different approaches – from very brief to comprehensive.

## An example of brief guidelines:

- **Grand Forks School District, Grand Forks, North Dakota**  
Grand Forks School District Policy 6175  
Nutrition Education Practices

## An example of more extensive guidelines:

- **FAIR School, Crystal, Minnesota**  
Food and Physical Activity Policy: A Model for the Future  
From: <http://www.mnschoolhealth.com/publications/hhSpring01.pdf>

## Two examples of comprehensive guidelines:

- **School Union #106, Calais, Maine**  
Model School Vending Machine Policy
- **Mercedes Independent School District, Mercedes, Texas**  
Student Nutrition/Wellness Plan  
Administrative Policy, March 5, 2002  
From: <http://www.mercedes.k12.tx.us/menus/misdnutritionpolicy.pdf>

## An example of state-level guidelines:

- **West Virginia Department of Education**  
Standards for School Nutrition Policy  
Series 86, Policy 4321.1  
From: <http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/p4321.1.html>
- ⇒ See also ***Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: A School Health Policy Guide*** from the National Association of State Boards of Education (Alexandria, VA: 2000) for direction on establishing an overall policy framework for school health programs and specific policies on various topics, including school nutrition. Designed for use by states, school districts, and individual schools, the guide is organized around sample policies that reflect best practice, which can be adapted to fit local circumstances.  
[http://www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/healthy\\_eating.html](http://www.nasbe.org/HealthySchools/healthy_eating.html)

**Grand Forks School District, Grand Forks, North Dakota**

Grand Forks School District Policy 6175  
Nutrition Education Practices

Eating habits are learned early in life, and school board interventions are indicated as potential key components in achieving public health improvement goals. Poor nutrition and fitness habits are the root causes of several serious public health problems in America. Therefore, the school board supports a school environment that promotes and encourages lifelong nutritious eating habits.

The board provides the following guidelines for healthy nutrition practices.

- Administrators, staff and extracurricular groups shall ensure that all school activities, including classroom practices and incentives, are consistent with the sound nutrition practices taught in the classroom and implemented in the school meal programs.
- School administrators will monitor fundraising activities in order to ensure that they are not in conflict with sound nutrition messages.
- School personnel serve as nutrition educators and role models for healthy lifestyles.
- The Child Nutrition program will provide meals that comply with or exceed federal and state standards.
- School personnel will collaborate with parents and the community to support these guidelines and the promotion of lifelong healthy nutrition habits.

Legal reference: Federal Regulation 7CFR Sec./210.11

Policy Adopted: January 27, 2003

### **FAIR School, Crystal, Minnesota**

Food and Physical Activity Policy: A Model for the Future  
<http://www.mnschoolhealth.com/publications/hhSpring01.pdf>

The Fine Arts Interdisciplinary Resource (FAIR) School, a fourth through eighth grade magnet school in Crystal, Minnesota, has implemented one of the state's first extensive physical activity and nutrition policies. The school was designed as a national model to celebrate diversity, creativity and the arts. It is not only unique in this respect but also in its vision and commitment to provide a healthier physical activity and nutrition environment for its students.

Schools are a natural setting to promote healthy eating and physical activity. With that in mind, the FAIR school staff, the Robbinsdale school food service, the University of Minnesota School of Public Health and the Hennepin County Community Health Department together developed the Healthier School Food and Physical Activity Policy. The goal was to implement a school policy that would:

- Make healthy food selections and physical activity an integral part of the education day
- Foster healthful nutrition and physical activity behaviors in students

### **Healthier School Food and Physical Activity Policy**

#### **School Meals**

- School meals will reflect USDA regulations and will contain 30% of calories from fat over five days.
- The school food service staff will work to:
  - Offer breakfast for all students
  - Attractively offer at least two fruits and two vegetables daily
  - Offer a table with extra bread, vegetables and fruit
  - Provide 20 minutes for students to eat lunch and 10 minutes to eat breakfast
  - Exclude fast food vendors from the school food service environment

#### **Other Food Choices at School**

- The sale of all foods on school grounds will be under the direction of the school food service program, except those sold for fund-raising activities.
- Food sales, a la carte foods, foods brought into the classroom, and foods offered at school functions will:
  - Contain 7 grams of fat or less per serving
  - Will not be encouraged or promoted if they have sugar listed as the main ingredient
  - Bottled water and fruit juice will be available for sale throughout the school day from the a la carte line.
- Fund-raising activities will emphasize the sale of non-food items.

- If foods are sold for fund-raising activities they will not be sold while school food service meals are served.

### **Vending Machines**

- Vending machines will not be available for student use.

### **Partnerships**

- Partnerships between businesses and the school that influence the school food environment will be designed to meet the identified educational need of the school, not commercial motives.
- The nutrition and physical activity curricula TEENS (Teens Eating for Energy and Nutrition at Schools) and CATCH (Child and Adolescent Trial for Cardiovascular Health) and other pertinent programs will be available for teachers' use in the classroom.

### **Physical Activity Policies**

- Every student will be encouraged to participate in physical education or dance classes.
- Skills and habits for a lifetime of regular physical activity will be emphasized.
- Physical education classes will provide a variety of activities and will meet the needs of all students.
- Physical activity curricula will be designed to encourage all students to be physically active for at least 50% of the physical education class.
- School personnel will not withhold physical education class from students as a punishment.
- Elementary children will have the opportunity to engage in daily recess. Recess will complement -- and not be substituted for -- physical education classes.

**School Union #106, Calais, Maine**  
Model School Vending Machine Policy  
(adopted by schools in various forms)

I. Purpose of the Policy

To improve the health of our children by promoting healthy food and beverage choices by replacing non-nutritious foods and beverages with more nutritious choices in vending machines.

II. Rationale

*“When children are taught in the classroom about good nutrition and the value of healthy food choices but are surrounded by vending machines, snack bars, school stores, and a la carte sales offering low nutrient density options, they receive the message that good nutrition is merely an academic exercise that is not supported by the school administration and is therefore not important to their health or education.” (Foods Sold in Competition with USDA School Meal Programs. US Dept. of Agriculture 2001.)*

The health of our children is of utmost importance to the future of our society. As great progress has been made toward understanding and treating many diseases, society is also recognizing the importance of establishing preventive health habits early in life in order to reduce the risks of developing diet related diseases. Many chronic diseases including heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis and cancer, are related to lifestyle risk factors including poor nutrition and physical inactivity.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, overweight and obesity are at epidemic proportions. The prevalence of overweight among youth ages 6-17 years in the U.S. has more than doubled in the past 30 years; most of the increase has occurred since the late 1970s. Overweight children and adolescents are much more likely to develop Type 2 diabetes and to become overweight adults, with increased risk for developing heart disease and stroke, gallbladder disease, arthritis, and endometrial, breast, prostate and colon cancers. Left unabated, the Surgeon General states, overweight and obesity may soon cause as much preventable disease and death as cigarette smoking.

As stated in Oral Health America: A Report of the U.S. Surgeon General, tooth decay continues to be the single most common chronic childhood disease. The connection between tooth decay and the consumption of foods high in sugar has long been known. Untreated oral diseases can interrupt a child’s normal development and learning. Early tooth loss caused by dental decay can result in failure to thrive, impaired speech development, absence from school, inability to concentrate in school, and a low self-esteem. Poor oral health has been related to decreased school performance, poor social relationships, and less success later in life. Children experiencing pain are distracted and unable to concentrate on schoolwork. Oral health is integral to children’s overall health and well-being.

According to the Center for Science in the Public Interest, as teens have doubled or tripled their consumption of soft drinks, they cut their consumption of milk, an important source of calcium, by more than 40%. Few teens consume the recommended amount of calcium. Getting enough calcium in the diet during childhood, adolescence and young adulthood is essential to reduce the risk for osteoporosis later in life. This is particularly important for females.

While many people believe that addressing nutrition related problems is a personal responsibility, they are only partially correct. It is also a community responsibility and schools have been identified as key settings to both teach and model responsible health behavior. In the October 2001 “Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity,” the Surgeon General of the United States specifically recommends that schools adopt policies ensuring that school environments contribute to eating patterns consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2000*. While often schools struggle to raise needed funds, financial considerations should be secondary to the health and well-being of our children.

### III. Definitions

(adapted from U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)/Nutrition Labeling and Education Act of 1990 (NLEA))

- Juice is defined as 100 percent fruit/vegetable juice and that information must be included on the label
- Low-fat items is defined as 3 grams or less of fat per serving
- Low-saturated fat is defined as 1 gram or less of saturated fat per serving
- Healthy food is defined as follows:
  - Must be low in fat (3 gram or less per serving) and low in saturated fat (1 gram or less per serving) and contain limited amounts of cholesterol (60 mg or less per serving) and sodium (cannot exceed 360 mg per serving).
  - Foods that are not raw fruits or vegetables must provide at least 10 percent of the daily value of one or more of the following nutrients per serving: vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein, and fiber. Exempt from this “10-percent” rule are certain raw, canned, and frozen fruits and vegetables and certain cereal-grain products.
- Water – should not contain sugar or added caffeine or other ingredients
- Low-sugar cereal – (defined by *Women, Infants and Children’s Nutrition Program (WIC)* and *Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)*) as 6 grams of sugar or less per 100 grams of cereal.
- Foods of minimal nutritional value – (a) in the case of artificially sweetened foods, a food which provides less than 5% of the Reference Daily Intake (RDI) for each of eight specified nutrients per serving; (b) in the case of all other foods, a food which provides less than 5% of the RDI for each of eight specified nutrients per 100 calories and less than 5% of the RDI for each of eight specified nutrients per serving. The eight nutrients to be assessed for this purpose are protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, niacin, riboflavin, thiamin, calcium and iron. Authority: 20MRSA Section 6602(5)

\*\*Note: Schools that participate in the national school lunch program must meet the criteria for foods of minimum nutritional value.

### IV. Vending Machine Policy

In all schools within the district, only items recommended for school vending machines by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and that meet or exceed the 5% minimum nutritional value rule (see Section III.), and water shall be sold in any school vending machine at any time of the day or evening. If items other than those on the CDC recommended list are to be sold, they must first be approved by (*identify school personnel/committee assigned to this task*) and meet the definition of a healthy food.

Allowable vending machine items include:

**Beverages**

Fruit juice and vegetable juice (100%)  
Low-fat (one percent) or skim milk  
Water

**Snacks**

Canned fruit (*packed in 100% juice/No sugar added*)  
Fresh fruit (e.g. apples and oranges)  
Fresh vegetables (e.g. carrots)  
Low-fat crackers and cookies, such as fig bars and ginger snaps  
Pretzels  
Bread products (e.g. bread sticks, rolls, bagels, and pita bread)  
Ready-to-eat, low-sugar cereals (*6g sugar or less per 100g cereal*)  
Granola bars made with unsaturated fat  
Low-fat or non-fat yogurt  
Snack mixes of cereal and dried fruit with a small amount of nuts and seeds\*  
(*low-sugar cereal*)  
Raisins and other dried fruit\* (*No sugar added*)  
Peanut butter and low-fat crackers\*\*

\*Some schools might not want to offer these items because these foods can contribute to tooth decay.

\*\*Some schools might not want to offer peanut butter; although it is low in saturated fatty acids, peanut butter is high in total fat.

**Optional Sections**

**V. Soda “Pouring Rights” Contracts**

The school shall not enter into a contract with any soda company that requires items to be sold in vending machines other than those from the Vending Machine Policy, Section IV.

**VI. Food Sold During Fundraising Activities**

To create a school environment that supports the promotion of healthy food and beverage choices for children, it is important to consider all venues where food and beverages are sold. These venues include fundraising, fundraising events; concession stands at sporting and other events, school stores and a la carte meal items. The following recommendations are made to promote healthy choices for children related to fundraising activities supported by the school.

- (a) Offer only non-food items as the items that raise funds such as books, gift wrap, candles, plants, flowers, school promotional items, etc.
- (b) Whenever food and beverages are sold that raise funds for the school, include food and beverage choices from the Vending Machine Policy, Section IV.  
Whenever food and beverages are offered in celebration or support of school fundraising activities, include food and beverage choices from the Vending Machine Policy, Section IV.

**VII. Advertising**

Except as permitted in subsection (d), it shall be unlawful for any public school in this district, or any other entity or person acting on behalf of any public school in this district to:

- (a) Enter into a contract that grants exclusive advertising of any product or service throughout the district to a person, business, or corporation;

- (b) Enter into a contract or permit a school within the district to enter into a contract for products or services that requires the dissemination of advertising to pupils, including logos on facilities or informational equipment such as a scoreboard or banner with an educational message, or allow any person, corporation or business to gather or obtain information from students for the purposes of market research.
- (c) Contracts entered into prior to the operative date of this policy may not be renewed if they conflict with this policy.
- (d) Nothing in this policy shall affect the ability of any public school in this district, or any other entity or person acting on behalf of any public school in this district to: (1) public advertising in any school newspaper, other school periodical, web pages, or yearbook, (2) distribute advertising or market research as part of curriculum on advertising, marketing, media literacy; or, (3) post signs indicating the public's appreciation for financial or other support from any person, business or corporation for the educational program in any school district.
- (e) The term "advertising" means the commercial use, by any person, company, business, or corporation, of any media including, but not limited to, newspaper or other printed material or flyer or circular, radio, television, video or any other electronic technology, outdoor sign, or billboard in order transmit a message with information:
  - (1) offering any good or service for sale, or
  - (2) for the purpose of causing or inducing any other person to purchase any good or service, or
  - (3) that is directed toward increasing the general demand for any good or service

**Mercedes Independent School District, Mercedes, Texas**

Student Nutrition/Wellness Plan

Administrative Policy, March 5, 2002

<http://www.mercedes.k12.tx.us/menus/misdnutritionpolicy.pdf>

**Purpose and Goal:**

The link between nutrition and learning is well documented. Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Healthy eating is demonstrably linked to reduced risk for mortality and development of many chronic diseases as adults. Schools have a responsibility to help students and staff establish and maintain lifelong, healthy eating patterns. Well-planned and well-implemented school nutrition programs have been shown to positively influence students' eating habits.

All students shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious and enjoyable food choices for a lifetime. In addition, staff are encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life. The Mercedes Independent School District shall prepare, adopt and implement a comprehensive plan to encourage healthy eating and physical activity. This plan shall make effective use of school and community resources and equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in cultural norms.

**Component 1: A Commitment to Nutrition and Physical Activity**

- A. The Mercedes Independent School District administration shall appoint a Comprehensive School Health Committee whose mission shall be to address nutrition and physical activity issues and will develop, implement, and evaluate guidelines that support a healthy school nutrition environment. This committee shall offer revisions to these guidelines annually or more often if necessary.
- B. Principals will address concerns such as kinds of foods available on their campus, sufficient mealtime, nutrition education and physical activity.
- C. Nutrition education shall be integrated across the curriculum and physical activity will be encouraged daily.
- D. The school food service staff will participate in making decisions and guidelines that will affect the school nutrition environment.

**Component 2: Quality School Meals**

- A. The Mercedes Independent School District will offer breakfast, lunch, and after school snack programs and will participate in a district-wide universal feeding program providing meals at no charge to all students. Students and staff are highly encouraged to promote and participate in these programs.
- B. School foodservice staff that is properly qualified according to current professional standards and regularly participate in professional development activities will administer the Child Nutrition Programs.
- C. Food safety will be a key part of the school foodservice operation.
- D. Menus will meet the nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, conforming to good menu planning principles, and featuring a variety of healthy choices that are tasty, attractive, of excellent quality, and are served at the proper temperature.
- E. Students will be given the opportunity to provide input on local, cultural, and ethnic favorites of the students.

- F. School personnel, along with parents, will encourage students to choose and consume full meals. Positive nutrition statements will be provided to students on a daily basis.

### **Component 3: Other Healthy Food Options**

- A. The Comprehensive School Health Committee will develop and recommend to the administration guidelines on nutrition standards for food and beverages offered through parties, celebrations, social events and any school functions. See Attachment A.
- B. All food and beverages available to students anywhere at school will include food items that are low in saturated fat, sodium, and sugar which should be marketed to encourage selection by students. See Attachment A.
- C. Food and beverages of minimal nutritional value should not be sold in competition with school meals during school meal service hours. At elementary schools any vending machines must be located in teacher lounges. See Attachment B.
- D. School staff shall use food as a reward for student accomplishment sparingly, and at the elementary level only after 2:00 p.m. during the school day. The withholding of food as punishment for students is prohibited. For example, restricting a child's selection of flavored milk due to misbehavior in the classroom.
- E. The school district will provide nutritional information to parents that will encourage parents to provide safe and nutritious foods for their children.
- F. The Mercedes Independent School District highly encourages organizations to use non-food items or foods designed for delivery and consumption after school hours (i.e., barbecue plates) as a means to raise funds.

### **Component 4: Pleasant Eating Experiences**

- A. Facility design will be given priority in renovations and new construction.
- B. Drinking fountains will be available for students to get water at meals and throughout the day.
- C. A short snack-free recess for elementary campuses is encouraged to be scheduled sometime before lunch so that children will come to lunch less distracted and ready to eat.
- D. School personnel will assist all students in developing the healthy practice of washing hands before eating.
- E. School personnel will schedule enough time so students do not have to spend too much time waiting in line.
- F. Schools should not schedule tutoring, pep rallies, assemblies, club/organization meetings and other activities during meal times.
- G. A minimum 30-minute uninterrupted lunch period should be scheduled to allow students to eat, relax and socialize.
- H. Schools will encourage socializing among students, and between students and adults. Adults will properly supervise dining rooms and serve as role models to students by demonstrating proper conduct and voice level, and by eating with the students. Parents are highly encouraged to dine with students in the cafeteria.
- I. Creative, innovative methods will be used to keep noise levels appropriate.

### **Component 5: Nutrition Education**

- A. Mercedes Independent School District will follow health education curriculum standards and guidelines as stated by the Texas Education Agency. Schools will link nutrition education activities with the coordinated school health program.
- B. Students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 will receive nutrition education that is interactive and teaches the skills they need to adopt healthy eating behaviors. Teachers are encouraged to integrate nutrition education into core curriculum areas such as math, science, social studies and language arts as applicable.

- C. Nutrition education will be offered in the school dining room and in the classroom, with coordination between school foodservice staff and teachers. Teachers can display posters, videos, websites, etc. on nutrition topics.
- D. Mercedes ISD campuses will participate in USDA nutrition programs such as “Team Nutrition” and conduct nutrition education activities and promotions that involve students, parents and the community. The school nutrition team responsible for these activities will be composed of Child Nutrition Services staff, Student Services staff, school nurses, health teachers and physical education coaches.

**Component 6: Marketing**

- A. Students will receive positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal, about healthy eating and physical activity throughout the school setting. All school personnel will help reinforce these positive messages.
- B. Schools will consider student need in planning for a healthy school nutrition environment. Students will be asked for input and feedback through the use of student surveys, and attention will be given to their comments.
- C. Schools will promote healthy food choices and will not allow advertising that promotes less nutritious food choices.
- D. Healthy eating and physical activity will be actively promoted to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at registration, PTO meetings, Open Houses, Health Fairs, teacher in-services, etc.
- E. Schools will work with a variety of media to spread the word to the community about a healthy school nutrition environment, such as local newspaper and television stations.

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**Attachment A**

**Mercedes Independent School District**

**Student Nutrition/Wellness Plan**

**Guidelines for Food and Beverages Offered to Students at School Functions**

At any school function (parties, celebrations, receptions, festivals, sporting events, etc.) healthy food choice options should be available to students. Some suggested foods are listed below to include on refreshment tables, price lists, etc.

- Raw vegetable sticks/slices with low-fat dressing or yogurt dip
- Fresh fruit and 100% fruit juices
- Frozen fruit juice pops
- Dried fruits (raisins, banana chips, etc.)
- Trail Mix (dried fruits and nuts)
- Dry roasted peanuts, tree nuts and soy nuts (not coconut or palm nuts)
- Low-fat meats and cheese sandwiches (use low-fat mayonnaise in chicken/tuna salads)
- Party Mix (variety of cereals, nuts, pretzels, etc.)
- Low-sodium crackers
- Baked corn chips & fat-free potato chips with salsa and low-fat dips (Ranch, French Onion, bean, etc.)
- Low-fat muffins, granola bars and cookies

- Angel food and sponge cakes
- Flavored yogurt & fruit parfaits
- Jell-O and low-fat pudding cups
- Low-fat ice creams, frozen yogurts, sherbets
- Low-fat and skim milk products
- Pure ice cold water

**Foods to avoid – Consume only occasionally**

- Carbonate and caffeinated beverages (soft drinks, tea, & coffee)
- High sugar content candies and desserts
- High fat foods (fried foods like French fries, fatty meats, most cheeses, buttery popcorn)
- High sodium foods (luncheon meats, cheeses, chips, salty popcorn, pickles)

In selecting food items to offer keep in mind the numerous students and adults who are on special diets and their consumption of sugar, fat, sodium, etc. is restricted.

The use of foods of minimal nutritional value as learning incentives should be kept to a minimum, and healthy food choices or non-food items should be substituted.

Organizations operating concessions at school functions should include at least some healthy food choices in their offerings. It is recommended that groups market these healthy options at a lower profit margin to encourage selection by students.

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**Attachment B**  
**Mercedes Independent School District**  
**Student Nutrition/Wellness Plan**  
**Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value as Defined by USDA**

These foods may not be sold to students on a school campus during meal service hours (breakfast and lunch):

- Soda Water – any carbonated beverage (even water). No product shall be excluded from this definition because it contains discrete nutrients added to the food such as vitamins, minerals and protein.
- Water Ices – any frozen, sweetened water such as “...sicles” and flavored ice with the exception of products that contain fruit or fruit juice.
- Chewing Gum – any flavored products from natural or synthetic gums and other ingredients that form an insoluble mass for chewing.
- Certain Candies – any processed foods made predominantly from sweeteners or artificial sweeteners with a variety of minor ingredients that characterize the following types:
- Hard Candy – A product made predominantly from sugar (sucrose) and corn syrup that may be flavored and colored, is characterized by a hard, brittle texture and includes such

items as sour balls, lollipops, fruit balls, candy sticks, starlight mints, after dinner mints, jaw breakers, sugar wafers, rock candy, cinnamon candies, breath mints and cough drops.

- Jellies and Gums – A mixture of carbohydrates that are combined to form a stable gelatinous system of jellylike character and are generally flavored and colored, and include gum drops, jelly beans, jellied and fruit-flavored slices.
- Marshmallow Candies – An aerated confection composed of sugar, corn syrup, invert sugar 20 percent water and gelatin or egg white to which flavors and colors may be added.
- Fondant – A product consisting of microscopic-sized sugar crystals that are separated by a thin film of sugar and/or invert sugar in solution such as candy corn, soft mints.
- Licorice – A product made predominantly from sugar and corn syrup that is flavored with an extract made from the licorice root.
- Spun Candy – A product that is made from sugar that has been boiled at high temperature and spun at a high speed in a special machine.
- Candy Coated Popcorn – Popcorn that is coated with a mixture made predominantly from sugar and corn syrup.

**West Virginia Department of Education**  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION POLICY  
Series 86, Policy 4321.1  
<http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/p4321.1.html>

**BACKGROUND:**

Standards for School Nutrition establishes standards for foods served and/or sold to students in schools during the school day. The policy sets forth management and meal service practices based upon an integrated approach to school-wide nutrition integrity. Staffing recommendations include minimum qualifications for county nutrition program directors.

**PURPOSE:**

A qualified school nutrition program director is essential in planning and managing school nutrition programs, including centralizing operations, developing and monitoring compliance with Standards for School Nutrition, implementing the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, ensuring district accountability and implementing nutrition education and training programs. The proposed policy revision establishes requirements for the position of school nutrition program director.

**CONTENTS:**

Proposed revisions reflect the following changes:

1. Requires each county superintendent to designate a school nutrition director beginning 2002-2003 school year;
2. Requires authorization for school nutrition directors;
3. Establishes requirements for initial school nutrition director authorization;
4. Establishes requirements for renewal of the authorization; and
5. Changes references to "qualified county director of nutrition" to "authorized school nutrition program director."

**IMPACT:**

Proposed revisions will help to ensure that school nutrition program directors possess the knowledge and skills required for effective management and attainment of high nutrition standards set forth in this policy. No additional financial outlay is required.

**TITLE 126**  
**LEGISLATIVE RULE**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**SERIES 86**  
**STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION (4321.1)**

**§126-86-1. General.**

1.1. Scope - This legislative rule establishes nutrition standards for foods served and/or sold to students in schools during the school day. The procedures relate both to nutritional standards of school meals and additional snacks, including foods and beverages sold or served to students.

1.2. Authority - W. Va. Constitution, Article XII, §2 and W. Va. Code §18-2-5.

1.3. Filing Date - . August 10, 2001

1.4. Effective Date - . September 9, 2001

1.5. Repeal of Former Rules - None - This is a revision of former rules filed in 1982 and revised in 1992, 1994 and 1997.

### **§126-86-2. Purpose.**

2.1. Good nutrition enhances learning and the quality of life. This plan reflects an integrated approach to ensuring a school environment that promotes optimal nutrition for students. Successful dietary changes must occur gradually. The intent of the policy is to enable schools to continue to provide students with choices while implementing changes progressively. For this reason, the policy implementation follows a tiered approach with target dates specified for each tier.

### **§126-86-3. Operational Definitions, Food Sales And Service.**

3.1. School day is defined as the time between the arrival of the first child at school and the end of the last scheduled instructional period.

3.2. Candy is defined as any food that, as served in its finished form, contains, by weight, 40 percent or more sugar (in crystalline form or in solution as syrup, both monosaccharides and disaccharides) and/or other sweetening agents, or any food product commonly referred to as "candy".

3.3. For the purposes of this policy "soft drinks" shall mean the same as "bottled soft drinks" as defined in Section 1, Article 19, Chapter 11 of the Code of West Virginia.

3.4. Chewing gum is defined as a preparation of chicle or other plastic substance sweetened and/or flavored for chewing.

3.5. Flavored ice bar is defined as a frozen confection consisting of water mixed with flavored syrups and/or powders, sugars and/or other sweetening agents, binders, stabilizers and/or emulsifiers.

3.6. Other foods are defined as any food or beverage, other than those served as part of the school meal, including snacks from vending machines, and foods sold during school hours for fund-raising purposes and foods for parties. Other foods do not include those brought to school by individual students for their own consumption.

3.7. Enrollment is defined as "head count".

3.8. Bottled water is defined as "water, bottled drinking water 100% pure natural spring water containing no additives."

3.9. High School - for the purposes of this rule, "high school" shall be defined as a school with a grade configuration of 9-12, 10-12 or 11-12.

### **§126-86-4. Nutrition Standards For School Nutrition Programs.**

4.1. All foods or beverages made available on school premises during the school day must meet the requirements of this policy.

4.2. County Boards of Education shall select for each school a USDA approved meal option that meets the Dietary Guidelines or one of two implementation options for lunch: Option A (4.1), based on 1994-95 meal patterns plus nutrient analysis standards; or Option B (4.2), on a WVDE Lunch Meal Pattern standard. The Breakfast Meal Pattern proposes a single implementation option (4.3). After-school programs which provide supplemental meals to children shall comply with standards of the policy. The sale or service of foods containing 40% or more added sugar by weight is prohibited (3.2).

4.3. No candy, soft drinks, chewing gum or flavored ice bars will be sold or served during the school day, except that, county boards may permit the sale of soft drinks in county high schools except during breakfast and lunch periods. The sale of such soft drinks shall be in compliance with the rules of the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program of the State Board and the nutrition service of the United States Department of Agriculture. Seventy-five percent of the profits from the sale of soft drinks shall be allocated by a majority vote of the faculty senate of each school and twenty-five percent of the profits from the sale of soft drinks shall be allocated to the purchases of necessary supplies by the principal of the school. No foods containing 40% or more sugar by weight will be sold or served. Any juice or juice product sold or served must contain a minimum of 20% real juice.

4.4. All "other foods" available during the instructional day shall reflect the Dietary Guidelines for fat by limiting the number of fat grams to not more than 8 per one ounce serving, or meet the USDA standard for a lunch component.

4.5. Lunch Implementation Option A\*.

4.5.1. School lunches shall meet 1994-95 USDA meal pattern requirements and averaged over a period of one week or one month, provide:

- a. at least one-third of students' RDAs for calories, protein, calcium, iron, vitamins A and C;
- b. limit calories from fat to no more than 30% and saturated fat to less than 10%;
- c. limit sodium to no more than 1100 mgs;
- d. at least 6g of naturally occurring dietary fiber; and
- e. offer water.

4.5.2. Require additional foods be provided to pregnant or lactating students so that breakfast and lunch together, or in combination with a snack, provide:

- a. a total of 5 oz. of protein foods, 1 oz. of which shall be 1 oz. cheese, 1 cup yogurt or 8 oz. fluid milk;
- b. 3 servings from the grain group, preferably from whole grains;
- c. 1 1/4 cups from the fruit and vegetable group, and
- d. 16 oz. from milk group.

4.5.3. In these additional foods, the following option shall be allowed:

- a. 1 cup of fruit in place of one serving of the grain group once a week.

4.5.4. \*The option to combine nutrient analysis of breakfast and lunch programs is allowable provided that such analysis is proportionate to the levels of participation in the two programs and in accordance with USDA guidance.

4.6. Lunch Implementation Option B \*\*\*.

| COMPONENT   | Grades K-3   | Grades 4-12  |
|---|--|--|
| FRUIT OR VEGETABLE**<br>C offer fresh produce whenever possible   | 1 cup<br>(At least 1/4 cup fresh 5 times/week)   | 1 1/4 cup<br>(at least 1/4 cup fresh 5 times/week)   |
| MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATE<br>C emphasize lean and lower sodium choices<br>C serve dried beans, dried peas or lentils at least once/week | 1 1/2 oz.<br>(at least 1/2 cup dried beans, dried peas or lentils/week)  | 2 oz.<br>(at least 1/2 cup dried beans, dried peas or lentils/week)  |
| BREAD/BREAD ALTERNATE**<br>C emphasize whole grain products   | 1.5 day and 10/week<br>(at least 5 servings/week contain at least 33% whole grain or 5g whole grain per 1 oz.) | 1.5 day and 12/week****<br>(at least 5 servings/week contain at least 33% whole grain or 5g whole grain per 1 oz.) |
| MILK<br>C offer lower fat choices   | 8 fl. oz.<br>offer only milk with 2% or less butterfat*  | 8 fl. oz.<br>offer only milk with 2% or less butterfat*  |
| WATER<br>C encourage adequate water consumption   | offer water  | offer water  |

\* Requires prior approval from USDA.

\*\* Snack Option may be chosen (see 7.1).

\*\*\* Require additional foods for pregnant and lactating students as specified in "Lunch Implementation Option A".

\*\*\*\* When 12 servings of bread are served per week, a total of two of the bread servings, but not more than one per day, may be grain-based desserts.

4.7. Breakfast Implementation Option \*\*.

| COMPONENT  | Grades K-12   |
|--|---|
| MILK<br>C Offer lower fat choices                                      | 8 fl. oz.<br>C offer only milk with 2% or less butterfat* |
| FRUIT/VEGETABLE<br>C offer daily a fruit, juice or vegetable that is a | 1/2 cup   |

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| good source of vitamin C |  |
|--------------------------|--|

May choose one serving from each of the following components or two servings from one

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| BREAD/BREAD ALTERNATE<br>C offer whole grain varieties often    | 1 or 2 servings       |
| MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATE<br>C encourage low-fat and low-salt choices | 1 serving recommended |

*\* Requires prior approval from USDA.*

*\*\* Require additional foods for pregnant and lactating students as specific in "Lunch Implementation Option A".*

#### 4.8. Nutrition Standards For Other Foods Consumed At School (K-12).

4.8.1. Develop or expand meal service options to improve accessibility of school meals and acceptability of school meals for all students.

4.8.2. Require that all "other foods" available during the school day reflect the Dietary Guidelines for fat by limiting the number of fat grams to not more than 8 per ounce serving, or meet the 1994-95 USDA standard for a lunch component.

4.8.3. No candy, soft drinks, chewing gum or flavored ice bars will be sold or served during the school day, except that, county boards may permit the sale of soft drinks in county high schools except during breakfast and lunch periods. The sale of such soft drinks shall be in compliance with the rules of the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program of the State Board and the nutrition service of the United States Department of Agriculture. Seventy-five percent of the profits from the sale of soft drinks shall be allocated by majority vote of the faculty senate of each school and twenty-five percent of the profits from the sale of soft drinks shall be allocated to the purchases of necessary supplies by the principal of the school. No foods containing 40% or more sugar by weight will be sold or served. Any juice or juice product sold or served must contain a minimum of 20% real juice.

#### **§126-86-5. A La Carte Sales.**

5.1. Only meal components may be sold as a la carte items for breakfast, and only fluid milk, milkshakes and bottled water may be sold as a la carte items for lunch.

#### **§126-86-6. Availability Of Drinking Water.**

6.1. All student dining facilities shall contain a drinking water dispenser, or water shall be offered with meals for student consumption.

#### **§126-86-7. Adequate Time For Meal Consumption.**

7.1. Adequate time shall be allowed for student meal consumption. Minimum time allowance (eating time for each student after being served the meal) for student consumption of meals shall be ten minutes for breakfast and twenty minutes for lunch.

##### 7.1.1. Snack Options For Meals

Schools may choose to allow adequate time for consumption of increased volume of food by extending the meal period or by providing a snack under the following stipulations:\*(Note: Prior USDA approval is required to provide the fruit/vegetable snack option for lunch.)

- a. The snack is offered as a separate item at breakfast or lunch for ----consumption later.
- b. The snack item may be a single serving of bread/bread alternate, fruit or vegetable.
- c. If the snack option is chosen, school administrators and teachers should support this effort by providing students with the time and opportunity to eat these snacks during the day.
- d. Timing of the snack should be determined by individual school choosing this option.
- e. The price of the meals may not be increased solely as a result of choosing this option. (Note: No federal reimbursements exist for snacks outside the lunch or breakfast meals).
- f. Schools choosing this snack option may elect to sell the same snack foods to students who do not purchase a school meal.

#### **§126-86-8. Compliance/Accountability.**

8.1. County boards of education and local school administrators shall provide a nutritionally healthful school environment for students and accountability for all funds from food and beverage sales. Compliance evaluation shall include, but is not limited to:

8.1.1. The Performance Based Accreditation System that includes specified compliance standard(s) and verification procedures.

8.1.2. Monitoring sales and service of "other foods". Sanctions for non-compliance shall include transfer of purchasing authority for food and beverage items from the school to the county level.

#### **§126-86-9. Staffing.**

9.1. Each county superintendent shall designate a school nutrition program director. Beginning with assignments made for the 2002-2003 school year, the school nutrition director must hold an Authorization endorsed for School Nutrition Program Director. An individual who is assigned as a school nutrition program director for the 2002-2003 school year shall be issued, upon recommendation from the county superintendent, an Authorization to continue working in this capacity AND shall renew such Authorization annually.

9.1.1. The applicant for initial authorization must provide evidence of satisfying the following:

- a. A minimum of a bachelor's degree with a 2.5 overall GPA and at least six semester hours of course work in nutrition, foods, and/or food service management; AND
- b. Receive the recommendation of the county superintendent verifying that the applicant is the most qualified candidate for the position.

9.1.2. The authorization shall be valid for one school year and shall expire on June 30.

9.1.3. The applicant for renewal of the Authorization for School Nutrition Program Director must provide evidence of satisfying the following:

- a. Completion of 15 clock hours of in-service credit related to Child Nutrition Programs and offered or approved by the West Virginia Department of Education; AND

b. Recommendation of the superintendent in the county in which the applicant is or was employed.

9.2. Since the availability of a full-time school nutrition program director at the county level is desirable for centralizing operations, developing and monitoring compliance with specification for foods, especially entrees, implementing the Dietary Guidelines, local district accountability, and for nutrition education and training, it is recommended that each county assign a full-time school nutrition director.

9.2.1. Suggested staffing:

a. One full-time authorized school nutrition program director;

b. One assistant school nutrition program director for each county where enrollment exceeds 10,000 students; and

c. Two secretaries or one secretary and one clerk for food service operations at the county level where enrollment exceeds 10,000 students.

9.2.2. Operational Definitions Relative To Staffing.

a. full-time is defined to mean a minimum of 220 days employment with exclusive nutrition program responsibilities.

#### **§126-86-10. Comprehensive County Plan To Address Health And Nutrition Re-Education.**

10.1. A comprehensive county plan shall be developed with the purpose of linking nutrition service and curriculum by establishing a wellness environment in schools, providing professional development and establishing an on-going evaluation process.

10.2. Development of the plan shall involve a broad spectrum of the school and community including health care providers, food service personnel, teachers, students and educational administrators.

#### **§126-86-11. Nutrition Advisory Council.**

11.1. A broad-based Nutrition Advisory Council shall be established by the West Virginia Department of Education for the purposes of keeping the West Virginia Board of Education apprised of current research findings in nutrition and assessing potential implications of findings for program development and implementation.

#### **§126-86-12. Evaluation Component.**

12.1. An evaluation/assessment component shall be established by the West Virginia Department of Education for the purpose of determining the effectiveness of this policy.