

Smart Snacks in School

Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in Schools: Information for Administrators

Smart Snacks in School are nutrition standards required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. This legislation mandated that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) establish nutrition standards for all foods sold in schools except foods and beverages sold under the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. These standards represent the minimum standards that local education agencies, school food authorities and schools must meet.

Healthier food for our children

In response to growing concerns over obesity, national attention has focused on the need to establish school nutrition standards and limit access to competitive foods. As a result, school nutrition policy initiatives have been put into place at the federal, state and local levels. The nutrition standards allow schools to offer healthier snack foods, while limiting junk food served to students. These nutrition standards are based on the 2007 Institute of Medicine's report entitled *Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools: Leading the Way toward Healthier Youth* and the 2015 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

Major Smart Snacks in School provisions

To be allowable, a competitive food item must have:

- Met all food standards
- Less than or equal to 35 percent calories from total fat as served
- Less than 10 percent calories from saturated fat as served
- Zero grams trans fat
- Less than or equal to 35 percent of weight from total sugar as served
- Snacks – must have less than or equal to 200 mg sodium; less than or equal to 200 calories
- Entrees – must have less than or equal to 480 mg sodium; less than or equal to 350 calories

To be allowable*, a competitive beverage item must be one of the following:

- Plain or carbonated water
- Low-fat milk (1 percent)
- Non-fat milk
- 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice
- 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water

*size allowances vary with school level. See *USDA Food and Nutrition Service Smart Snacks in School* resource for further information

High school, only:

- Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages (not more than 20 fluid ounces)

Definitions

Competitive food – All food and beverages, other than meals reimbursed under the National School Lunch and Breakfast programs, on the school campus at any time during the school day.

School day – The period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

Extended school day – Time students are at school after the regular school day, including, but not limited to, participation in extracurricular activities or childcare programs.

School campus – All areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day.

Food Standard – To be allowable, a competitive food item must:

- Be a whole grain-rich grain product (include 50 percent or more whole grains by weight or have whole grains as the first ingredient); or
- Have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food; or
- Be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup fruit and/or vegetable
- If water is the first ingredient, the second ingredient must be one of the above



- 20 fluid ounces: less than or equal to 5 calories per 8 fl. oz. or 10 calories per 20 fl. oz.
- 12 fluid ounces: less than or equal to 40 calories per 8 fl. oz. or 60 calories per 12 fl. oz.
- Beverage nutrition standards apply to the extended school day. The extended school day does not apply to food standards.

School food authority responsibilities

The school food authority responsibilities are to maintain records documenting compliance with competitive foods under the umbrella of the nonprofit food service.

Local education agency responsibilities

The local education agency responsibilities are to establish policies and procedures necessary to ensure compliance. This includes documenting and maintaining records for all competitive foods available for sale to students in areas under its jurisdiction and outside the control of the school food authority.

Food and beverage fundraisers

Food and beverage fundraisers, taking place on the school campus during the school day, must meet Smart Snacks in Schools food and nutrition standards. A special exemption to the standards is allowed. The Colorado Department of Education Office of School Nutrition will allow up to three exemptions per school building per school year. Exempted fundraiser foods or beverages may not be sold in competition with school meals on the school campus 30 minutes before to 30 minutes after each scheduled meal service.

Exemptions

The Smart Snacks in School standards do **not** apply to foods brought into the school by parents or other groups that are provided, but not sold.

Colorado specific regulations

Districts must also comply with the current *Colorado Healthy Beverage Policy* and the *Colorado Competitive Foodservice Policy* regulations when they are more restrictive than federal policy. For more information on Colorado specific regulations, please see the [Colorado Healthy Beverages and Competitive Food Policies document](#).

Where can I learn more?

- CDE Office of School Nutrition: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/nutricompetitivefoods.htm>
- USDA Food and Nutrition Service Smart Snacks in School: http://www.fns.usda.gov/school_meals/smart_snacks_school
- To view all CDE fact sheets, visit: www.cde.state.co.us/Communications/factsheetsandfaqs