

I recommend approving Policy 533 Wellness. The first reading of Policy 533 Wellness was conducted last month. The policy contains the revisions developed by MSBA Policy Service's Council of School Attorneys in 2010.

The updated policy reflects MS 121A.215 and 42 U.S.C. 1758b, which both became law in 2010. The revised policy does not reflect the PL 111-296, also known as the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, which was adopted in December of 2010.

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has convened an interagency workgroup including the US Department of Education, Health and Human Services, and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The USDA FNS will publish a final rule in the fall of 2013, which will provide additional regulations for public school food service programs including a model wellness policy.

The final rule by USDA FNS, reflecting PL 111-296, will require public schools to comply with the model wellness policy and show progress toward obtaining it's goals. I expect the MSBA Policy Service's Council of School Attorneys to update Policy 533 Wellness after the USDA FNS publishes their final rule in 2013.

Enclosures:

- 5-year Technical Assistance and Guidance Plan for Local School Wellness Policies (2010, drafted by USDA FNS, US DOE, and DHHS' CDC)
- Nutrition Standards For Foods In Schools (2009, published by CDC)

Given the additional stricter requirements to be imposed on school districts in 2013, it would not be prudent to approve a Wellness Policy less stringent than the 2010 MSBA Model Policy. To do so would be disruptive and confusing to students, staff, parents, and community members when we are required to comply with PL 111-296 in approximately 18 months.

Adopted: June 5, 2006

Revised: _____

533 WELLNESS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assure a school environment that promotes and protects students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The school board recognizes that nutrition education and physical education are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters student attendance and education.
- B. The school environment should promote and protect students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by encouraging healthy eating and physical activity.
- C. The school district encourages the involvement of students, parents, teachers, food service staff, and other interested persons in implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school district nutrition and physical activity policies.
- D. Children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive.
- E. All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- F. Qualified food service personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; try to accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

III. GUIDELINES

- A. Foods and Beverages
 - 1. ~~All foods and beverages made available on campus during regular school hours will be consistent with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.~~ **(including concessions and ala carte cafeteria items) will be consistent with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.**

Ala Carte Program

Food and beverage items sold in the ala carte program must meet the following criteria:

1. ~~Have 30 percent or less of its calories from fat (excluding nuts and seeds.)~~
 2. ~~Have 10 percent or less of its total calories from saturated fat.~~
 3. ~~Have no more than 35% total sugar by weight.~~
 4. ~~Items that are restricted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's list of Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value may not be offered in the program.~~
 5. ~~Fresh fruit, fresh vegetables and milk must be offered every day.~~
 6. ~~Food or beverage items containing artificial sweeteners are prohibited.~~
 7. ~~Plain unflavored water, 100% juice, milk, hot chocolate, and hot apple cider are the only beverages allowed for sale.~~
 8. ~~Breakfast cereals must contain whole grain.~~
 9. ~~Food items must be limited to the following maximum portion sizes:~~
 - a. ~~One and one half ounces of chips, crackers, popcorn, or cereal;~~
 - b. ~~Two and one half ounces for trail mix, nuts, seeds, or dried fruit;~~
 - c. ~~One and one half ounce for cookie or cereal bar;~~
 - d. ~~Two and one half ounces for muffins;~~
 - e. ~~Eight ounces for non-fat yogurt;~~
 - f. ~~One ounce for cheese and 3 ounces for meat;~~
 - g. ~~Twelve ounces or less for 100% juice~~
2. Food service personnel will take every measure to ensure that student access to foods and beverages meet or exceed all federal, state, and local laws and guidelines.
 3. Food service personnel shall adhere to all federal, state, and local food safety and security guidelines.

Hot Lunch Program

~~The district will meet the guidelines for Reimbursable School Meals. These guidelines require schools to serve meals to students that meet federal program regulations and nutrition standards. Meals must also be consistent with the latest Dietary Guidelines for Americans including serving a variety of foods: grain products, vegetables and fruits; meals that are moderate in sugar and salt; and no more than 30% calories from fat and less than 10% calories from saturated fat over a weeks time. In addition, lunches must provide, on average over each school week, at least 1/3 of the Recommended Dietary Allowance for protein, iron, calcium, and vitamins A and C.~~

~~The district will use the Enhanced Food-Based Menu Planning meal pattern to assure that the guidelines for Reimbursable School Meals are met.~~

4. The school district will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.
5. The school district will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
6. The school district will make every effort to provide students with sufficient time (~~no less than 15 minutes~~) to eat after sitting down for school meals and will schedule meal periods at appropriate times during the school day.
7. The school district will discourage tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.

B. School Food Service Program/Personnel

1. The school district will provide healthy and safe school meal programs that strictly comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations.
2. The school district shall designate an appropriate person to be responsible for the school district's food service program, whose duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available on campus to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
3. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, the school district will ~~notify all food service personnel in schools of~~ provide continuing professional development opportunities for all food service personnel in schools.

C. Nutrition Education and Promotion

1. The school district will encourage and support healthy eating by students and engage in nutrition promotion that is:
 - a. offered as part of a comprehensive program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;

- b. part of health education classes as well as classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects, where appropriate; and
 - c. enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and includes participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, and field trips.
2. The school district will encourage all students to make age appropriate, healthy selections of foods and beverages, including those sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs, such as through ala carte [snack] lines, vending machines, fundraising events, concession stands, and student stores.
 3. Schools will **not limit** the use of foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior (unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual education plan or behavior intervention plan) ~~If food or beverages are used, a healthy alternative will be provided. Schools shall~~ **and will** not withhold food or beverages as punishment.

D. Physical Activity

1. Students need opportunities for physical activity and to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior. Toward that end, health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities such as watching television;
2. Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons, where appropriate; and
3. Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Physical Education Grades K-12

~~1. Physical Education K-2.~~

~~It is recommended that students in kindergarten receive 20 minutes per school day of regular physical education and students in grades one and two receive 120 minutes of physical education per week for the entire school year. A majority of the physical education class will be spent in vigorous physical activity.~~

~~2. Physical Education 3-5~~

~~It is recommended that students in grades three, four and five receive 150 minutes of physical education per week for the entire school year. A majority of the physical education class will be spent in vigorous physical activity.~~

~~3. Physical Education Grades 6-8~~

~~It is recommended that students grades six through eight receive 175 minutes of regular physical education per week for the entire school year. Students will spend a majority of this time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity. In addition, each quarter, students will be required to complete one, at home, health related assignment, that consists of physical activity and/or health related topics. Each school year a physical fitness evaluation will be completed for each student and will be available to the parent/guardian of the student. Students will be provided the opportunity to participate in 15 minutes of supervised recess as part of their scheduled lunch period.~~

~~4. Physical Education Grades 9-12~~

~~It is recommended that students grades nine and ten receive .5 credit hours of physical education per week for one quarter (approximately 43 school days). Students will spend a majority of this time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity. Twenty minutes of that day will be attributed to aerobic or weight bearing activity. In tenth grade, students will be required to create a written plan for maintaining physical activities for the eleventh and twelfth grades. Students in grades eleven and twelve will be offered elective courses in physical education. Students will be provided the opportunity, when space allows, to participate in supervised physical activity as part of their scheduled lunch period.~~

E. Communications with Parents

1. The school district recognizes that parents and guardians have a primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and well-being.
2. The school district will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
3. The school district encourages parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and refrain from including beverages and foods without nutritional value.
4. The school district will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities and will support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.
- ~~5. This policy may be altered with the directive of a physician.~~

IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- A. After approval by the school board, the wellness policy will be implemented throughout the school district.
- B. School food service staff, at the school level, will ensure compliance within the school's food service areas and will report to the food service program administrator, the building principal, or the superintendent's designee as appropriate.
- C. The school district's food service program administrator will provide an annual report to the superintendent setting forth the nutrition guidelines and procedures for selection of all foods made available on campus.
- D. The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with the wellness policy and will provide an annual report of the school district's compliance with the policy to the school board.
- E. The school district will post this wellness policy on its website, to the extent it maintains a website.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 121A.215 (Local School District Wellness Policy)
42 U.S.C. § 1751 *et seq.* (~~Richard B. Russell~~ National School Lunch Act)
42 U.S.C. § 1758b (Local School District Wellness Policy)
42 U.S.C. § 1771 *et seq.* (Child Nutrition Act of 1966)
~~P.L. 108-265 (2004) § 204 (Local Wellness Policy)~~
7 U.S.C. § 5341 (Establishment of Dietary Guidelines)
7 C.F.R. § 210.10 (School Lunch Program Regulations)
7 C.F.R. § 220.8 (School Breakfast Program Regulations)

Local Resources: Minnesota Department of Education, www.education.state.mn.us
Minnesota Department of Health, www.health.state.mn.us
County Health Departments
Action for Healthy Kids Minnesota, www.actionforhealthykids.org and
www.actionforhealthykids.org/filelib/toolsforteachers/recom/MN-Healthy%20Foods%20for%20Kids%208-2004.pdf

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, Section 204: Local School Wellness Policies 5-Year Technical Assistance and Guidance Plan

This five-year technical assistance plan is a fluid plan that will be updated upon the completion of a needs assessment, including additional stakeholder consultations to inform its development. State agencies should direct any questions concerning this plan to their USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Regional Office.

Background

Today, many children are consuming diets with too many calories and not enough nutrients. In addition, many of these children are not getting enough physical activity. Poor diet and physical inactivity among children can lead to an increased risk for certain chronic health conditions, including high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and obesity.¹ During 2007–2008, 20% of U.S. children aged 6–11 years and 18% of persons aged 12–19 years were obese, percentages that have tripled since 1980.² Engaging children and adolescents in healthy eating and regular physical activity can lower their risk for obesity and related chronic diseases.³⁻⁵

Healthy eating and physical activity behaviors among children and adolescents are influenced by a variety of sectors within society, including families, communities, schools, child care settings, health-care providers, faith-based institutions, government agencies, the media, the food and beverage industries, and the entertainment industries. Each of these sectors has an important and unique role to play in improving the dietary and physical activity behaviors of youth. Schools play a significant role in the lives of children and are where children spend much of their day. As such, helping students stay healthy is a fundamental part of the mission of schools.⁶⁻⁹ Schools are an important setting for providing children and adolescents with a healthy environment where they can consume nutritious meals, snacks and beverages; get regular physical activity; and learn about the importance of lifelong healthy behaviors. Research demonstrates that eating patterns established in childhood often carry over into later life. Therefore, early interventions in adopting healthy behaviors and engaging in physical activity are essential priorities.¹⁰

Research links healthy eating and physical activity with improved academic performance and classroom behavior. Eating a healthy breakfast is associated with improved memory, reduced absenteeism, and improved psychosocial function and mood,¹¹⁻¹³ as well as improvements in academic performance.^{14,15} Adequate water consumption may also improve cognitive function in children and adolescents.¹⁶⁻¹⁸ School-based physical activity is associated with improved academic achievement, including grades and standardized test scores, as well as improved cognitive skills, attitudes, and academic behavior (including enhanced concentration, attention, and improved classroom behavior).¹⁹ Further, increasing or maintaining time dedicated to physical education may help, and does not appear to adversely impact academic performance.¹⁹

Federal Requirements for Local School Wellness Policies

Recognizing the important role schools play in ensuring children's wellness, in 2004, Congress passed the Child Nutrition WIC Reauthorization Act (Public Law 108-265, Section 204). This act required each local educational agency (LEA) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or other child nutrition programs, such as the School Breakfast Program (SBP), to establish, for all schools under its jurisdiction, a local school wellness policy (LWP). Since the passage of the 2004 law, nearly all LEAs or school districts have developed and adopted LWPs as required by law. With the passage of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296, Section 204), new provisions for LWPs place greater emphasis on implementation, evaluation, and publicly reporting on progress of LWPs.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) issued an implementation memo (SP-42-2011) (http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Policy-Memos/2011/SP42-2011_os.pdf) to guide LEAs in implementing LWP provisions in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

The following is a summary chart that compares the 2004 and 2010 requirements for LWPs.

| | Old Requirements Child Nutrition WIC Reauthorization Act, 2004 | New Requirements Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 |
|---|---|---|
| Overview | Directs local educational agencies (LEAs) to have in place a LWP for each school under its jurisdiction. | Strengthens LWPs and adds rules for public input, transparency, and implementation. |
| Elements of the Local School Wellness Policy | LWP to include, at a minimum, goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities to promote student wellness, as well as nutrition guidelines for all foods available on school campus. | In addition to the 2004 requirements, the LWP is also to include goals for <u>nutrition promotion</u> . |
| Stakeholder Involvement | LEAs are required to involve parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators and the public in the development of LWP. | In addition to the 2004 requirements, LEAs are now required to permit <u>teachers of physical education and school health professionals</u> to participate in the development of LWP. |
| Stakeholder Participation | The stakeholders named above are required to participate in the development of the LWP. | In addition to the 2004 requirements, LEAs are now required to permit <u>all stakeholders named above and in 2004</u> to participate in the <u>implementation and periodic review and update</u> of LWP. |
| Local Discretion | LEAs can determine the specific policies appropriate for the schools under their jurisdiction, provided that those policies include all required elements specified in the Act. | Same as 2004 requirement. |
| Public Notification | None. | LEAs are required to inform and update the public (including parents, students, and others in the community) about the content and implementation of the LWP. |
| Measuring Implementation | LEAs are required to establish a plan for measuring implementation of the LWP. | LEAs are required to measure periodically and make available to the public an assessment on the implementation of LWP, including the extent to which schools are in compliance with LWP, the extent to which the LWP compares to model LWP, and to describe the progress made in attaining goals of LWP. |
| Local Designation | LEAs are required to establish a plan for measuring implementation of the LWP, including designation of one or more persons within the LEA or at each school, as appropriate, charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the LWP. | LEAs are required to <u>designate one or more LEA officials or school officials</u> , as appropriate, to ensure that each school complies with the LWP. |

Local School Wellness Policy Interagency Workgroup

USDA FNS convened a workgroup including the US Department of Education (ED) and the Health and Human Services, acting through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This Interagency Workgroup is charged with providing information and technical assistance to LEAs, school food authorities, and State educational agencies to meet the new LWP requirements and establish healthy school environments that are intended to promote student health and wellness. For this purpose, the Workgroup is developing this fluid, five-year technical assistance plan, which will be updated upon the completion of a needs assessment.

FNS, ED, and CDC are working together to identify and develop resources and training on designing, implementing, promoting, disseminating, and evaluating LWPs and overcoming barriers to the adoption of LWPs. Technical assistance will include model LWPs and best practices recommended by Federal agencies, State agencies, and nongovernmental organizations; as well as other technical assistance as required to establish healthy school environments that promote healthy eating and physical activity. Technical assistance will be consistent with the specific needs and requirements of LEAs.

Needs Assessment

The Local School Wellness Policy Interagency Workgroup is in the process of conducting a needs assessment to determine the training and technical assistance needs of LEAs and other stakeholders in meeting the new federal requirements for LWPs. The findings from the needs assessment will inform the technical assistance plan. The needs assessment activities to date and a short description follow. Additional needs assessment activities will include a literature review, key informant interviews, stakeholder roundtables, and focus groups.

Needs assessment activities to date have included:

- A survey with key experts in the field (researchers and practitioners) to identify gaps in training and technical assistance;
- Informal conversations with school nutrition professionals; and
- Conversations with state, district, and local education administrators and other staff.

Survey with Key Experts

The Interagency Workgroup identified nine key experts on LWP, including researchers and practitioners, to help identify gaps in, and provide recommendations for, resources, training, and technical assistance to support LWP implementation. The survey results highlighted the following needs:

- Tools, resources, trainings, and ongoing technical assistance on how to assess, monitor, and evaluate the implementation of LWPs.
- Strong leadership at the State, district, and school levels.
- Framing LWP as an educational issue to garner support from decision-makers.
- Getting buy-in from key stakeholders in schools and communities.
- Support for monitoring and enforcement from State agencies.

Conversations with School Nutrition Professionals

The Interagency Workgroup engaged in initial conversations with school nutrition professionals at a national meeting to gain insight into their needs around LWP. Findings from these conversations indicate that:

- More support is needed from school and district personnel, including teachers, principals, and superintendents, to implement and enforce LWPs.

- There needs to be clear communication about the new LWP requirements from the State agencies through to the school level.
- There is a need for easy-to-use guidance and resources to help school districts assess, implement, and measure the implementation of their LWPs.
- District and school personnel need additional training on what LWPs are, why they are important, and ways they can help to ensure that they are implemented.
- Resources that address the academic, financial, and health benefits associated with LWPs would be useful for gaining support from key stakeholders.

Conversations with School and District Administrators, School Board Members, and School Staff

The Interagency Workgroup hosted two town hall-like sessions at the US Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools National Conference on August 8, 2011 in Maryland to obtain input from approximately 150 district and school administrators, school board members, principals, teachers, and other school health stakeholders from across the country. Highlights from these sessions are as follows:

- There is a need for simple and standardized tools for implementation, monitoring, and reporting related to LWPs, as well as concrete evaluation guidelines and tools.
- There is a request for model policies and examples of policies.
- It is important to get buy-in from school administration to ensure LWP success.
- There is an interest in district and school success stories with details on how success was achieved.

Technical Assistance and Guidance – Five-Year Plan (2011-2015)

Goals

To assist LEAs in creating a healthy school environment enabling children and adolescents to make healthy eating choices and be physically active in order to learn and thrive, technical assistance and guidance will help:

- Increase the skill and capacity of LEAs to meet or exceed the new Federal requirements for LWPs;
- Increase the capacity of State educational agencies and their partners to provide technical assistance to LEAs in meeting the new Federal requirements for LWPs; and
- Improve the strength and quality of LWPs.

Objectives*

As a part of the technical assistance and guidance plan, the Interagency Workgroup will:

1. Conduct needs assessment activities to identify training and technical assistance needs of LEAs and other stakeholders in meeting the new federal requirements for LWPs.
2. Update USDA/FNS, CDC, and ED LWP web pages and existing resources.
3. Create new or update existing tools and resources to reflect the new requirements of LWPs.
4. Facilitate a series of webinars targeting LEAs and other stakeholders on a variety of topics related to LWPs.
5. Establish and sustain national and state partnerships to assist with the implementation of the five-year technical assistance and guidance plan.
6. Establish a mechanism of gathering success stories and best practices specific to LWPs.
7. Draft Team Nutrition Training Grant request for proposals to include a focus on LWP activities.

** USDA FNS and the Interagency Workgroup will report on the progress of current objectives and add additional objectives as the technical assistance and guidance plan is finalized.*

Activities

Based on findings from the needs assessment and monitoring of activities from State agency reviews (i.e. Coordinated Review Effort [CRE]), technical assistance activities may include:

- Webinars/conferences/trainings
- Online publications and resources (existing and new)
- Peer-to-peer mentoring
- Sharing best practices in all aspects of LWPs
- Grant and other funding opportunities
- Other activities as identified through the Interagency Workgroup's needs assessment process

Timelines and Deliverables

The following timelines highlight key activities and deliverables over the course of the five-year plan. These will be updated periodically.

Short-Term (March through December 2011)

- Convene Interagency Workgroup between FNS, CDC, and ED.
- Conduct a needs assessment to identify training and technical assistance needs of LEAs and other stakeholders in meeting the new federal requirements for LWPs.
- Consult with key stakeholders to inform the initial needs assessment, and training and technical assistance activities.
- Synthesize the findings from the initial needs assessment to develop a five-year technical assistance and guidance plan to assist states and LEAs in meeting the new federal requirements.
- Update USDA/FNS, CDC, and ED LWP web pages with current requirements and related links (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/healthy/wellnesspolicy.html>).
- Initiate coordination with other agencies, through national and state partnerships, to assist with implementation of the technical assistance and guidance plan.
- Revise FNS' CRE Procedures Manual, Forms and Instructions to include a review of the LEAs' LWPs.

Mid-Range (Winter 2012 through Fall 2012)

- Finalize the five-year technical assistance and guidance plan.
- Launch implementation of five-year technical assistance and guidance plan activities.
- Continue to update USDA/FNS, CDC, and ED LWP web pages as needed with new guidance and resources: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/healthy/wellnesspolicy.html>.
- **USDA to publish Proposed Rule in the Federal Register (Fall 2012), accept comments from the public on the rule, and analyze comments.**
- Continue to coordinate with other agencies, through national and state partnerships, to assist with implementation of technical assistance and guidance plan.
- Include additional LWP guidance in the CRE Procedures Manual, Forms and Instructions.

Long-Term (Winter 2013 thru Fall 2014)

- Continue to develop and implement guidance, trainings, and resources based on five-year technical assistance and guidance plan and/or new and emerging issues.
- Continue to disseminate guidance and resources.
- **USDA FNS to publish Final Rule (Fall 2013), which will define key terms and provide regulations and guidance for LEAs, school food authorities, and State agencies to implement the provisions set forth in the law.**
 - This 5-year technical assistance and guidance plan is intended to support the Final Rule.

- The Final Rule will be printed in the Federal Register, the Code of Federal Regulations, and on the USDA FNS web page:
http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Legislation/CNR_2010.htm.
- Continue to coordinate with other agencies, through national and state partnerships, to assist with implementation of the technical assistance and guidance plan.

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Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools

Recommended Nutrition Standards for Foods Outside of School Meal Programs

Information for School Boards, School Districts, and Other School Administrators

In 2007, the Institute of Medicine (IOM), which advises Congress on matters of health and science, issued a report entitled *Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools*. This report provided science-based recommendations about appropriate nutritional standards for the availability, sale, content, and consumption of competitive foods at school (i.e., foods and beverages sold in competition with school meals). These IOM recommendations are specific to competitive foods and not school meals. In the report, IOM concluded that

- Federally reimbursable school nutrition programs should be the main source of nutrition in schools.
- Opportunities for competitive foods should be limited.
- If competitive foods are available, they should consist primarily of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products.

This fact sheet answers commonly asked questions about the *Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools* report and gives examples of foods and beverages that schools can offer to be consistent with the recommended standards.

Aren't there already standards for foods in schools?

Yes, but those standards apply only to the foods in the federally reimbursable National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These recommended standards apply to all other foods and beverages offered or sold in the school environment or at school activities.

What's different about these IOM Standards?

- The IOM-recommended standards address competitive foods and beverages that are offered as à la carte items during school meals or in school snack bars, stores, vending machines, or canteens. They also apply to foods and beverages provided during other school activities, such as classroom parties, classroom snacks, school celebrations, fundraisers, or school meetings.
- These recommended standards are intended to be applied throughout the school day at all schools *and* after school during school-based events or activities.

Why do we need the IOM Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools?

- Most U.S. children consume a large portion of their daily food intake at school. Competitive food sources (e.g., à la carte, vending, school stores) compete with federally regulated school meals, often offering foods and beverages high in calories, sugar, sodium, and fat.
- Children in the United States are increasingly becoming overweight and obese, and most do not meet recommendations for a healthy diet. By adhering to these recommended standards, schools can help children meet dietary guidelines and reduce their risks for diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and other health problems.
- The school environment is one of several settings that can influence children's food choices and eating habits. By ensuring that food offerings are consistent with an overall healthy diet, schools can model healthy eating behaviors.

Which foods and beverages are recommended under the IOM Standards?

The *Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools* recommends two tiers of foods and beverages:

- Tier 1 refers to competitive foods and beverages that may be offered to students in all grades at all times of day.
- Tier 2 refers to competitive foods and beverages that fall short of Tier 1 recommended standards and may be offered only to high school students and only after school.

The following table outlines the criteria for each tier and gives examples of foods and beverages that meet the recommended standards.

Foods and Beverages Recommended by the Institute of Medicine's

Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools

| For All Students at All Times of Day (Tier 1) | Examples |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, combination products, fat-free and low-fat milk and milk products, lactose-free and soy beverages, per portion as packaged: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » ≤200 calories; » ≤35% of total calories from fat; » <10% of calories from saturated fats; » Zero trans fat (≤ 0.5 g per serving); » ≤35% of calories from total sugars; and » ≤200 mg sodium. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual fruits—apples, pears, oranges. • Fruit cups packed in juice or water. • Vegetables—baby carrots, broccoli, edamame. • Dried or dehydrated fruits—raisins, apricots, cherries. • 100% fruit juice or low-sodium 100% vegetable juice. • Low-fat, low-salt, whole-grain crackers or chips. • Whole-grain, low-sugar cereals. • 100% whole-grain mini bagels. • 8-oz servings of low-fat, fruit-flavored yogurt with ≤30 g of total sugars. • 8-oz servings of low-fat or nonfat chocolate or strawberry milk with ≤22 g of total sugars. • Low-sodium, whole-grain bars containing sunflower seeds, almonds, or walnuts. |
| For High School Students, After School Only (Tier 2) | Examples |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any foods or beverages from Tier 1. • Snack foods that are ≤200 calories per portion as packaged, and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » ≤35% of total calories from fat; » <10% of calories from saturated fats; » Zero trans fat (≤ 0.5 g per serving); » ≤35% of calories from total sugars; and » ≤200 mg sodium. • Sugar-free, caffeine-free beverages with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Nonnutritive sweeteners; » Not vitamin- or nutrient-fortified; and » <5 calories per portion as packaged. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-salt baked potato chips (≤200 mg of sodium), crackers, and pretzels. • Animal crackers with ≤35% of calories from sugars. • Graham crackers with ≤35% of calories from sugars. • Ice cream bars low in sugar and fat. • Caffeine-free, calorie-free, nonfortified soft drinks. |
| Examples of Items that Do Not Meet the Recommended Standards | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potato chips or pretzels that have too much sugar or salt (i.e., exceeding the values listed above). • Cheese crackers that have too much fat or sodium. • Breakfast or granola bars that have too much fat or sugar. • Ice cream products that have too much fat or sugar. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cake, cupcakes, or cookies with too much sugar or salt. • Fortified sports drinks or fortified water. • Gum, licorice, or candy. • Fruit smoothies with added sugar. • Regular colas or sodas with sugar or caffeine. |
| Additional Recommended Standards for Foods and Beverages | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make plain, drinkable water available throughout the school day at no cost to students. • Offer sports drinks only to student athletes engaged in school sport programs involving vigorous activity for more than 1 hour. • Foods and beverages should not be used as rewards or discipline for academic performance or behavior. • Reduce marketing of Tier 2 foods and beverages in high schools. • Encourage the use of Tier 1 foods and beverages for fundraising activities both during and after school at elementary and middle schools. Allow Tier 1 and 2 foods and beverages for fundraising activities at high schools. • Allow both Tier 1 and 2 foods and beverages for evening and community school activities involving adults. | |

Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools

How do the IOM Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools help school boards, school districts, and school administrators?

- The recommended standards help school boards, districts, and administrators identify the best foods and beverages to offer students before, during, and after school.
- The recommended standards provide guidance for addressing the nutrition goals of districts' local wellness policies.¹

What should school districts do to implement the IOM Standards?

School districts should work toward adopting the *Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools* for all competitive foods and beverages offered to students before, during, and after school. School health councils, local wellness policy teams, or similar committees should assess current district policies for competitive foods and develop an action plan to bring them in line with the *Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools*.

What can administrators do to support the recommended standards and help schools model and reinforce healthy eating behaviors?

- Become familiar with the *Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools*.
- Review current nutrition and wellness policies and determine the best approach to promote consistency with the recommended standards.
- Encourage schools to educate students about nutrition so they can
 - » Become advocates for promoting healthy options in schools.
 - » Recognize the importance of a healthy school environment.
 - » Make food and beverage choices consistent with an overall healthy diet throughout the school day.

Resources

- Stallings VA, Yaktine AL, editors. *Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools: Leading the Way Toward Healthier Youth*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press; 2007. Available at www.iom.edu/CMS/3788/30181/42502.aspx.
- Food and Nutrition Service. *Changing the Scene—Improving the School Nutrition Environment*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture; 2000. Available at <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/changing.html>.
- CDC. *Healthy Youth: Nutrition and the Health of Young People*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2007. Available at www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/nutrition/facts.htm.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2005. Available at www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/report/default.htm.

¹ Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Section 204 of P.L. 108-265, required each local educational agency participating in a program authorized by the National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to establish a Local Wellness Policy by the beginning of the 2006–2007 school year.

The Institute of Medicine Recommended

Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools

Standards for Food Content

- Standard 1:** Snacks, foods, and beverages meet the following criteria for dietary fat per portion as packaged:
- No more than 35% of total calories from fat.
 - Less than 10% of total calories from saturated fats.
 - Zero trans fat (less than or equal to 0.5 g per serving).
- Standard 2:** Snacks, foods, and beverages provide no more than 35% of calories from total sugars per portion as packaged. Exceptions to the standard are
- 100% fruits and fruit juices in all forms without added sugars.
 - 100% vegetables and vegetable juices without added sugars.
 - Unflavored nonfat and low-fat milk and yogurt; flavored nonfat and low-fat milk can contain no more than 22 g of total sugars per 8-oz portion, and flavored nonfat and low-fat yogurt can contain no more than 30 g of total sugars per 8-oz serving.
- Standard 3:** Snack items are 200 calories or less per portion as packaged and à la carte entrée items do not exceed calorie limits on comparable National School Lunch Program items.
- Standard 4:** Snack items meet a sodium content limit of 200 mg or less per portion as packaged or 480 mg or less per entrée portion as served à la carte.
- Standard 5:** Beverages containing nonnutritive sweeteners are only allowed in high school after the end of the school day.
- Standard 6:** Foods and beverages are caffeine-free, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine-related substances.

Standards for the School Day

- Standard 7:** Foods and beverages offered during the school day are limited to those in Tier 1.
- Standard 8:** Plain, potable water is available throughout the school day at no cost to students.
- Standard 9:** Sports drinks are not available in the school setting except when provided by the school for student athletes participating in sport programs involving vigorous activity of more than 1 hour's duration.
- Standard 10:** Foods and beverages are not used as rewards or discipline for academic performance or behavior.
- Standard 11:** Minimize marketing of Tier 2 foods and beverages in the high school setting by
- Locating Tier 2 food and beverage distribution in low student traffic areas.
 - Ensuring that the exterior of vending machines does not depict commercial products or logos or suggest that consumption of vended items conveys a health or social benefit.

Standards for the After-School Setting

- Standard 12:** Tier 1 snack items are allowed after school for activities for elementary and middle schools. Tier 1 and Tier 2 snacks are allowed after school for high school.
- Standard 13:** For on-campus fundraising activities during the school day, Tier 1 foods and beverages are allowed for elementary and middle schools. Tier 1 and 2 foods and beverages are allowed for high schools. For evening and community activities that include adults, Tier 1 and 2 foods and beverages are encouraged.



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