



Superintendent's Circular

School Year 2011-2012

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NUTRITION POLICY AND GUIDELINES – VENDING MACHINES, A LA CARTE AND COMPETITIVE FOODS

In response to continuing concerns regarding childhood overweight and obesity as well as other diet-related diseases in our city's school-aged children, the Boston School Committee has approved the following guidelines regarding the sale of beverages and foods in schools. These guidelines will cover items that are sold, provided, or served to students within school buildings or on school grounds, in the student stores, cafeterias, classrooms, hallways, and vending machines, all of which are sold in competition with the school meal programs.

In accordance with Mayor Menino's Executive Order Relative to Healthy Beverage Options, all beverages sold on school grounds shall meet the City's Healthy Options Beverage Standards. Principals and staff will promote a school environment supportive of healthy eating. Adults are encouraged to model healthy eating by serving nutritious food and beverages at school meetings and events for adults and staff, and by prohibiting the use of food as reward or punishment, from providing candy and snacks of minimal nutritional value as rewards for students, and instead integrating practices of non-food rewards.

To promote a healthier school environment, these guidelines also apply to fundraisers, school-sponsored transportation, classroom activities, and school events. See the Implementation Guidelines section for details.

Taking effect first in July 1, 2004, these guidelines were implemented with the start of school on September 2004. They were updated in April 2011, to take into consideration new Nutrition Guidelines that impact the overall health and wellness of our students and staff. This document is intended to assist Principals, Headmasters and other Administrative Heads in implementing these guidelines in their schools.

These guidelines apply to snacks, side items, treats, and desserts offered for sale as Competitive Foods in schools. All such Competitive Foods shall meet the criteria outlined in the implementation guidelines that follow. This includes food and beverages sold, provided, or served to students in:

- School cafeterias, specifically "a la carte" entrees and snacks
- Vending machines
- School stores
- School snack bars
- Concession stands
- Classrooms and hallways
- Booster sales
- Fundraising activities
- School-sponsored or school-related events, including those with school-sponsored transportation occurring off school grounds, such as sporting events and field days
- Food trucks on school grounds

Foods in these guidelines include but are not limited to fruits, vegetables, yogurts (including drinkable yogurt and yogurt smoothies), puddings, soups, cheeses, salty snacks, nuts, seeds, dried meat snacks, packaged or snack bars, baked goods and other pastries, candy, frozen desserts, and other similar foods.

Items that would be considered to be entrées if sold in the reimbursable meal program, but are sold a la carte as Competitive Foods, are not subject to these Guidelines. This policy will be reviewed once yearly by a sub-committee of the Boston Public Schools (BPS) District Wellness Council.

BACKGROUND

Schools across the city, state and nation have been grappling with developing meaningful and applicable guidelines on this issue of obesity for the past decade. Earlier "Competitive Food Guidelines," set forth by USDA and individual State Departments of Education, prohibited only the sale of foods of minimal nutritional value: (Federal Register: 7 CFR Part 210.11). These standards attempted to address types of foods and beverages sold, provided, or served to students within school buildings. While some state standards may have been useful thirty years ago, most are outdated as they do not address the growing availability of vending machines, foods, candy and soda sold inside and outside of the cafeteria at fundraisers or in student stores. Competitive foods are relatively low in nutrient density and high in fat, added sugar and calories. Neither a la carte nor competitive foods are bound by dietary guidelines that the National School Lunch (NSLP), National School Breakfast, and After School Snack Programs must adhere to.

National and State Departments of Education, School Boards, Food Policy Advocacy Organizations, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Center for Science in the Public Interest, State Dietetic and School Food Service Associations and other representative groups have met over the past several years to establish or recommend nutrition standards to promote healthy eating habits among children. *Massachusetts A La Carte Food Standards to Promote a Healthier School Environment* is a guideline that has been established by the Massachusetts Action for Healthy Kids, first adopted in January 2004 and updated December 2009. These guidelines, along with the Institute of Medicine, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation Competitive Foods and School Beverage Guidelines, nutrition standards from School Nutrition Bill (H4459, S2322), and the *HealthierUS* School Challenge informed the latest revision to our policy.

POLICY

The Boston School Committee supports lifelong healthy eating habits for all students and staff in the Boston Public Schools. The School Committee is committed to addressing the increasing rates of diet-related health consequences among these groups by means of the following:

The Boston Public Schools takes a comprehensive approach to reviewing, implementing, and incorporating changes in policy, curricula and operating procedures to promote healthy lifestyles and appropriate nutritional practices for all students. Components of this approach include:

- reviewing and assessing the food available in school lunches to ensure that it is consistent with recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and USDA School Meals Initiative for Healthy Children in nutritional content, portion size and quality;
- reviewing the BPS curriculum and identifying opportunities to teach healthy eating habits;
- identifying opportunities to provide support to students around appropriate nutritional practices for meals and snacks;
- identifying opportunities to support teachers, school staff, and parents around modeling healthy eating habits and the appropriate nutritional standards and encouraging non-food alternatives, for school fundraisers, student rewards and reinforcement, school parties, and classroom celebrations;
- promoting health and nutrition messages consistent with those taught by qualified health educators;
- establishing policy guidelines for food and beverage sales within school environments.

The Superintendent reports back to the School Committee with an update and recommendations on the Student Health and Nutrition Initiatives

In addition, the Superintendent and appropriate BPS staff have developed guidelines, which are implemented on July 1, 2004 and updated March, 2011 for the sale of competitive foods and beverages and beverages in school buildings or on school grounds. These guidelines are in accordance with the *Massachusetts A La Carte Food Standards to Promote a Healthier School Environment*, Institute of

Medicine, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation Competitive Foods and School Beverage Guidelines, and the *HealthierUS* School Challenge.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

Preparation of all competitive foods and beverages must meet state and federal food safety guidelines. In accordance with 105 CMR 225.100, nutrition information must be made available to students for non-prepackaged competitive foods and beverages, by August 1, 2013. This requirement shall not apply to the sale or provision of fresh fruits or fresh vegetables, and foods or beverages sold during the school day at booster sales, concession stands and other school-sponsored or school-related fundraisers and events.

Implementation guidelines must comply with or exceed nutrition standards delineated by 105 CMR 225.000:

http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=eohhs2terminal&L=5&L0=Home&L1=Government&L2=Laws%2C+Regulations+and+Policies&L3=Department+of+Public+Health+Regulations+%26+Policies&L4=Proposed+Amen+dm+nts+to+Regulations&sid=Eeohhs2&b=terminalcontent&f=dph_legal_nutrition_standards&csid=Eeohhs2

Beverages and foods sold, provided, or served to students in Boston Public Schools or on school grounds outside the school meal program must adhere to the following standards.

Beverages:

The total beverage product line must meet the following criteria:

1. Schools may sell, provide, or serve only plain water, juice, and milk to students. Beverages such as soft drinks, fruit drinks with minimal nutritional value, and sports drinks **cannot** be sold, provided, or served to students anywhere in school buildings or on the school campus.
2. Plain drinking water must be readily available during the school day at no cost
3. Drinking water must be unflavored, has 0mg of sodium, has no nutritive or non-nutritive sweeteners, noncarbonated, caffeine-free, and has no additives except those minerals normally added to tap water.
4. Beverages, except for flavored milk or flavored milk substitutes shall not contain added sugars including high fructose corn syrup and non-nutritive sweeteners.
5. No beverages shall contain artificial sweeteners.
6. Fruit and/or vegetable based drinks must be composed of no less than 100% fruit/vegetable juices with no added sweeteners, not to exceed 4 ounces in elementary, middle, and K-8 schools, and not to exceed 8 ounces in high school, with 120 calories/8 oz. plus 10% Daily Value of 3 vitamins and nutrients, such as Vitamin A, C, D and calcium
7. All milk and milk substitute products shall be pasteurized fluid types of low fat (1%) or skim (fat-free) milk, which meet USDA, state and local standards for milk. All milk shall contain Vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration and shall be consistent with the state and local standards for such milk. All milk, flavored milk and milk substitute container sizes shall not exceed 8 ounces.
8. Flavored milk and milk substitutes shall be fat-free and contain no more than 22 grams total sugars per 8 ounces.

9. Soy and rice milk-substitute drinks shall be calcium and vitamin-fortified and shall contain no more than 22 grams total sugars per 8 ounces.
10. No beverages shall contain more than trace amounts of caffeine.
11. Competitive juice and milk beverages will not be offered in elementary schools.
12. City of Boston agencies in BPS buildings may offer 8 oz. of 100% juice or low-fat and nonfat milk products in vending machines available only outside of the school day.

Foods:

Fresh fruits and/or non-fried vegetables must be offered wherever competitive foods are sold, provided, or served to students except in non-refrigerated vending machines and vending machines offering only beverages.

Use of fryolators in preparing competitive foods is prohibited.

In addition, competitive foods must meet the following nutritional criteria **per item**:

1. Any other food that meets **all** of the following criteria:
 - **≤ 35% of total calories from fat.**
 - Nuts, nut butters, and seeds are exempt from above limitation and are permitted if served in 1 oz portions
 - Fruit and nut combination products are exempt from the above limitation.
 - **≤ 10% of calories from saturated fat – OR - ≤1g saturated fat**
 - Nuts, nut butters, and seeds are exempt from above limitation and are permitted if served in 1 oz portions
 - **0g trans fat**
 - **≤ 35% of total calories from sugar**
 - Non-fat or low-fat yogurt with a maximum of 30g sugar per 8 ounces.
 - **≤ 200 mg sodium**
 - A la carte entrees like cheese sandwiches, vegetable with sauce, and soups must be less than 480 mg sodium if they contain one or more of the following:
 - ≥2g fiber
 - ≥5g protein
 - ≥10% DV of Vitamin A, C, E, folate, calcium, magnesium, potassium, or iron
 - ≥½ serving (¼ cup) of fruit or vegetables.
 - If products are dairy, they must be non-fat or low fat dairy.
 - **Bread and other whole-grain based products shall have a whole grain (such as whole wheat) listed as the first ingredient or contain grains that are at least 51% whole grains.**
 - **Meet 1 of the following calorie requirements:**
 - ≤100 calories
 - Vegetables with sauce and soups can have 150 calories if they contain two or more of the following: ≥2g fiber; or ≥5g protein; or ≥10% DV of Vitamin A, C, E, folate, calcium, magnesium, potassium, or iron; or ≥½ serving (¼ cup) of fruit or vegetables.
 - Other foods can have calorie limits per below if they contain one or more of the following:
 - ≥ 2g fiber
 - ≥ 5g protein
 - ≥ 10% DV of Vitamin A, C, E, folate, calcium, magnesium, potassium, or iron
 - ≥ ½ serving (1/4 cup) of fruit or vegetables:
 - ≤ 150 calories for elementary schools
 - ≤ 180 calories for middle and

- < 200 calories for high schools
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2. No more than trace amounts of caffeine are allowed in foods.
 3. Foods must contain no artificial sweeteners.
 4. Foods must have limited added sweeteners as much as possible.
 5. Fruits shall have no added sweeteners and have 0g total fat. Since fresh fruits and vegetables vary in size and calories naturally, they have no calorie limit.
 6. Fruits packaged in their own juices or dried will not exceed the following calorie limits: 150 calories for elementary schools, 180 calories for middle schools and 200 calories for high schools.
 7. Dried fruit and nut combination products (commonly known as trail mix) can be included within these guidelines if they meet the following standards:
 - a. The items found in the combination product include only unsweetened dried fruit, nuts and/or seeds.
 - b. The product contains no added sweeteners.
 - c. The combination product is exempt from the $\leq 35\%$ of total calories from fat requirement, but must meet all requirements around calories, saturated fat, trans fat, sodium, sugar, and positive nutrients
 8. Any one egg or equal amount of egg equivalent is allowable, if it contains no added fat.
 9. Any reduced-fat or part-skim cheese ≤ 1 oz.

TIME OF DAY

The Guidelines apply to all food and beverages (outside the USDA School Meals and After School Snack Program) provided to students on school grounds during the regular and extended school day when events are primarily under the control of the school or third parties on behalf of the school.

The **extended school day** is the time before or after the official school day that includes activities such as clubs, yearbook, band and choir practice, student government, drama, sports practices, intramural sports, and childcare/latchkey programs. These Guidelines shall also apply to food and beverages supplied by schools during official transportation to and from school and sponsored activities, including but not limited to field trips and interscholastic sporting events where the school is the visiting team except as specified herein.

Vending machines, including those controlled by other entities in BPS buildings and grounds, shall comply with these Guidelines at all times.

FUNDRAISERS, FOOD REWARDS AND MEETINGS

The building administrator or his/her designee is responsible for approving all fund raisers. Principals and staff will promote a school environment supportive of healthy eating. Adults are encouraged to model healthy eating by serving nutritious food and beverages at school meetings and events, and by refraining from providing candy and snacks of minimal nutritional value as rewards for students and instead integrating practices of non-food rewards.

If schools participate in fundraising involving food and beverages, the fundraiser should support a healthy school environment and be free from solicitation of foods that do not meet the specifications of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Fundraisers should not include the sale of candy, beverages, and snacks of minimal nutritional value

Automatic timers will be used to limit access to competitive foods and beverages during the school day.

SUPPORT FOR IMPLEMENTATION

This is a citywide initiative, with the Boston Public Schools taking the lead to implement healthy snack and beverage guidelines. The Mayor's Office, the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), the Boston Centers for Youth and Families (BCYF) are all in full support of these policies.

To assist with this transition, Food and Nutrition Services will continue meeting with vendors and manufacturers to discuss product specifications that meet these guidelines. Language referencing new policies is included in the Request for Bids for beverages, dairy and ice cream, and snack food products. Vendors who are awarded single-year or multiple-year contracts must comply with the stated guidelines.

With assistance from the School Wellness Council, students, teachers, parents and administrators will be informed and educated about the new guidelines. Technical support will be provided to help schools and agency partners adjust to the revised standards, including providing resources on healthful forms of fundraising and meeting guidelines. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed a School Nutrition Bill (H4459, S2322). The BPS implementation guideline have been revised to include state nutritional standards.

MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

Schools will be monitored by:

- Schools will include a goal for implementing this policy in the Wellness Action Plan of their Whole School Improvement Plan
- All schools will annually complete the Alliance for a Healthier Generation Healthy School Program Inventory that includes questions on competitive foods and beverages.
- All schools will annually complete the Alliance for a Healthier Generation Healthy Schools inventories specific to competitive foods and beverages

The Principal and relevant academic Superintendent will be notified if a school is found to not be compliant.

School administration, families, students, and wellness council will be provided information about the policy to engage and support monitoring, enforcement, and compliance.

DEFINITIONS

Food of Minimal Nutritional Value: Food that provides less than five percent of the Reference Daily Intakes (RDI) for each of eight specified nutrients per serving.

A La Carte Foods: Sold typically in the cafeteria by the school food service department. They are separately and individually priced and are not usually part of the NSLP.

Competitive Foods: *Competitive foods or beverages* means all foods or beverages sold or provided in public schools, other than non-sweetened carbonated water and those items sold or provided as part of federal nutrition programs such as the School Breakfast Program, School Lunch Program, and the Child and Adult Care including those offered in: School cafeterias; school stores; school snack bars; concession stands, booster sales, vending machines; fundraising activities; school-sponsored or school-related events; food trucks, and any other location in public schools.

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