



Nebraska Guidelines for Competitive Foods* in Schools

(*Foods and beverages sold a la carte, in vending machines, in school stores or as part of school fundraisers)

Developed by Nebraska Action for Healthy Kids

These guidelines are designed to assist schools in providing healthier food options for improving the overall health of our youth. If you have questions about these guidelines, please contact Nutrition Services, Nebraska Department of Education, 402-471-2488 or 800-731-2233 (In Nebraska).

Rational: School lunches must meet USDA meal pattern and nutrition standards, which recommend that no more than 30 percent of an individual's calories come from fat, and less than 10 percent from saturated fat. Regulations also establish a standard for school lunches to provide one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances of protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium, and calories. While the Federal government has established nutrition standards for school breakfast and lunch, there are no standards for competitive foods. Competitive foods are foods and beverages sold a la carte, in vending machines, in school stores or as part of school fundraisers⁽¹⁾. Competitive foods are often low in nutrient density and high in fat, added sugar and calories. Unfortunately, there continues to be an increase in childhood overweight and obesity; the prevalence has tripled in the past three decades. Therefore these guidelines are provided to improve nutritious options for students.

Definitions:

A la Carte food sales – the sale involving any food or beverage that students purchase in addition to or in place of the USDA reimbursable school breakfast or lunch, from an a la carte source such as vending, a la carte lines or kiosks, school stores or snack bars located anywhere on the entire school campus, including the cafeteria and athletic events. Sometimes referred to as competitive foods — competing with USDA meals.

Foods of high nutrient value – include whole grains, foods low in saturated fat and trans fat and high in nutrient value. Whole foods are preferred over highly processed foods.

Portion size – in the a la carte guiding document below, portion sizes are suggested for all foods available on school premises. It is crucial that children and their parents are educated on portion sizes.

Guiding Principle: Promote availability of foods meeting these guidelines.

Rationale⁽²⁾:

- The present and future health and well being of school-age children are profoundly affected by dietary intake and the maintenance of a healthy weight.
- Schools contribute to current and life-long health and dietary patterns and are uniquely positioned to model and reinforce healthful eating behaviors in partnership with parents, teachers, and the broader community.
- Because foods and beverages available on the school campus represent significant caloric intake they should be designed to meet nutritional standards.
- Foods and beverages have health effects beyond those related to vitamins, minerals, and other known individual components.
- Implementation of nutrition standards for foods and beverages offered in will likely require clear policies. These guidelines should be included in each district's Local Wellness Policies.

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Food Group	Recommendation	Rationale
Competitive Beverages	<p>All students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water without flavoring, additives, or carbonation. • Low-fat (1-percent milk fat) and nonfat milk (in 8-oz. portions): • Soy beverages meeting USDA guidelines for milk replacement • Flavored milk with no more than 22 grams of total sugars (12 of these grams are naturally occurring lactose-milk sugar) per 8-oz. portion • 100-percent fruit juice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4-oz. portion as packaged for elementary/middle school ○ 8-oz. for high school ○ Caffeine-free, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances. <p>High School Students Additional Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-caffeinated, non-fortified beverages with less than 5 calories per portion as packaged (with or without nonnutritive sweeteners, carbonation, or flavoring) 	<p>The Institute of Medicine (IOM) provides guidance on beverages served in schools.</p> <p>The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, as well as the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), state that juice does not contain the fiber found in whole fruit, nor does it promote eating behaviors associated with consumption of whole fruit.</p> <p>A review of 40 published studies suggests that liquid sugar appears to be less well regulated than energy consumed in solid form. A 2003 report by the Centers for Disease Control states that for each additional serving of a sweetened beverage that is consumed daily for a period of one and one half years, the risk of children being overweight increased by 60 percent. Source: CDC, Resource Guide for Nutrition and Physical Activity Interventions to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Disease.</p> <p>Sports drinks are only recommended for times of vigorous physical activity that last 60-90 minutes. Therefore, they are not considered meal/snack time beverages.</p>
Grains	<p>Choose foods that include the word "whole" in the first ingredient on the label. For example: whole wheat flour, whole oats, whole corn. The following terms may also be listed as the first ingredient because the term is already defined as whole grain: oatmeal, graham flour, wild rice, bulgur.</p> <p>It is recognized that many grain products have added fats and sugars, use the guidelines at the right in choosing acceptable products.</p> <p>Strive for a portion size of not more than 1 ounce for chips, crackers, granola bars and cookies.</p>	<p><u>Fiber:</u> Whole grains products will have at least 2 grams of fiber per 1 ounce serving</p> <p><u>Fat:</u> No more than 35% of total calories from fat or 7 grams maximum per serving one ounce.</p> <p><u>Saturated Fat:</u> No more than 10% of total calories from saturated fat or 2 grams maximum per one ounce.</p> <p><u>Trans Fat:</u> Zero per serving.</p> <p><u>Added Sugar:</u> No more than 35% by weight or 15 grams maximum per one ounce.</p> <p>The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends using more whole grains, at least half of total daily grain servings should from whole grains.</p> <p>Saturated fat and trans fat raise total blood cholesterol and LDL (bad) cholesterol, risk factors for heart disease. In addition, trans fat lowers HDL (good) cholesterol, further contributing to heart disease.</p>

Food Group	Recommendation		Rationale
Fruits and Vegetables	<p>Make quality fruits and vegetables available wherever a la carte foods are sold. For example, dried fruit in vending, fresh fruit in a la carte lines and school stores. Limit dried fruit portion to 100 calories.</p> <p>Quality refers to fruits and vegetables prepared/packaged without added fat, sugar or sodium.</p>		<p>The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend the consumption of 2 cups of fruit and 2½ cups of vegetables daily. Fruits and vegetables provide essential vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients that may protect against many chronic diseases.</p>
Low fat dairy (skim or 1%)	<p><u>Suggested portion size:</u></p> <p>Yogurt – 6 to 8 oz. Milk – 8-12 oz. Cheese – 1 oz.</p>	<p>Flavored milk with no more than 22 g of total sugars (12 of these grams are naturally occurring lactose-milk sugar) per 8-oz. portion.</p> <p>Flavored nonfat and low-fat yogurt with no more than 30 grams of total sugars per 8-ounce serving.</p>	<p>Low calcium intake in one of the most significant nutrient deficiencies identified in Healthy People 2010. Milk and milk products are nutrient dense foods, providing calcium, protein and vitamin D for bone growth and development.</p> <p>The American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement on Calcium Requirements of Infants, Children and Adolescents recognizes children's low calcium intake and urges pediatricians to recommend milk, cheese, yogurt and other calcium-rich food for children's daily diets to help build bone mass in all growing children and adolescents.</p> <p>Source for sugar guidelines: Nutrition Standard for Foods in Schools: Leading the Way Toward Healthier Youth. Institute of Medicine (IOM)</p>
Meat/Beans/Nuts	<p><u>Suggested snack portion size:</u></p> <p>Trail mix, nuts, seeds – 1 oz. Nut butters – no more than 1 Tbsp. Bean dip - 1/4 cup Cheese dip - 1/4 cup</p>	<p><u>Fat:</u> No more than 35% of total calories from fat, with the exception of nuts, seeds and nut butters served with the above portions guidelines.</p> <p><u>Saturated Fat:</u> No more than 10% of total calories from saturated fat or 2 grams maximum per serving.</p>	<p>Meats, beans and nuts offer protein and other valuable nutrients such as zinc, iron and B vitamins.</p> <p>Protein supplies amino acids, which are building blocks that build, repair and maintain body tissues.</p> <p>School lunch meal pattern requires 2 Tbsp. nut butter to equal 1 oz. meat alternate. However, USDA MyPyramid recommends a nut butter serving size of 1 Tbsp.</p> <p>Non-hydrogenated nut butters like all natural peanut butter or almond butter will have no trans fats and minimal saturated fat and will provide healthy unsaturated fats.</p>

⁽¹⁾ Guidelines will be developed for Concession Stands.

⁽²⁾ Source: *Nutrition Standard for Foods in Schools: Leading the Way Toward Healthier Youth.* Institute of Medicine (IOM)