Greater Essex County District School Board

Policy: School Food and Beverage

Reference No: P-AD-40

The Greater Essex County District School Board is committed to supporting schools as healthy places for students in order to establish the conditions needed to realize the potential of all students. A healthy school environment enhances student learning and success, and supports students' and supports students' social and emotional well-being. The Greater Essex County District School Board acknowledges that schools have an important role to play in helping students lead healthier lives, including teaching students the skills to make healthy choices and reinforcing those lessons through school practices.

This Policy, Regulation and Administrative Procedure are made in accordance with the Ministry of Education School Food and Beverage – Policy/Program Memorandum 150.

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The nutrition standards of the Food and Beverage policy apply to all food and beverages sold in all venues (e.g., cafeterias, vending machines, tuck shops), through all programs (e.g., catered lunch programs), and at all events (e.g., bake sales, sports events).

The standards do not apply to food and beverages that are:

- Offered in schools to students at no cost;
- Brought from home or purchased off school premises and are not for resale in schools;
- Available for purchase during field trips off school premises;
- Sold in schools for non-school purposes (e.g. sold by an outside organization that is using the gymnasium after school hours for a non-school-related event);
- Sold for fundraising activities that occur off school premises;
- Sold in staff rooms.

Exemption for Special Event Days

The school principal may designate up to ten days during the school year as Special Event Days on which food and beverages sold in schools would be exempt from the nutrition standards outline in the Food and Beverage Policy. The school Principals are encouraged to consult with their students (when appropriate) in making these decisions.

Despite this exemption, schools are encouraged to sell food and beverages that meet the nutrition standards of the Food and Beverage Policy.

Nutrition Standards and Criteria for Ontario Schools

The nutrition standards are outlined in “Ministry of Education, School Food and Beverage Policy- Resource Guide, 2010”.

The nutrition standards embody the principles of healthy eating as outlined in Canada’s Food Guide, and are intended to contribute to students’ healthy growth and development. The nutrition standards are divided into two sections: food and beverage.

Nutrition Standards for Food

Food is categorized into six groups (the first four food groups are from Canada’s Food Guide):

- Vegetables and Fruit, e.g. broccoli, spinach, carrots, apples, oranges, berries;
- Grain Products, e.g. whole grain breads, brown rice, oats, whole wheat pasta;
- Milk and Alternatives, e.g. 1% or skim milk, fortified soy beverages; yogurts, cheeses such as part-skim mozzarella, light cheddar;
- Meat and Alternatives, e.g. lean meat, poultry, fish, beans, lentils, tofu, nuts seeds;
- Mixed dishes – please refer to the nutrition standards in Resource Guide, Appendix 1, p.24, for foods such as pizza, soups, sandwiches, pasta, hotdogs;

- Miscellaneous items – please refer to the nutrition standards in Resource Guide, Appendix 1, p. 36 for items such condiments and spreads; gravies and sauces; dips; fats; oils and dressings.

Nutrition Standards for Beverages
Beverages are categorized into two groups:

- Elementary Schools
- Secondary Schools

These sections are outlined in the School Food and Beverage Policy Overview section of the School Food and Beverage Policy Resource Guide 2010.

80/20 Rule

Sell Most (>80%). Products in this category must make up at least 80 percent of all food choices that are available for sale in all venues, through all programs, and at all events. The same requirement applies to beverage choices.

Sell Less (<20%). Products in this category must make up no more than 20 percent of all food choices that are available for sale in all venues, through all programs, and at all events. The same requirement applies to beverage choices.

Not permitted for sale. Food and beverages in this category may not be sold in schools.