

MYPLATE GUIDE TO SCHOOL LUNCH

for Families



GRAINS

Whole grains give kids B vitamins, minerals, and fiber to help them feel fuller longer so they stay alert to concentrate at school.



PROTEIN FOODS

Meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, peas, eggs, nuts, and seeds provide many nutrients including protein and iron. Portion sizes are based upon the nutrition needs of children in various grade groups. School meals also allow cheese, tofu, and yogurt to count as the meat/meat alternate in the school lunch.

VEGETABLES

A variety of vegetables helps kids get the nutrients and fiber they need for good health.



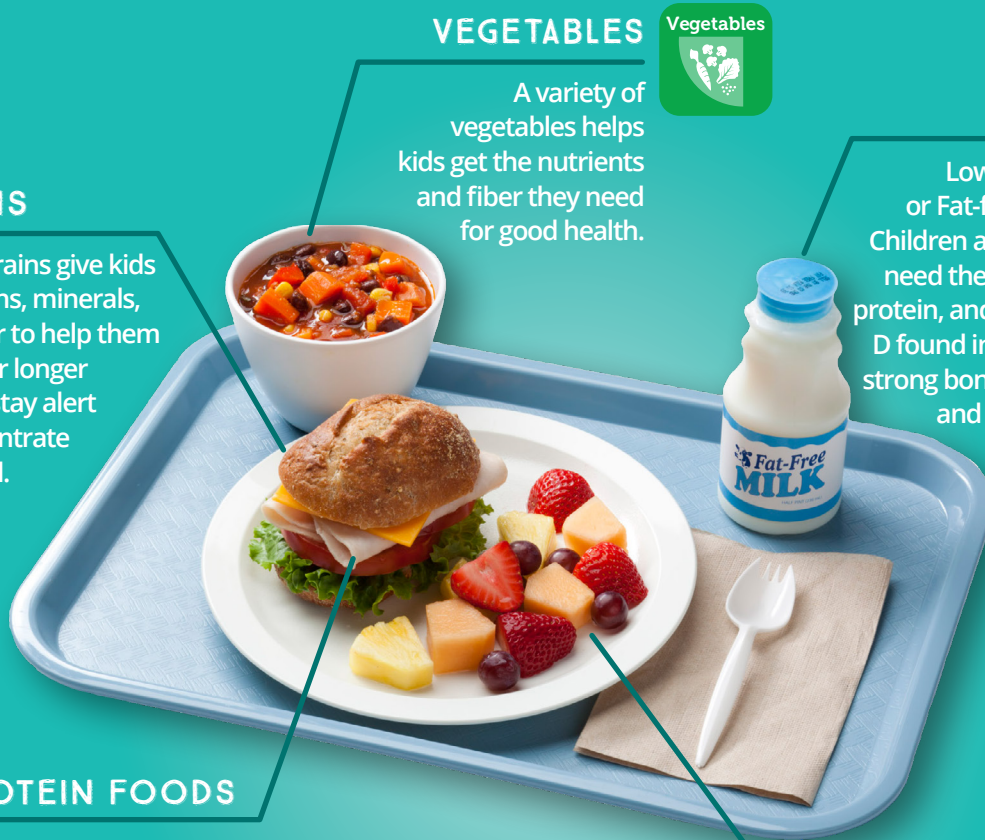
MILK

Low-fat (1%) or Fat-free milk. Children and teens need the calcium, protein, and vitamin D found in milk for strong bones, teeth and muscles.

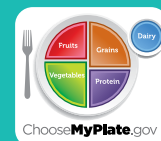


FRUITS

Every school lunch includes fruits as well as vegetables. Only 1/2 of the fruits offered may be 100% juice, since whole and cut-up fruits have more fiber.



Visit teamnutrition.usda.gov for additional tips and activities.



HOW DOES SCHOOL LUNCH HELP FAMILIES?



Provides a balanced meal

It meets one-third of the nutrition needs of most children for the day.



Helps kids learn where foods come from

Farm to school programs are in 42 percent of schools which increase kids access to locally produced foods and learning activities such as farmers' visits and school gardening.



Saves time

If you spend 10 minutes a day packing lunch, that adds up to 30 hours (1,800 minutes) each school year.



Supports learning at school

Research shows that kids with healthier eating patterns have better academic performance.



"We grow fruits and vegetables in our school greenhouse, which are harvested and given to the cafeteria to serve on the salad bar. It's great because the landscaping class gets involved, the leadership classes get involved, and even all the marketing plan classes get involved."



Nebraska student

HOW CAN FAMILIES HELP THEIR CHILDREN ENJOY SCHOOL LUNCH?

- Try new foods at home. Kids need many opportunities to taste a new food to "get used to it."
- Talk with your child about what's on the menu. Make sure he or she knows about all the foods that are included in his or her school.
- Eat lunch at school with your child. Learn more about what's offered and meet school nutrition staff.
- Encourage your child or teen to join in taste-testing events or surveys about school lunch, when available.

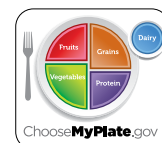
Visit Choosemyplate.gov/Families for additional tips and activities for families.

The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day.

Learn more at: www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp.

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Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

Maryland Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School

I. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to promote a healthy school environment by defining the scope of authority of the Local Educational Agency (LEA) regarding foods and beverages available to students during the school day and to outline the federal and State regulations which apply to serving these foods and beverages in schools and facilities that participate in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The policy and procedures establish minimum requirements and provide guidance for LEAs electing to set policies which go beyond those contained in this memorandum.

In 2010, Congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (Sec. 204 of Public Law 111-296), based on recommendations from the Institute of Medicine. The Act defined nutrition standards to ensure quality meals served in all LEAs participating in the NSLP and SBP. The Act also directed U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to establish broader guidelines for all foods and beverages available during the school day, now adopted as the Final Rule on Nutrition Standards for all Foods Sold in School, commonly known as “Smart Snacks” (Federal Register, Vol. 81, No. 146, July 29, 2016). These standards detail criteria for allowable foods and beverages, such as nutrient content and portion size, and replace the term, Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value.

Schools play a powerful role in preparing students for a successful future. The updated School Lunch and Breakfast Programs contribute to student learning and the development of lifelong health habits. Schools must continue to strengthen this foundation by providing healthy foods and beverages, while limiting less healthy options throughout the school environment.

II. Procedures

The policy is effective as of July 1, 2014*[▲], and applies to all foods and beverages sold to students on the school campus, including cafeteria a la carte items, vending machines, school stores, and fundraising activities, from 12:01 am until thirty minutes after the end of the official school day. The Maryland State Department of Education supports and adopts the aforementioned efforts from USDA to promote healthy choices for students, with minimal changes to the beverage standards. The following page outlines the combined federal and state standards. This policy was unanimously adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education on June 27, 2014.

Maryland LEA school wellness committees and schools may decide to implement policies that go beyond these Federal and State policies.

Questions may be sent to Sara Booker, RD, MPH, Nutrition Education and Training Coordinator in the Office of School and Community Nutrition Programs, Sara.Booker@Maryland.Gov, or 410-767-0204.

** Revised December 2017 to correct typo. Previous versions allowed ≤ 5 calories/8 oz.*

▲ Revised June 2018 to reflect USDA flexibilities for the 2018/19 School Year to allow flavored, low-fat (1%) milk.

Maryland Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School

from 12:01am through 30 minutes after the end of the school day

Other than foods offered as part of the National School Lunch Program & School Breakfast Program
Effective July 1, 2014

#1: Foods must fall into one of these categories:

- Be whole grain-rich (*at least 50% whole grain by weight, or listed as first ingredient*)
- First ingredient must be: fruit, vegetable, dairy product or protein food
- Be a combination of food that consists of at least ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable

#2: If the food qualifies as one of the above, it must also meet all of these standards:

Calories		Sodium		Fats			Sugar
Snack / Side Dish	Entrees	Snack / Side Dish	Entrees	Total Fat	Saturated Fat	Trans Fat	<i>weight sugar ÷ total weight</i>
≤ 200 cal	≤ 350 cal	≤ 200mg	≤ 480mg	≤ 35% of calories	< 10% of calories	Zero grams	≤ 35% of total weight from sugar

Beverages must meet these standards:

	Elementary	Middle	High School
Plain Water or Plain Carbonated Water	Any Size	Any Size	Any Size
Low-fat Milk[▲], Flavored or Unflavored Non-fat Milk, Flavored or Unflavored	≤ 8 fl oz	≤ 12 fl oz	≤ 12 fl oz
100% Fruit/Vegetable Juice	≤ 8 fl oz	≤ 12 fl oz	≤ 12 fl oz
100% Fruit/Vegetable Juice - diluted with water, with or without carbonation - with no added sweeteners	≤ 8 fl oz	≤ 12 fl oz	≤ 12 fl oz
Other Flavored and/or Carbonated Beverages - soda is not allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	≤ 12 oz: ≤ 40 calories/8 oz or ≤ 60 calories/12 oz > 12 and ≤ 20 oz: <5 calories/8oz* or ≤ 10 calories/20 oz
Caffeine , beyond naturally-occurring trace amounts	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed

* Revised December 2017 to correct typo. Previous versions allowed ≤ 5 calories/8 oz.

▲ Revised June 2018 to reflect USDA flexibilities for the 2018/19 School Year to allow flavored, low-fat (1%) milk.



CELEBRATIONS THAT SUPPORT CHILD HEALTH

Schools and afterschool programs play an important role in helping students learn about healthy eating. School celebrations can reinforce messages about good nutrition and health when they include healthy foods and beverages and provide opportunities for kids to dance, play games and engage in sports.

FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO ENSURE THAT YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY PROVIDES FUN AND HEALTHY CELEBRATIONS:

- 1** Survey staff, students and families to identify successful healthy celebration options and share the results with the school community.
- 2** Work with your school wellness committee to update the celebration policy in the school wellness policy or handbook. Be sure to align with the district's local school wellness policy.
- 3** Promote the new celebration policy through the school's website, social media accounts, newsletters and/or bulletin boards.
- 4** Send letters to parents explaining the policy change and why it is important. Include a list of healthy snacks that parents/guardians can pack for their children.
- 5** Provide healthy celebration ideas to parents and school staff. Include a suggested healthy snack list for classroom celebrations.
- 6** Encourage school staff can share healthy celebration success stories to encourage all classrooms to implement healthy celebrations.

On the next page are many examples of non-food and healthy celebration ideas from Healthier Generation that students will enjoy!

To learn more and join the movement, visit HealthierGeneration.org

NON-FOOD CELEBRATION IDEAS



PRIZES

Pencils or erasers
Stickers
Books
Tickets or tokens toward for a larger prize
Rulers
Slap bracelets
Playdough
Frisbees
Coloring books



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Lead a special physical activity break
Host a special event such as a dance or kite-flying party
Provide extra recess or PE time
Turn on the music and let students dance for a few minutes
Have a themed parade around your school



SPECIAL EVENTS

Let students choose a special activity or be a teacher's helper
Allow students to select a special book or invite a guest to read aloud
Go on a scavenger hunt
Host a special dress day where students can wear hats or pajamas



RECOGNITION

Give a certificate or ribbon
Post a sign in the classroom or on a prominent bulletin board
Give a shout-out in the morning announcements
Allow child to wear a crown or special sash
Recognize the student during an assembly

HEALTHY SNACK & BEVERAGES IDEAS*



BEVERAGES

Water
100% fruit juice with no added sugar
Fat-free or low-fat milk
Fruit smoothies made with frozen fruit with no added sugar and fat-free or low fat yogurt
100% fruit juice slushes with no added sugar
Fruit-infused water



FRUITS & VEGGIES

Fruit trays, salads or kabobs
Vegetable trays, salads or kabobs
Canned fruit or fruit cups in water or 100% fruit juice
Frozen fruit or fruit cups in water or 100% fruit juice
Dried fruit with no added sugar



WHOLE GRAINS

Whole grain crackers, pretzels or cereal bars
Small whole grain bagels, waffles or pancakes topped with fruit or seed butter
Low-fat or air-popped popcorn with no added butter or salt
Graham crackers
Baked whole grain tortilla chips with salsa or bean dip



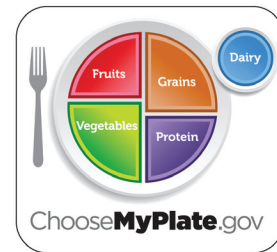
PROTEINS

Fat-free or low-fat yogurt served alone or as a fruit or vegetable dip
Seed butter served with fruit or whole grain crackers
Trail mix made with dried fruit and whole grain cereal
Low-fat cheese served with fruit or whole grain crackers
Hummus served with vegetables or whole grain crackers

* Work with your district's nutrition services staff to purchase Smart Snack compliant foods and beverages for celebrations. Use [Healthier Generation's Smart Snacks Product Calculator](https://www.healthiergeneration.org/resources/smart-snacks) to ensure items meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Ensure food allergies of any participants are known before serving any food item. Many schools are nut-free. Please check with your school.



be a healthy role model for children



10 tips for setting good examples

You are the most important influence on your child. You can do many things to help your children develop healthy eating habits for life. Offering a variety of foods helps children get the nutrients they need from every food group. They will also be more likely to try new foods and to like more foods. When children develop a taste for many types of foods, it's easier to plan family meals. Cook together, eat together, talk together, and make mealtime a family time!

1 show by example

Eat vegetables, fruits, and whole grains with meals or as snacks. Let your child see that you like to munch on raw vegetables.

2 go food shopping together



Grocery shopping can teach your child about food and nutrition. Discuss where vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy, and protein foods come from. Let your children make healthy choices.

3 get creative in the kitchen

Cut food into fun and easy shapes with cookie cutters. Name a food your child helps make. Serve “Janie’s Salad” or “Jackie’s Sweet Potatoes” for dinner. Encourage your child to invent new snacks. Make your own trail mixes from dry whole-grain, low-sugar cereal and dried fruit.

4 offer the same foods for everyone

Stop being a “short-order cook” by making different dishes to please children. It’s easier to plan family meals when everyone eats the same foods.



5 reward with attention, not food

Show your love with hugs and kisses. Comfort with hugs and talks. Choose not to offer sweets as rewards. It lets your child think sweets or dessert foods are better than other foods. When meals are not eaten, kids do not need “extras”—such as candy or cookies—as replacement foods.

6 focus on each other at the table

Talk about fun and happy things at mealtime. Turn off the television. Take phone calls later. Try to make eating meals a stress-free time.



7 listen to your child

If your child says he or she is hungry, offer a small, healthy snack—even if it is not a scheduled time to eat. Offer choices. Ask “Which would you like for dinner: broccoli or cauliflower?” instead of “Do you want broccoli for dinner?”

8 limit screen time

Allow no more than 2 hours a day of screen time like TV and computer games. Get up and move during commercials to get some physical activity.

9 encourage physical activity

Make physical activity fun for the whole family. Involve your children in the planning. Walk, run, and play with your child—instead of sitting on the sidelines. Set an example by being physically active and using safety gear, like bike helmets.



10 be a good food role model

Try new foods yourself. Describe its taste, texture, and smell. Offer one new food at a time. Serve something your child likes along with the new food. Offer new foods at the beginning of a meal, when your child is very hungry. Avoid lecturing or forcing your child to eat.



10 tips
Nutrition
Education Series



MyPlate
MyWins

Based on the
**Dietary
Guidelines
for Americans**

Make celebrations fun, healthy, and active

Eating healthy and being physically active can be a fun part of parties and events. Great gatherings are easy to have when tasty, healthy foods from all the food groups are offered in a fun, active environment. Above all, focus on enjoying friends and family.

1 Make healthy habits part of your celebrations

Although food and beverages are a part of many events, they do not have to be the center of the occasion. Focus on activities that get people moving and allow people to enjoy each other's company.

2 Make foods look festive

Add a few eye-catching vegetables to a favorite dish or a new recipe. Add a sprinkle of herbs or spices to make the dish pop. Cut foods into interesting shapes.

3 Offer thirst quenchers that please

Make fun ice cubes from 100% juice or add slices of fruit to make water more exciting.

4 Savor the flavor

Take time to pay attention to the taste of each bite of food. Make small, healthy changes to your recipes or try dishes from another culture to liven things up.

5 Let MyPlate be your guide

Offer whole-grain crackers, serve a spicy bean dip and a veggie tray, make fruit kabobs, layer yogurt and fruit to create a sweet parfait. Use whole-grain pasta or brown rice and veggies to make a savory, healthy salad.

6 Make physical activity part of every event

Being physically active makes everyone feel good. Dancing, moving, and playing active games add fun to any gathering.

7 Try out some healthier recipes

Find ways to cut back on added sugars, salt, and saturated fat as you prepare your favorite recipes. Try out some of the recipes on WhatsCooking.fns.usda.gov.

8 Keep it simple

Have others participate by contributing a healthy prepared dish, helping with the cleanup, or keeping the kids active.

9 Shop smart to eat smart

Save money by offering foods that fit your budget. Buy in-season produce when it costs less and tastes better. Plan in advance and buy foods on sale.

10 Be a cheerleader for healthy habits

It's never too early for adults to set an example. Keep in mind that children follow what the adults around them do—even at parties.

