

BUSINESS AND NONINSTRUCTIONAL OPERATIONS

Outside Food and Beverage in Schools

A. Generally

Serving nutritious, healthy, and balanced meals is a critical component of the School Division's safety measures for students and staff. The School Division has well-established policies and procedures relating to student and staff wellness, and food safety in our kitchens and cafeterias. These policies and procedures are continuously evaluated for improvement, with the foremost focus remaining on health, nutrition, and food safety within the schools.

The School Division has qualified nutrition professionals who administer the school meal programs in school cafeterias. Nutrition professionals are trained in food preparation, handling, serving, allergies, sanitation, and local, state, and federal statutes and regulations. Therefore, served school meals and healthy school snacks meet or exceed current United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) nutrition requirements aimed at promoting student wellness education for lifelong healthy eating and physical activity habits. Additionally, any snacks sold on school property during the school day (i.e. school stores, fundraisers, etc.) must follow USDA Smart Snacks in Schools regulations.

B. Outside Food and Beverage

Life-threatening allergy management in school requires a team effort from the student, parent/legal guardian, healthcare provider, school nurse and school staff. Outside food manufacturer food labeling interpretation has significant challenges for nurses and teaching staff due to limited FDA mandates on manufacturer ingredient listings. Additionally, outside food may lack federal meal component requirements and increase classroom distraction. Elementary and middle schoolers are especially vulnerable to these challenges. Therefore, outside food and/or drink brought into a classroom school setting by parents/legal guardians, volunteers, students, or staff members for holidays, celebrations, and rewards that is intended to be shared with other students during the school day shall be discouraged and approved by the Principal/designee.

Please refer to the Food and Beverage Guidelines document, which includes healthy snack and beverage ideas, located on the Office of Food Services website.

C. Use of Food in Curriculum Activities & School/Classroom Celebrations

The use of food in curriculum activities will be limited. Teachers will work with the school nurse to ensure students' allergy needs are addressed.

Principal/designee approval must be obtained for any school-related events, such as honor roll, perfect attendance, holiday, graduation, snack closet, etc.

D. Birthday Celebrations

All birthday celebrations shall be served during lunchtime. Parents/legal guardians may elect to order Elementary Birthday Celebrations through the school cafeteria.

Elementary Birthday Celebration order requests must be submitted to the cafeteria manager at the student's respective school. The cafeteria manager will review and follow student food allergy directives for birthday celebrations.

E. Rewards

Instructional staff should always consider non-food rewards first in lieu of food rewards (particularly candy). A list of non-food alternatives and healthy food ideas may be found on the Office of Food Services' website.

This Policy does not pertain to consumption of outside food and/or ~~drink~~beverage on school property during after-school activities.

Legal Reference

Virginia Board of Education Regulations Governing School Lunch Sale of Food Items, 8 VAC 20-290-10, as amended.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Rules and Regulations, National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School as Required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, 7 C.F.R. Parts 210 and 220.

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, 42 U.S.C. § 1751, as amended.

Related Links

School Board Policy 3-84

School Board Policy 3-86

School Board Policy 5-58

School Board Regulation 3-86.1

School Board Regulation 5-58.1

Adopted by School Board: