



Smart Snacks in School – Quick Reference

I. Background on Smart Snacks in School

- a. Competitive food standards enacted under the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.
- b. Implementation began July 1, 2014 under Interim Final Rule.
- c. Regulations found at [7 CFR 210.11](#).

II. Definitions and Applicability

- a. *Competitive Foods*: All foods and beverages sold to students outside of the reimbursable meal, on the school campus, and at any time during the school day.
 - i. *Sold* means the exchange of money, tokens, or the use of some type of prepaid account to purchase an item.
 - ii. Includes: Items sold a la carte, in vending machines, at school stores, during fundraisers, or at any other venue that sells food/beverages to students during the school day.
 - iii. *School Campus*: All areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day, including school buses.
 - iv. *School Day*: Period from midnight before school starts to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

III. Nutrition Standards for Foods

- a. Apply the same to all grade levels.
- b. Must meet two sets of standards:
 - i. General Standard - must meet ONE of the following:
 1. Be a whole grain-rich product (i.e., contains 50% or more whole grains by weight or have whole grains as the first ingredient); *or*
 2. Contain one of the other major food groups (fruits, vegetables, dairy product, or protein food) as the first ingredient; *or*
 3. Be a “combination food” with at least $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fruit and/or vegetable.
 - ii. Nutrient Standards - must meet ALL the following and each is assessed “as packaged/served” and including all accompaniments:
 1. Total Fat: \leq 35% of total calories per item.
 2. Saturated Fat: $<$ 10% of total calories per item.
 3. Trans Fat: Zero grams per portion.
 4. Sodium:
 - a. Snack and side items: \leq 200 mg sodium per item.
 - b. Entrée items: \leq 480 mg sodium per item.
 5. Calories:
 - a. Snack or side items: \leq 200 calories per item.

- b. Entrées items: \leq 350 calories per item.
 - 6. Sugar: \leq 35% of weight from total sugar per item.
- c. Broad exemptions to Smart Snacks standards include:
 - i. Fruits and Vegetables:
 - 1. Fresh and frozen fruit with no added ingredients except water, and canned fruit packed in 100% juice, light syrup, or extra light syrup.
 - 2. Fresh and frozen vegetables with no added ingredients except water, and low-sodium or “no salt added” canned vegetables that contain no added fats. (Note: Canned corn or peas with a small amount of sugar for processing are included.)
 - 3. Combinations of fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables are exempt if there are no other added ingredients except for water.
 - ii. NSLP/SBP Entrée Items Sold a la Carte: Entrée items offered as part of the reimbursable breakfast or lunch are exempt from all competitive food standards when sold a la carte on the day of service or on the following school day.
 - iii. Sugar-Free Chewing Gum
- d. Specific exemptions to Nutrient Standards (must meet all other nutrient standards):
 - i. Exempt from total fat and saturated fat standards:
 - 1. Reduced fat cheese (including part-skim mozzarella)
 - 2. Nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters
 - 3. Whole eggs with no added fat
 - 4. Celery with peanut butter and unsweetened raisins
 - 5. Apples with reduced-fat cheese
 - ii. Exempt from total fat standard:
 - 1. Seafood with no added fat (i.e., canned tuna packed in water)
 - 2. Bean dip
 - a. Defined as a spread made from ground pulses (beans, peas, and/or lentils) along with one or more optional ingredients in [regulation](#).
 - b. Bean dip exemption does not apply to combination products that contain bean dip with other ingredients such as crackers, pretzels, pita, and manufactured snack-type vegetable and/or fruit sticks.
 - iii. Exempt from sugar standard:
 - 1. Dried fruits or vegetables with no added sugars
 - 2. Dried cranberries, tart cherries, or blueberries sweetened only for processing and/or palatability, with no added fats
 - iv. Exempt from total fat, saturated fat, and sugar standards:
 - 1. Trail mix consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added sugar or fats

IV. Nutrition Standards for Beverages

- a. Standards vary by grade level:
 - i. Plain water or plain carbonated water with no added ingredients may be sold to all students with no limits on portion size.
 - ii. Unflavored or flavored low-fat (1%) milk, and unflavored or flavored fat-free milk (including nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives as permitted in the school meal programs)

- a. Elementary schools (K-5): ≤ 8 fluid ounces
 - b. Middle and high schools (6-12): ≤ 12 fluid ounces
 - iii. 100% fruit and/or vegetable juice, with or without carbonation
 - a. Elementary schools (K-5): ≤ 8 fluid ounces
 - b. Middle and high schools (6-12): ≤ 12 fluid ounces
 - iv. 100% fruit and/or vegetable juice diluted with water, with or without carbonation, and with no added sweeteners
 - a. Elementary schools (K-5): ≤ 8 fluid ounces
 - b. Middle and high schools (6-12): ≤ 12 fluid ounces
- b. Additional beverages for high school students (9-12):
 - i. Calorie-Free Beverages (up to 0.5 calories per fluid ounce): Maximum serving size 20 fluid ounces
 - 1. Calorie-free flavored water, with or without carbonation
 - 2. Other “calorie-free” beverages with less than 5 calories per 8 fluid ounce container, or up to 10 calories per 20 fluid ounce container.
 - ii. Lower Calorie Beverages (up to 5 calories per fluid ounce): Maximum serving size 12 fluid ounces
 - 1. Up to 60 calories per 12 fluid ounce container
 - 2. Up to 40 calories per 8 fluid ounce container
- c. Caffeine:
 - i. Only caffeine-free beverages are allowed for elementary and middle school students, except for trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances, such as in chocolate milk.
 - ii. Caffeine-containing products are not prohibited in high schools.

V. Fundraisers

- a. All foods/beverages that meet the Smart Snacks standards may be sold for fundraising purposes on the school campus during the school day without a federal or state limit on frequency or location of sale.
- b. Smart Snacks standards do not apply to items sold during non-school hours, on weekends, or at off-campus fundraising events.
- c. PDE permits a maximum of five exempt fundraisers to occur in each elementary school and middle school building, and a maximum of ten exempt fundraisers to occur in each high school building per school year.
 - i. *Exempt fundraisers*: Fundraisers that do not meet the Smart Snacks standards.
 - ii. Each exempt fundraiser may last up to one school week, or five consecutive school days.
 - iii. Items sold for exempt fundraisers may not be sold in the meal service area during meals.
 - iv. See *Fundraiser Exemptions Guidance* on PEARS, Download Forms in the Smart Snacks in School section for more information.

VI. Administrative Provisions

- a. Recordkeeping

- i. School food authorities (SFAs) are responsible for maintaining records documenting compliance with the competitive food standards for items sold in the meal service area during meal service periods.
 - ii. Local education agencies (LEAs) are responsible for maintaining records documenting compliance with the competitive food standards for items sold in areas outside of the school food service operation.
 - iii. LEAs are responsible for ensuring that any organizations selling competitive foods at the various venues in the school are maintaining records documenting compliance with the competitive food standards.
 - iv. Required records include receipts, nutrition labels, and/or product specifications for items available for sale. In addition, a record that substantiates that each item offered for sale meets Smart Snacks standards is required and includes evaluating the Nutrition Facts label and/or using the Alliance for a Healthier Generation Calculator and retaining copies in the files.
- b. Monitoring and Compliance
- i. State agencies are responsible for monitoring compliance with the requirements of the competitive food nutrition standards through periodic reviews of LEA records and operations.

VII. Resources

- a. PEARS, Download Forms, Smart Snacks in School section
- b. Alliance for a Healthier Generation's [Smart Snacks Calculator](#)
- c. USDA/FNS [Tools for Schools: Focusing on Smart Snacks](#)
- d. Alliance for a Healthier Generation's [Smart Foods Planner](#)

IX. PDE Contact:

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