

# **Nutrition Environment & Services**



# Nutrition Environment & Services

The foods that we eat give us the energy and the nutrients that our bodies need to perform, whether in school or at home. With so many choices available today, acquiring the right amount of energy and nutrients is a challenge for both children and adults.

In all public schools and many private schools, the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) provide meals that are both nutritious and balanced. School lunch and breakfast meals meet the Nutrition Standards meal pattern for foods by providing fruits and vegetables, whole grain-rich grain products, low-fat unflavored and unflavored or flavored fat-free milk.

The meal pattern's dietary specifications set specific calorie limits to ensure age-appropriate meals for grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Other meal enhancements include gradual reductions in the sodium content of the meals (sodium targets must be reached by SY 2014-15, SY 2017-18 and SY 2022-23). While school lunches must meet Federal meal requirements, decisions about what specific foods to serve and how they are prepared are made by local school food authorities.

In addition to USDA meal requirements, the Mississippi Legislature and the Mississippi Board of Education have established additional requirements for foods and beverages sold on school campuses.

Healthy eating patterns and adequate nutrients are important for school-aged children to promote cognitive development, prevent health problems and reduce undernourishment, which has been linked to increased behavioral and emotional functioning. Selecting the right foods to eat today can help us reduce the risk of chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease, and certain cancers in later years. Promoting healthy eating habits, providing resources to reduce the fat, sugar and/or sodium in our foods, marketing fruits and vegetables, along with daily exercise, are important to a healthy lifestyle.

Healthy eating habits can occur in many places: school cafeterias, classrooms, libraries, home and others. Join us in learning more about good nutrition!

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- Nutrition Standards
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- Nutrition Resources





## Federal USDA Nutrition Standards

### National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in over 100,000 public and non-profit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provided nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to more than 31 million children each school day in 2012. In 1998, Congress expanded the National School Lunch Program to include reimbursement for snacks served to children in afterschool educational and enrichment programs to include children through 18 years of age. The Food and Nutrition Service administers the program at the Federal level. At the State level, the National School Lunch Program is usually administered by State education agencies, which operate the program through agreements with school food authorities.

School lunches must meet meal pattern and nutrition standards based on the latest *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The current meal pattern increases the availability of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in the school menu. The meal pattern's dietary specifications set specific calorie limits to ensure age-appropriate meals for grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Other meal enhancements include gradual reductions in the sodium content of the meals (sodium targets must be reached by SY 2014-15, SY 2017-18 and SY 2022-23). While school lunches must meet Federal meal requirements, decisions about what specific foods to serve and how they are prepared are made by local school food authorities.

School lunch and Breakfast Programs must meet Federal Nutrition Standards; however, decisions about what specific foods to serve and how they are prepared are made by local school food authorities.

For more information on National School Lunch Program visit: [www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp](http://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp)

### School Breakfast Program (SBP)

The School Breakfast Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. It began as a pilot project in 1966, and was made permanent in 1975. The School Breakfast Program is administered at the Federal level by the Food and Nutrition Service. At the State level, the program is usually administered by State education agencies, which operate the program through agreements with local school food authorities in more than 89,000 schools and institutions.

For more information about the School Breakfast Program visit: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sbp/school-breakfast-programs-sbp>

# USDA Smart Snacks Standards

Students across the country are now offered healthier school meals with more fruits, vegetables and whole grains through the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. The Smart Snacks in School standards published by USDA (effective July 1, 2014) will build on those healthy advancements by ensuring that all snack foods and beverages available for sale to students in schools are tasty and nutritious. Foods and Beverages that are available for sale during the **school day**, must meet the criteria's listed below. The **School Day** means the period during the regular and extended school day; from the midnight before, until 30 minutes after the end of the instructional day.

## Nutrition Standards for Foods

### Any food sold in schools must:

- Be a "whole grain-rich" grain product; or
- Have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food; or
- Be a combination food that contains at least ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable; or contain 10% of the Daily Value (DV) of one of the nutrients of public health concern in the *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber).\*

### Foods must also meet several nutrient requirements:

#### Calorie limits

Snack items: ≤ 200 calories and Entrée items: ≤ 350 calories

#### Sodium limits

Snack items: ≤ 230 mg\*\* and Entrée items: ≤ 480 mg

#### Fat limits

Total fat: ≤35% of calories, Saturated fat: < 10% of calories and *Trans fat*: zero grams

#### Sugar limit

≤ 35% of weight from total sugars in foods

## Nutrition Standards for Beverages

### All schools may sell:

- Plain water (with or without carbonation)
- Unflavored low fat milk
- Unflavored or flavored fat free milk and milk alternatives permitted by NSLP/SBP
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice and
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation), and no added sweeteners.

**Elementary schools may sell** up to 8-ounce portions, while middle schools and high schools may sell up to 12-ounce portions of milk and juice. There is no portion size limit for plain water.

**Beyond this, the standards allow additional** "no calorie" and "lower calorie" beverage options for high school students.

- No more than 20-ounce portions of calorie-free, flavored water (with or without carbonation); and other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are labeled to contain < 5 calories per 8 fluid ounces or ≤ 10 calories per 20 fluid ounces.
- No more than 12-ounce portions of beverages with ≤ 40 calories per 8 fluid ounces, or ≤ 60 calories per 12 fluid ounces.
- **Fundraisers**
  - The sale of food items that meet nutrition requirements at fundraisers are not limited in any way under the standards.
  - The standards do not apply during non-school hours, on weekends and at off-campus fundraising events.
  - MDE State Board Policy (2006) does not allow "*Exempt Fundraisers*". If the product does not fall within the Smart Snacks standards, they cannot be sold during the school hours from the midnight before, until 30 minutes after the end of the school day.

## Mississippi Healthy Students Act Nutrition Standards



**The Mississippi Department of Education/Office of Child Nutrition recognizes that:**

- 1) A crucial relationship exists between health, nutrition and learning. The health and nutrition needs of growing students are met with USDA school meals programs.
- 2) As a minimum, school districts must follow all current and future requirements and recommendations of the USDA National School Lunch Program Meal Patterns and Nutrient Standards.
- 3) The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, USDA's ChooseMyPlate and the USDA Healthier U.S. School Challenge provide nutritional guidance for school meals.
- 4) Schools must offer equal access to all meals or items served or sold under the National School Lunch & School Breakfast Programs.
- 5) Students need adequate time to eat and enjoy meals served in schools.
- 6) Moving recess before lunch, through a simple schedule change, may provide many benefits for students especially in grades K-12.
- 7) Family education will be the key to building a healthy future for all Mississippians. Families must embrace nutrition and wellness; it is crucial to the success of our efforts. Mississippi public schools offer the best resources, facilities, and structure to promote family nutrition education.
- 8) Offering healthy foods and beverages in schools does not guarantee that students will choose them. Aggressive marketing techniques must inform students, teachers, administrative staff and most importantly, the public of the benefits of eating in the school cafeteria.
- 9) School districts are encouraged to participate in the **Healthier U.S. School Challenge** and become a **USDA Team Nutrition School**.

**The Mississippi Department of Education intends that:**

### **A. Healthy food and beverage choices:**

- 1) Schools (grades K-8) must offer students a minimum of  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fresh fruits and vegetables daily; schools (grades 9-12) must offer students a minimum of one (1) cup fresh fruits and vegetables daily.
- 2) No more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the total weekly requirement for fruit may be offered in the form of 100% full-strength fruit juice.
- 3) Schools (grades K-12) must offer vegetable subgroups throughout the week (dark green, red/orange, beans/peas, starchy and other).
- 4) Schools (grades K-12) fluid milk offered must be 1% unflavored, or fat free flavored or unflavored.

### **B. Healthy food preparation**

1. Schools shall comply with the existing USDA NSLP/SBP meal pattern requirements. This includes meeting the 10% of the Daily Value (DV) of one of the nutrients of public health concern in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (calcium, potassium, vitamin D, or dietary fiber).

## Nutrition Standards (Continued)

2. Schools shall develop and implement a food safety program by July 1, 2005 to conform to guidance issued by USDA. Every school/SFAs must have a fully implemented Food Safety Program that complies with HACCP principles as required by the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004. Policy to include a food safety assurance program for all foods offered to students through sale or service.
3. Schools shall secure a Food Service Permit through the Mississippi State Department of Health for approval to operate under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.
4. The Mississippi State Department of Health conducts two School Food Facility Inspections per site each school year. The State Agency is required by federal regulations to submit a written report to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service reporting on the number of School Food Facility Inspections conducted per site. **(Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act 2004, Section 15. 9(H), Implementation Memo SP-24)**
5. Schools shall implement healthy school food preparation techniques using training materials developed through sources such as USDA, National Food Service Management Institute or the Mississippi Department of Education. Training documentation and assessment records shall be retained for review by the Mississippi Department of Education.
6. Schools should limit fried foods whenever possible and practical and shall develop a long range plan for reducing and/or eliminating fried products in their lunch and breakfast menus. The long range plan should include preparation methods using existing equipment and/or goals to replace fryers with combination oven/steamers as budgets allow.

### C. Marketing of healthy food choices to students and staff

1. Train School Foodservice Administrators, Kitchen Managers, and Cooks in Marketing, New Cooking Techniques, and Garnishing using available or newly developed training tools, such as *Marketing Sense* – Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition.
2. Use the Whole School Approach in Marketing the Local Wellness Policy. Administration, faculty, staff, students, and parents need to be solicited to be a part of the implementation of the Local Wellness Policy. Educating the family and the community is crucial to the success of our efforts. Suggestions include:
  - a. Establishing Community Partnerships. With these groups on-board with the program, they can provide physical and financial support.
    - 1) Junior League
    - 2) Service Organizations (Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.)
    - 3) Local Community Foundations
  - b. Marketing New Foods. Research shows that it takes a number of times for an item to be served before it can be accepted. To facilitate the introduction of a new item, we suggest:
    - 1) Tasting Parties
    - 2) Serving Line Sampling
    - 3) Serving Line Promotion



## MS Nutrition Standards (Continued)

### D. Food preparation ingredients and products

1. Keep trans fatty acid consumption as low as possible, especially by limiting foods that contain synthetic sources of trans fats, such as partially hydrogenated oils, and by limiting other solid fats.
2. Wherever possible and practical, school lunch and breakfast programs shall include products that are labeled "0" grams trans fat.
3. Schools shall incorporate whole grain-rich (WGR) products into daily and weekly lunch and breakfast menus based on product availability and student acceptability.

### E. Minimum and maximum time allotment for students and staff lunch and breakfast periods

1. Schools shall schedule at least a minimum of 24 minutes to ensure an adequate eating time for school lunch. The factors influencing the lunch period are wait time, consumption time, standard deviation/variability and social time.
2. Since school breakfast is not factored into the regular school day, schools should take into consideration the recommended time of 10 minutes for a child to eat school breakfast after they have received the meal.

### F. The availability of food items during the lunch and breakfast periods of the Child Nutrition Breakfast and Lunch Programs

1. School districts shall comply with the Mississippi Board of Education Policy on Competitive Food Sales as outlined in the **Mississippi Board of Education Policies**
2. School districts shall update the wellness policy to address limiting the number of extra sale items that may be purchased with a reimbursable meal. This policy will exclude extra beverage purchases of milk, juice and/or water. Schools may want to consider the following options:

#### **Example:**

- A. Elementary School – 1 extra sale item other than beverage
- B. Middle School – 1 extra sale item other than beverage
- C. High School – 2 extra sale items other than beverage

3. Schools may sell extra items in individual packages not to exceed 200 calories.

**Example:** ice cream, reduced-fat chips, (100% juice bars, 100% fruit juice, or granola bars, or cereal bars.

4. Schools may sell entrée items as extra food sales on the day they are served and the day after.
5. Schools will use marketing, pricing and nutrition education strategies to encourage healthy extra sale selections.

#### **Example:**

- A. Healthy selections such as fruit or vegetables priced lower than other selections
- B. Healthy selections positioned in a visibly prominent location
- C. Fun nutrition information marketing the healthy selections

## Nutrition Standards (Continued)

### **G. Marketing methods to increase participation in the Child Nutrition School Breakfast and School Lunch Programs:**

1. Since school food service operates like a business with income and expenses, adequate marketing ensures a successful program operation. Child Nutrition Programs are usually highlighted once or twice a year during National School Lunch and Breakfast Weeks. For marketing to be effective, it should occur more frequently. When devising a plan, remember the following:
  - A. Define your business.
  - B. Define your customers.
  - C. Evaluate your plan and budget.
  - D. Define your objectives.
2. Family education will be the key to building a healthy future for all Mississippians. Mississippi public schools offer the best resources, facilities and structure to promote family nutrition education.
3. Schools are strongly encouraged to develop academic partnerships with appropriate governmental agencies to offer family nutrition education programs. Family education should be incorporated into each school's Wellness Policy.
4. Schools will promote healthful eating and healthy lifestyles to students, parents, teachers, administrators and the community at school events.

### **In Summary:**

School Nutrition Programs must play a central role in modeling good nutrition. These regulations offer schools a standard for improving the nutritional quality of school meals. These recommendations go above and beyond the established standards for the USDA National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Healthy eating patterns and adequate nutrients are important for school-aged children to promote cognitive development, prevent health problems and reduce under-nutrition which has been linked to increase behavioral and emotional functioning.



## Nutrition Standards

### The School Lunch Pattern for Various Age/Grade Groups:

The United States Department of Agriculture, National School Lunch Program requires that portions of meal components be adjusted by age/grade group to better meet the food and nutritional needs of

| Food Components   | Ages 1-2                          | Ages 3-4                         | Grades K-5                             | Grades 6-8                             | Grades 9-12                            |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Meat or Meat Alternate (M/MA)</b>                              |                                   |                                  | 8 oz. eq./wk                           | 9 oz. eq./wk                           | 10 oz. eq./wk                          |
| <b>When combining K-5 &amp; 6-8 to establish a K-8 group.</b>     |                                   |                                  | 9 oz. eq./wk                           |  |  |
| Lean meat, poultry, fish  | 1 oz.                             | 1 ½ oz.                          | 1 oz. eq. <sup>x</sup> per day minimum | 1 oz. eq. <sup>x</sup> per day minimum | 2 oz. eq. <sup>x</sup> per day minimum |
| Cheese  | 1 oz.                             | 1 ½ oz.                          |  |  |  |
| Large egg(s)  | ½                                 | ¾                                |  |  |  |
| Cooked, dry beans or peas   | ¼ cup                             | 3/8 cup                          |  |  |  |
| Peanut butter (or any nut or seed butter)                         | 2 Tbsp                            | 3 Tbsp                           |  |  |  |
| Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts or seeds*                            | ½ oz. = 50%                       | ¾ oz. = 50%                      |  |  |  |
| Yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened               | 4 oz. or ½ cup                    | 6 oz. or ¾ cup                   |  |  |  |
| <b>Grains / Breads</b>  |                                   |                                  | 8 oz. eq/wk                            | 8 oz. eq/wk                            | 10 oz. eq/wk                           |
| <b>When combining K-5 &amp; 6-8 to establish a K-8 group.</b>     |                                   |                                  | 8 oz. eq*/wk                           |  |  |
| Servings of grains or breads must be whole-grain rich (WGR)       | 5 per week at least<br>½ svq/ day | 8 per week at least<br>1 svq/day | 1 oz. eq. per day minimum              | 1 oz. eq. per day minimum              | 2 oz. eq. per day minimum              |
| <b>Vegetable</b>  |                                   |                                  | ¼ cup every day                        |  | 1 cup every day                        |
| Dark Green  | 1/2 cup either or                 | 1/2 cup either or                | ½ cup every week                       |  | ½ cup every week                       |
| Red/Orange  |                                   |                                  | ¼ cup every week                       |  | 1 ¼ cups every week                    |
| Beans/Peas  |                                   |                                  | ½ cup every week                       |  | ½ cup every week                       |
| Starchy   |                                   |                                  | ½ cup every week                       |  | ½ cup every week                       |
| Other   |                                   |                                  | ½ cup every week                       |  | ¾ cup every week                       |
| <b>Fruit</b>  |                                   |                                  | ½ cup every day                        | ½ cup every day                        | 1 cup every day                        |
| <b>Milk</b><br>(fluid offered as a beverage)                      | ½ cup (6 fl. oz)                  |                                  | ½ pint (8 fl. oz)                      |  |  |
| <b>Min. and Max. Calorie Ranges in an average 5-day week menu</b> | 517*                              |                                  | 550-650                                | 600-700                                | 750-850                                |
| <b>When combining K-5 &amp; 6-8 to establish a K-8 group.</b>     |                                   |                                  | 600-650                                |  |  |
| <b>Sodium</b>   |                                   |                                  | ≤ 1230                                 | ≤ 1360                                 | ≤ 1420                                 |

## State Board Policy-2002

### Competitive Food

To ensure that children are not in the position of having to decide between non-nutritious foods immediately before or during the meal service period:

- No food or beverage items will be sold on the school campus for one (1) hour before the start of any meal services period.
- The school food service staff shall serve only those foods which are components of the approved federal meal patterns being served (or milk products) and such additional foods as necessary to meet the caloric requirement of the age/grade group being served.
- With the exception of water and milk products, a student may purchase individual components of the meal only if the full meal unit also is being purchased.
- Students who bring their lunch from home may purchase water and milk products. This policy should be viewed as a minimum standard. Local boards of education are encouraged to develop more comprehensive restrictions.

# Nutrition Resources

Mississippi Department of Education/Office of Child Nutrition  
601-576-5000

<http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/child-nutrition>

**United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)**

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/child-nutrition-programs>

**Smart Snacks in Schools**

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>

**Smart Snacks Alliance Product Calculator**

[https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take\\_action/schools/snacks\\_and\\_beverages/smart\\_snacks/alliance\\_product\\_calculator/](https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take_action/schools/snacks_and_beverages/smart_snacks/alliance_product_calculator/)

**Healthier US School Challenge (HUSSC) Information**

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/hussc/healthierus-school-challenge-training-and-technical-assistance>

**FAQs Healthier US School Challenge**

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/faq.pdf>

**Fact Sheets For Healthier School Meals**

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/factsheets-healthier-school-meals>

**Team Nutrition Resources**

<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/library.html>

**Child and Adult Care Food Program**

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-and-adult-care-food-program>

**Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)**

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-food-service-program-sfsp>

**Afterschool Care Snacks**

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Afterschool/default.htm>

**National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) Resource Guide**

<http://www.nfsmi.org/>

**ChooseMyPlate**

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>

**Fuel up to Play 60**

<http://www.fueluptoplay60.com/>

**The Southeast United Dairy Industry Association, Inc. (SUDIA)**

<http://www.southeastdairy.org/>

**Move to Learn**

<http://www.movetolearnms.org/>

**The Bower Foundation**

<http://bowerfoundation.org/>

**Food Safety Pre/Post Test for all school staff**

[http://healthyschoolsms.org/ohs\\_main/documents/PreandPostFoodSafetyTest\\_000.doc](http://healthyschoolsms.org/ohs_main/documents/PreandPostFoodSafetyTest_000.doc)

**Food Safety Pre/Post Test Answer Guide**

[http://healthyschoolsms.org/ohs\\_main/documents/PreandPostTestAnswerGuide\\_000.doc](http://healthyschoolsms.org/ohs_main/documents/PreandPostTestAnswerGuide_000.doc)

**Eating Safely at School**

[www.nsba.org](http://www.nsba.org)

**Food-Safe Schools—A How-to Guide**

[http://www.healthyschoolsms.org/ohs\\_main/initiatives/documents/6FSSActionGuide.pdf](http://www.healthyschoolsms.org/ohs_main/initiatives/documents/6FSSActionGuide.pdf)

\* All websites are current at time of publication but are subject to change.