The Basics of the **Arizona Healthy Schools Act**

Effective at the start of the 2026-2027 school year, the Arizona Healthy Schools Act A.R.S. 15-242.01, prohibits public schools participating in federally funded or assisted meal programs from serving, selling, or allowing a third party to sell ultra-processed food on the school campus during the regular school day. This resource outlines what school administrators need to know about this new ordinance.

The Arizona Healthy Schools Act **prohibits** schools from **serving, selling, or allowing a third party to sell ultra-processed food** on the school campus during the **regular school day.**

1 Defining Ultra-Processed Foods

The Arizona Healthy Schools Act defines ultra-processed foods as those with the following eleven ingredients:

- potassium bromate;
- propylparaben;
- titanium dioxide;
- brominated vegetable oil;
- yellow dye 5 or 6;
- blue dye 1 or 2;
- green dye 3; or
- red dye 3 or 40.

2 Defining the School Day

A school day, for the applicability of this law, is defined as **midnight before to 30 minutes after** the end of the instructional day.

Schools must adhere to serving foods that do not contain the 11 specified food additives in lunches, vending machines, snack bars, and school stores during the regular school day.

- **Please note, this ruling does not apply to food brought from home by students.**

3 Compliance

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) is creating a standardized attestation for schools to certify compliance with the law.

To demonstrate and certify compliance, Local Educational Agencies must:

- Submit the standardized attestation to ADE, which will maintain a public list of compliant schools on its website, starting July 1, 2026 and annually thereafter.
- Continue to meet existing federal guidelines under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP).

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS:

- **Conduct a Compliance Audit:** Inventory all food/beverage sources on campus; compare ingredients to the banned-ingredient list.
- **Train Staff & Vendors:** Educate cafeteria, vending, store, and event personnel to identify disallowed ultra-processed foods.
- **Submit Certification:** Complete the attestation to confirm compliance status.
- **Update Community Communication:** Provide clear guidance to the public and external vendors on prohibited items.
- **Monitor Ongoing Compliance:** Review new products, fundraising plans, and third-party sales ahead of events.

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The Arizona Healthy Schools Act Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is the attestation available?
A: No. ADE Communications will alert operators when it is available at the start of the 2026-2027 school year.

Q: Is there a date Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) need to complete the attestation by?
A: No. However, school administrators should aim to comply by the start of the 2026-2027 school year.

Q: Who in a LEA will be responsible for submitting the attestation of compliance with A.R.S 15-242.01?
A: The individual responsible for submitting the attestation is a business decision for the LEA. ADE does not have specific parameters regarding who needs to submit the attestation. LEAs should keep in mind that this is a campus-wide requirement and consider who is responsible for campus-wide compliance with laws and policies.

Q: If a parent brings in food for the class (i.e. class party) do these rules apply? Or can a parent only bring in foods for their child? What about food rewards for perfect attendance, test scores, behavior?
A: A.R.S. 15-242.01 prohibits the service or sale of ultra-processed foods at any point of the school day. This includes student celebrations, birthday parties, prizes/incentives, and classroom snacks. A.R.S. 15-242.01 does not prevent a student's parent or guardian from providing ultra-processed food to the student during the regular school day.