National Nutrition Standards
Recommendations

As of December 8, 2008
School Nutrition Association  
National Standards Guiding Principles  
For School Breakfast and Lunch, Summer Feeding Programs, After School Snack Programs, and Other Items Sold / Served on the School Campus

General

2. Schools will offer and promote foods and beverages consistent with Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005 (DGAs) and Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs).
3. Foods and beverages available at school will contribute to teaching children lifelong healthy eating habits. This principle will be accomplished in partnership with school foodservice professionals, teachers, parents, and the broader community.
4. Federally reimbursable meals and snacks will be the primary source of foods and beverages offered at school.
5. Current and future implementation of these standards will require a collaborative effort with all stakeholders.
6. Compliance with Federal pre-emptive standards will require clear policies including enforcement, technical and financial support, and increased reimbursements.
7. Federal standards will pre-empt state and local standards for all foods and beverages sold/served during the school day throughout the campus.

School Breakfast and Lunch, Summer Feeding Programs, After School Snack Programs

1. Standards for reimbursable meals and reimbursable snacks will promote the consumption of a variety of foods and beverages from all food groups.
2. Nutrient content of foods and beverages will be averaged over a week, rather than nutrient profiling of an individual day or single food or beverage product.
3. SNA endorses all currently approved menu planning systems, including offer versus serve.
4. These recommendations are consistent with current Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs), 1/3 for lunch and ¼ for breakfast for the following dietary elements: calories, protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and iron.
5. Meal pattern requirements should be averaged over a five day school week.
6. Calories and nutrients may need to be adjusted based on age and energy needs, including those for Pre K-Grade 3.
7. These recommendations are consistent with current Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) for fat, saturated fat, sodium, and fiber.
8. SNA recommends that meeting these nutrient standards will be phased in over time.
Items Sold / Served on the School Campus Outside of Reimbursable Meals

1. Foods and beverages sold/served outside reimbursable CNPs will complement, rather than compete with reimbursable meals and snacks, in order to support the DGAs.
2. Local districts should develop standards for classroom parties and celebrations.
3. A state or local wellness policy/initiatives may be more restrictive in the items sold/served, but may not alter the nutrition standards of items.
4. Authority needs to be given to the USDA for periodic review and updating based on nutrition science and the healthy status of children.
School Nutrition Association
National Nutrition Standards
Meal Pattern Recommendations for School Breakfast and Lunch,
Summer Feeding Programs and After School Snack Programs

SNA recommends the following standards for foods and beverages served/sold through the Child Nutrition Programs - School Breakfast and Lunch, Summer Feeding Programs, and After School Snack Programs. These standards are based on the DGAs 2005 and the USDA HealthierUS School Challenge Guidelines 2006.

SNA recommends the following standards for all reimbursable meals:

- Calories: Ranges based on DRIs
- Fat: 25-35% of calories over week
- Saturated Fat: Less than or equal to 10% of calories over week
- Trans fat: Zero trans fat (≤.5 grams)

SNA recommends the following targets as total quantities for reimbursable meals throughout the school day.

- Fiber: 14-21 grams throughout the school day
- Sodium: 1,340 – 1,400 milligrams total throughout the school day
- Fruits and vegetables need to increase over time to meet DGA’s.

SNA recommends the following additional standards for School Nutrition Programs:

- For food-based menu planning systems, continue to offer a minimum of five components for lunch, four components for breakfast, and two components for afterschool snacks.
- Sodium: Salt shakers and packets shall not be available.
- Sugar: Sugar packets shall not be available.
- Legumes: Must be offered two times per week as either a meat/meat alternate and/or vegetable component.
- Extra fruits and vegetable servings are contingent on additional reimbursements.
- Schools need to begin working towards recommended targets so they reach those goals at implementation date.
## Meal Pattern Recommendations

### Lunch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Requirement</th>
<th>Estimated Amount</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meat/Meat Alternate</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Offer lower fat options at least four days per week (defined as an item with less than 40% of calories from fat)</td>
<td>1-2 oz. daily</td>
<td>Range of ounces allows for flexibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Maintain current crediting for alternate protein products</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grains/Breads</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• One half of grain servings should be whole grain choices.</td>
<td>10-14 servings per week</td>
<td>DGAs recommend one-half of grains/breads from whole grain sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The HealthierUS School Challenge defines a whole grain product is a food/menu item where the primary grain ingredient is a whole grain. (Examples of common whole grains can be found in Table 7 of the 2005 DGAs; also pages 6 and 7 of the HealthierUS School Challenge)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Difficulty obtaining these products may require a phased approach to implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruits</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Three different fruits must be offered each week to ensure variety</td>
<td>½ cup total fruit combination daily</td>
<td>Rounded up estimated amount to phase in daily recommended need (DGAs) and current consumption patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Only 100% juice, no added sugar, may be offered</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rationale for fresh fruits and vegetables – USDA HealthierUS Challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If only one fruit choice is offered per day, juice may only be offered two times per week as the fruit choice</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Three servings of fresh fruits and/or raw vegetables shall be offered per week</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Vegetables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Three different vegetables must be offered each week to ensure variety</td>
<td>½ cup total vegetable combination daily</td>
<td>Rounded up estimated amount to meet daily recommended need (DGAs) and current consumption patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Two servings of dark green vegetables per week</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rationale for fresh fruits and vegetables – USDA HealthierUS Challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• One serving orange/deep yellow vegetables per week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Only 100% juice, no added sugar, may be offered</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As of December 8, 2008
- Three servings of raw vegetables and/or fresh fruits shall be offered per week

**Milk**
- Not to exceed 1% milk fat for all milk offered
- Not to exceed 28 grams of sugar per 8 oz. serving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Requirement</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meat/Meat Alternate</td>
<td>½ – 2 oz. daily</td>
<td>Adds flexibility to menu planning on alternate serving methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains/Breads</td>
<td>1 – 2 servings daily</td>
<td>DGAs recommend one-half of grains/breads from whole grain sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits / Vegetables</td>
<td>¾ cup total combination daily</td>
<td>Adds flexibility in choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>8 oz. daily</td>
<td>Small amounts of sugars added to nutrient-dense foods, such as low fat and fat-free milk products, may increase intake of such foods by enhancing the palatability of these products - DGAs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Breakfast**

- Maintain the requirement for m/ma and grains/breads, allowing flexibility in combining the two components
- ½ oz minimum of m/ma to be considered a serving

- Maintain the requirement for grains/breads and m/ma, allowing flexibility in combining the two components
- Whole grain offered minimum 3 times per week.
- The Healthier US School Challenge defines a whole grain product is a food/menu item where the primary grain ingredient is a whole grain. (Examples of common whole grains can be found in Table 7 of the 2005 DGAs; also pages 6 and 7 of the HealthierUS School Challenge)

- Offer a variety of choices over a week

- Not to exceed 1% milk fat for all milk offered
- Not to exceed 28 grams of sugar per 8 oz. serving
# Afterschool Snacks

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</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Meat/Meat Alternate</strong></td>
<td>1 oz. daily</td>
<td>Adds flexibility in choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Keep the same requirement for all components with flexibility to offer any two of the four components</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grains/Breads</strong></td>
<td>1 serving daily</td>
<td>DGAs recommend one-half of grains/breads from whole grain sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Whole grain offered minimum 1 time per week.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ The HealthierUS School Challenge defines a whole grain product is a food/menu item where the primary grain ingredient is a whole grain. (Examples of common whole grains can be found in Table 7 of the 2005 DGAs; also pages 6 and 7 of the HealthierUS School Challenge)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruits / Vegetables</strong></td>
<td>¾ cup combination daily when averaged over the week</td>
<td>Adds flexibility in choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Milk</strong></td>
<td>8 oz. daily</td>
<td>Small amounts of sugars added to nutrient-dense foods, such as low fat and fat-free milk products, may increase intake of such foods by enhancing the palatability of these products - DGAs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Not to exceed 1% milk fat for all milk offered</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Not to exceed 28 grams of sugar per 8 oz. serving</td>
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School Nutrition Association
National Nutrition Standards

Recommendations for Items Sold / Served on the School Campus
Outside of Reimbursable Meals

SNA recommends the following standards for foods and beverages served/sold outside
reimbursable meals. The Institute of Medicine Nutrition Standards for Food in Schools and the
Alliance for a Healthier Generation Competitive Foods and Beverage Guidelines were used as
resources in developing these standards.

Tier 1 (All Students)

Tier 1 foods are fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and related combination products and low-fat
and fat-free dairy that are limited to 200 calories or less per single serve portion, and:

- No more than 35 percent of total calories from fat
- Less than or equal to 10 percent of total calories from saturated fats
- Zero trans fat (≤ .5 grams)
- 35 percent or less of calories from total sugars
- Sodium content of 230 mg or less

Due to nutrient density, nuts (1 oz.), seeds (1 oz.), cheese (1 oz.), are exempt from fat,
saturated fat standards. Must be served in 1 oz. serving size only.

Any entrée that is on the menu cycle as a part of a reimbursable meal (same
specification/recipe/serving size) may be served / sold outside reimbursable meal in single
serving only.

Tier 1 beverages:

- Water without flavoring, additives, carbonation, or added sugar
- Low-fat and fat-free milk (up to 8 oz. portion)
  - Lactose-free and soy beverages are included;
  - Not to exceed 170 calories per 8oz. serving
- 100 percent juice or 100% juice/water blends, with no added sugar (up to 10 oz. portion)
- Caffeine-free, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine
  substances.

As of December 8, 2008
Tier 2 (Optional for Middle and High Schools Students only):

Tier 2 foods are limited to 200 calories or less per single serve portion:

- No more than 35 percent of total calories from fat
- Less than or equal to 10 percent of total calories from saturated fats
- Zero trans fat (≤ .5 grams)
- 35 percent or less of calories from total sugars
- Sodium content of 230 mg or less

Due to nutrient density, nuts (1 oz.), seeds (1 oz.), cheese (1 oz.), are exempt from fat, saturated fat standards. Must be served in 1 oz. serving size only.

Any entrée that is on the menu cycle as a part of a reimbursable meal (same specification/recipe/serving size) may be served / sold outside reimbursable meal in single serving only.

Tier 2 beverages are:

- Non-caffeinated, non-fortified beverages with less than 5 calories per portion as packaged (with or without nonnutritive sweeteners, carbonation, or flavoring) up to 20 oz. portion size
- Low-fat and fat-free milk with no more the 255 calories per 12 oz. portion size
- 100% juice or 100% juice/water blends with carbonation up to 12 oz.

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