



2015 Position Paper Reauthorization of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act

Allow all food items that are permitted to be served as part of a reimbursable meal to be sold at any time as an a la carte item.

The *Smart Snacks in School* rule forced schools to take many healthy school meal options off a la carte menus, unnecessarily limiting student choices and reducing revenue for school meal programs.

School meal standards gradually phase in sodium reductions over 10 years, but *Smart Snacks* rules do not, forcing competitive foods to meet excessively low sodium limits. For instance, a 2 oz. eq. of USDA's reduced sodium ham – without bread, cheese or condiments – nearly surpasses the sodium limit for entrees (≤ 480 mg). One cup of [low sodium peas](#) exceeds the limit for sides (≤ 230 mg or ≤ 200 mg by July 2016). Even salads have taken a hit as the sodium in low fat dressing often exceeds limits.

In a recent SNA [survey](#) of school nutrition operators, 74% reported that *Smart Snacks* rules are a “serious” or “moderate” challenge for their school meal programs, with 42% indicating “serious.”

Allowing foods that meet nutrition standards for school meals to be sold as daily competitive food choices can help preserve the financial stability of school meal programs and ensure students can choose from a variety of healthy choices in the cafeteria.