

Autauga County Schools  
Wellness Policy on Nutrition and Physical Activity

**Background:**

Today, many children are consuming diets with too many calories and not enough nutrients. In addition, these children are not getting enough physical activity. Due to the alarming obesity rates and the continual decline in the health of our children, it has become clear that action must be taken to correct this epidemic by those in the position to make a clear difference. Schools play a significant role in the lives of children and are where children spend much of their day. As such, helping students stay healthy is a fundamental part of the mission of schools. Schools are an important setting for providing children with a healthy environment where they can consume nutritious meals, snacks and beverages, get regular physical activity, and learn about the importance of lifelong healthy behaviors. Eating patterns are established in childhood and often carry over into later life.

For these reasons, Congress included a new requirement in the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 for schools participating in the National School Lunch program. Every school was to implement a Wellness Plan by the beginning of the 2006-07 school year, which Autauga County did, to promote proper nutrition, increase physical activity and take steps to decrease the burden of chronic disease. Each school district was to oversee these plans and serve as the governing agency for compliance. Then in 2010 the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) added additional requirements. With the passage of the 2010 Act, new provisions have been established placing greater emphasis on implementing, evaluation and public reporting on progress. On March 27, 2015, Alabama revised the Implementation of USDA Smart Snacks in School and Fundraising Activities, to reflect the changes that the federal government has given even more guidance for foods sold in schools.

American Schools have always been the starting point for real change due to their impact on the children and future of this country. Change is unlikely to take a stronghold in the adults of today, but change can be instilled in the lives of our children and future generations. The problem we face today did not happen overnight; therefore the corrections will not happen overnight. We must adjust our thinking and the choices we make today in hope that they become the habits of tomorrow.

Thus, the Autauga County School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

Therefore, it is the policy of the Autauga County School District that:

1. The school district shall engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing,

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implementing, monitoring and reviewing district wide nutrition and physical activity policies.

2. All students in grades K-12 shall have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
3. Foods and beverages sold or served at school shall meet the nutritional recommendations of the U.S. Guidelines for Americans and the Smart Snacks in Alabama Schools revised March 27, 2015.
4. Qualified Child Nutrition professionals shall provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students in a clean, safe, and pleasant setting with adequate time for students to eat.
5. To the maximum extent practicable, all schools in our district shall encourage participation in available federal school meal programs, including the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program.
6. Schools shall provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and shall establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

**School Action Plan:**

The Autauga County Schools will provide a district wellness policy that will serve as their wellness plan or building blocks for individual schools to write an action plan for improving student health that is unique to the individual needs of their school. A school will follow the wellness policy or be more restrictive, but not less restrictive than the policy. Every school shall review and approve its offerings of foods sold and develop a strategic plan for providing foods and beverages in vending machines, school stores, fundraisers, classroom parties and classroom snacks to ensure that all snacks and beverages meet the nutritional requirements before being offered to students. Schools shall organize a school health committee to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. Each school shall conduct evaluations using a validated survey to identify strengths and weaknesses and prioritize changes as an action plan for improving student health. The assessment and planning steps shall involve teachers, child nutrition staff or other school staff as appropriate, parents, students, and the community. Each school shall publish on its website the policy, along with periodic evaluations (no less than one each semester) and a list of ways to improve and reach compliance. Each school shall submit names to the chairman/co-chairman of the Wellness Policy Committee identifying all personnel assigned to the wellness committee and the periodic evaluation forms on a date to be identified by the district wellness committee.

**Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus.**

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The school campus shall reflect a healthy nutrition environment. Adequate time to eat shall be allowed to have a pleasant dining experience. Schools shall ensure that all students have daily access to meals served. Schools may not establish policies, class schedules, bus schedules, or other barriers, such as an unfriendly atmosphere, that directly or indirectly restrict access to or the completion of meals. School Administrators will not allow access to school stores or food and beverage machines while meals are being served in the cafeteria.

### **School Meals**

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs shall meet the guidelines established by the “Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 and shall:

1. Be appealing and attractive to children and be served in clean and pleasant settings using HACCP food safety principles to ensure the best quality of food;
2. Schools shall focus on improving meal quality and increasing the variety of fruits and vegetables, especially raw fruits and vegetables;
3. Serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA);
4. Serving sizes shall comply with the meal pattern requirements as described by the United States Department of Agriculture regulations. Consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables or canned fruits and non-starchy vegetables shall be encouraged.
5. School meals weekly caloric intake shall meet the standards of the “*Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010*”;
6. Emphasis shall be placed on increasing the quantity of whole grains served with the ultimate goal of all grains served to be whole grain by school year 2013-2014.
7. Cafeteria managers shall review the items offered as a la carte sales and evaluate the nutritional contributions of each item. Foods not meeting the criteria listed in the Alabama Healthy Snack Standards shall be eliminated.
8. All flash-fried vegetable products (oven-ready French fries, breaded okra, etc.) are to be limited to the number of times served per week and are not to exceed three ounces per serving. Preparation techniques shall be modified to reduce the number of flash-fried foods and increase baking, steaming, and roasting preparation methods. Foods must not be prepared by deep or pan frying.
9. Federal law requires “Offer Versus Serve” be implemented at all high schools, which allow students to decline one food group during breakfast and two food groups at lunch yet still allows the meal to be reimbursable. In addition, “Offer Versus Serve” may or may not be offered at elementary schools, which would allow those students to decline *one food item* at breakfast and at lunch yet still allows the meal to count as a reimbursable meal. The purpose of “Offer Versus Serve” is to allow students to choose foods they prefer to eat without being forced to take food they will not eat. Lunchroom employees shall encourage elementary school students to take one serving of all food groups being offered.
10. School meals shall not be used as a reward or as a form of punishment.

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**Breakfast:**

All children shall be encouraged to have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

1. All Autauga County Schools shall operate a School Breakfast Program.
2. Schools administrators shall arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation and notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast and Lunch Program. The cafeteria must provide an inviting atmosphere to encourage students to participate. This takes cafeteria personnel as well as teachers or others on breakfast duty.
3. School Administrators shall encourage parents to provide healthy meals for their children that do not eat breakfast or lunch in the school cafeteria. This can be accomplished through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

**Goals for Nutrition Promotion and Education:**

At a minimum, school cafeteria personnel are expected to:

1. To have bi-annual celebrations to promote either lunch or breakfast or both. The date to be determined by the Child Nutrition Director.
2. Use the district website to feature nutritional information about fruit/vegetable consumption monthly including recipes.
3. Post nutritional information on individual school websites.
4. Have informational posters and/or bulletin boards on nutrition at the school. This does not have to be in the lunchroom, but can be located throughout the school.

**Free and Reduced-priced Meals:**

Federal Law requires that schools make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.

1. Schools in Autauga County shall utilize electronic identification and payment systems that do not identify the student's eligibility.
2. In the event of computer failure, school cafeterias shall have procedures in place to account for meals without exposing individual student's eligibility status.
3. School Administrators are to promote the availability of school meals to all students and encourage participation in the lunch and breakfast program.

**Meal Times and Scheduling by school administrators:**

1. Provide adequate time for students to eat and enjoy school meals.

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2. Ensure school staff (other than lunchroom staff) are assigned monitoring duties in the lunchroom and shall provide supervision in the serving and dining areas.
3. Schedule meal periods at appropriate times.
4. Shall not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students are allowed to obtain meals through the lunchroom and eat during the activity.
5. Provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before eating meals.

**Qualifications for Child Nutrition Director:**

Any person employed as a CNP Director must meet the standards of the *Code of Alabama (1975) 290-080-030-05 and 06* as amended June 6, 1994, effective with the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year. All new CNP Directors must meet the educational requirements as specified or meet the requirements within a three-year period from the date of employment.

**Qualifications of School Food Service Staff:**

Qualified nutrition professionals shall administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools will be provided. Staff development programs shall include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility. The manager at each cafeteria must be "Serv-Safe" certified by the National Restaurant Association as required by the State Child Nutrition Program.

**Sale of Food and Beverages:**

Foods and beverages sold individually (i.e., foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.) as a minimum, must follow the Alabama State Department of Education latest edition of the "Alabama Smart Snacks in School (Revised March 27, 2015)".

Foods sold as the "entrée" of any single meal are exempt from the USDA Smart Snacks in School standards, and may be sold a la carte on the day of, and the day after, the item is on the menu. Except in the case of entrees, as outlined above, all foods sold a la carte during the school day must meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School standards as outlined below. Food items that do not meet these standards should be eliminated from a la carte sales, or be sold in reduced portion sizes in order to comply with the USDA requirements.

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**Elementary Schools, Middle Schools and High Schools:** The school administrator shall approve, monitor and provide only food and beverages that meet the state nutritional guidelines. All foods and beverages provided to students during the school day shall follow the nutrition and portion size standards outlined in the Alabama Smart Snacks in School updated March 27, 2015. This includes snacks sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores, fundraising activities or food provided free to students during classroom parties or awards.

- 1. Foods and drinks not allowed in the cafeteria:** No commercial or fast foods will be allowed in the cafeteria. Foods or beverages that have commercial logos (not purchased in the cafeteria) on the wrapping need to be placed in plain paper cups or taken out and placed on a tray.

Teachers and other staff should understand the importance of fully implementing the nutrition and health education curriculum and become familiar with its underlying theory and concepts. The State Task Force recommendation is that teachers and other staff members assess and improve their own eating practices and make them aware of the behavioral messages they give as role models.

- 2. Food items in competition with the CNP scheduled meal time may not be sold or provided free of charge to students.** This includes, but is not limited to food items purchased through school organizations and those donated from outside sources. To encourage students to eat healthy meals, schools are required to restrict student access to concessions, extra sales, vending, and fundraisers one hour before or after meal periods. Therefore, schools may not schedule sales of such items immediately before or after meals that would compete with the meal service. If sales should occur that are in competition with the meal, then all income generated from such sales will be required to be given to Child Nutrition for depositing in the school cafeteria account. The policy is not intended to restrict access to healthy snacks during recess, or at times other than the meal service.

**Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value:**

In addition to the restriction regarding the sale of carbonated beverages listed, no one on the school campus may provide access to “for sale” or “free” foods and beverages of minimal nutritional value as identified under USDA regulations 7 CFR 210, Appendix B, Categories of Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value between the hours of 7:00 AM and 3:30 PM. These classifications are as follows:

1. Water ices, including frozen sicles, ices and slushes, except those ices containing 100% fruit juice.
2. Chewing gum, flavored or unflavored from natural or synthetic sources.

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3. Certain candies, processed predominately from sugar or corn syrup sweeteners or artificial sweeteners combined with a variety of ingredients including but not limited to:
  - Hard candies, sour balls, fruit balls, candy sticks, starlight mints, after dinner mints, sugar wafers, rock candy, cinnamon candies, breath mints, and cough drops.
  - Jellies and gums, such as gum drops, jelly beans, jellied or flavored fruit slices.
  - Marshmallow candies or other aerated sugar, corn syrup or invert sugar confections.
  - Fondants, such as candy corn or soft mints
  - Licorice
  - Spun candy or cotton candy
  - Candy coated popcorn

**Allowable snack and A la carte items:**

All snack items made available to students during the school day must meet Alabama Smart Snack Standards and be approved by the nutrition committee established at each school. Snacks cannot exceed the established limits for carbohydrates, sodium or fat and contain a minimum amount of the required nutrients (Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium or fiber). Items cannot exceed more than one serving per container and meet the portion size outlined for that product.

**Fund Raising Activities:**

All fundraising activities that involve the selling or distributing of food during school hours or as students gather on school campus before school or wait on transportation or otherwise exit the school campus following school dismissal shall meet the established guidelines and have prior approval from the school administrator and nutrition committee. Events outside of the school day are not affected by this requirement and that means booster clubs, etc., are free to select items for sale for specific fundraising and concessions sales as long as the activity is not during the school day (**school day is defined as the period from the midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day**) or does not conflict with this position. Fund raising activities that take place during school hours should be designed to support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts. School fundraising activities shall be addressed by each school nutrition committee at the school and will not be less restrictive than the district wellness policy.

**Allowable Fundraising on School Campuses:**

- Foods that meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School standards, but are not sold in competition with school meals. Example: Fruit
- Foods that do not meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School standards, but are not consumed at school. Example: Cookie Dough Sales

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- Non-food items. Example: School Supplies
- Food fundraisers which meet exempt fundraising definition.

### **Exempt Fundraiser Definition**

An exempt food fundraiser is defined as the sale of food items that do not meet the USDA Smart Snacks in School standards and are sold during the school day. A school may sponsor up to and not to exceed **30 exempt fundraisers per year**, for no more than one (1) day each in length. Exempt fundraiser food is prohibited from being sold as a la carte item, in vending machines or in school stores, or before school on school campus.

Foods sold as part of exempt fundraisers may not be sold one (1) hour before or after meal periods. Example: If lunch ends at 12:30 p.m., then the fundraiser could not start until 1:30 p.m. Exempt Food Fundraiser Procedure:

- **School principal** - Alabama's Implementation of USDA Smart Snacks in School and Exempt Fundraisers Form.
  - Complete, approve and sign form
  - Provide copy to CNP Director.
  - Provide documentation of approval upon request by Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) for audit review.
- **Superintendent** - Attestation of Compliance with Alabama Implementation of USDA Smart Snacks in School and Fundraising Activities.
  - Complete and sign the attestation document
  - Provide to CNP Director's to support the annual online application renewal
- **Child Nutrition Director** - Place a copy of the Alabama's Implementation of USDA Smart Snacks in School and Exempt Fundraisers Form (signed by the school principal) in the wellness plan file.
  - Provide documentation of approval upon request by ALSDE.

Semi-annual due dates are: July 1 and January 1 of each school year. The completed Alabama's Implementation of USDA Smart Snacks in School and Exempt Fundraisers Form is required to be signed and on file as described above before exempt food fundraisers commence.

### **Snacks:**

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs shall make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving whole grains as the primary snacks and water, 100% juice, or milk as the primary beverage. Schools shall assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs,

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children's ages, and other considerations. The school's nutrition committee shall disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

**Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion**

Nutrition Education and Promotion: The Autauga County School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools shall provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

1. Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
2. Is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
3. Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
4. Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
5. Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
6. Includes training for teachers and other staff.

**Physical Activity Goals:**

At a minimum:

1. Students will receive the Physical Education State Course of Study recommendation for per day activity and students will be encouraged to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior.
2. Physical activity will not be used as a punishment or a reward.
3. Physical education must include the instruction of individual activities as well as competitive and non-competitive team sports to encourage life-long physical activity.
4. Adequate, approved physical education equipment is available for all students to participate in physical education class.
5. Physical activity facilities on school grounds will be safe and evaluated no less than annually for safety precautions.
6. The school provides a physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students, including those who are not athletically inclined.
7. Information will be provided to families to help them incorporate physical activity into their children's lives.

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8. Schools are encouraged to provide information to parents on after school programs in their community (i.e. gymnastics, dance, karate, football and cheerleading).

**Communication with Parents:**

The district/school shall support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district/school shall send home nutrition information with handouts, post nutrition tips on school websites and menus, and be available to answer any questions parents may have about their student's meals. Schools shall encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The district/school shall provide parents a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities.

**Food Safety**

In accordance with the USDA Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act, each cafeteria manager shall initiate and follow Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principals. The manager is to establish standard operating procedures that shall be used to establish food safety and be used for monitoring procedures and these procedures are unique to each school cafeteria. Monitoring procedures for each manager or designated CNP employee shall include:

1. Enforcing all Standard Operating Procedures.
2. Complete Food Preparation Action Plan.
3. Sort menus by the process approach for food safety.
4. Establish control measures for each menu item being prepared.
5. Complete Food Safety Checklist monthly.
6. Maintain Employee Training Planner.
7. Maintain all record keeping forms as outlined in the HACCP plan.
8. Review the School Food Safety Program at the beginning of each school year and when sufficient changes occur in the operation.
9. Maintain temperature records on all "Potentially Hazardous Foods" from the time it is received until it is consumed.
10. Maintain an accurate Food Production Record that tracks the usage of food during preparation and tracks all left-over food.

### **Monitoring and Policy Review**

**Monitoring:**

In each school, the School Administrator and Nutrition Committee shall ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and shall report on the school's compliance to the wellness committee chair/co-chair.

**School food service staff:**

School food service staff at the school level, shall ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and shall report on this matter to the CNP Director. In addition, the school district will undergo monitoring from the Child Nutrition State Department once every three years beginning the 2013-2014 school year. Monitoring includes regulations that define how the Dietary Guidelines and other nutrition standards apply to school meals. This initiative includes actions to support State agencies, school food authorities, and communities in improving school meals and encouraging children to improve their overall diets.

**Policy Review:**

- The district wellness committee shall review the Wellness Policy as changes occur. Schools shall establish nutrition committees that shall monitor the established strategic plan on a continuous basis to ensure that foods in vending machines, school stores, a la carte sales, fund raising activities or food made available to students during class parties or given out to students meet the established nutritional requirements.
  
- Each School Administrator shall provide the Child Nutrition Director with the Alabama's Exempt Fundraiser form that will be provided twice a year. The wellness committee chairperson at each school will provide documentation that they have evaluated the nutrition compliance at their location. Documentation will show how the school measured and assessed its compliancy along with how it is progressing towards full compliancy and actions taken for improvement.
  
- The district chair/co-chair of the wellness committee will compile district wide reports that shall be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, school principals, and school health services personnel in the district on an annual basis.

Each school shall maintain a copy of the wellness plan, and evaluation documentation and have it available during audits and inspections. This information will be asked for during Child Nutrition audits (every three years). The documentation will contain a list of all snacks that have been analyzed for nutritional content and approved for vending sales.

## **Nutrition Standards for Foods Sold Individually (exempts reimbursable meals)**

### **Smart Snacks in Schools guidelines as established by the USDA:**

*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) \* \*On July 1, 2016, foods may not qualify using the 10% DV criteria.*

*Foods must also meet several nutrient requirements:*

- *Calorie Limits* ○ *Snack items: 200 calories or less* ○ *Entrée items: 350 calories or less*
- *Sodium Limits* ○ *Snack items: 230 mg or less\*\** ○ *Entrée items: 480 mg or less*
- *Fat Limits* ○ *Total fat: 35% of calories or less* ○ *Saturated fat: Less than 10% of calories* ○ *Trans fat: zero grams*
- *Sugar Limit* ○ *35% or less of weight from total sugars*

*\*\*On July 1, 2016, snack items must contain 200 mg sodium or less per item.*

### **Accompaniments**

- *Must be included in the nutrient profile as part of the food item sold to help control the amount of calories, fat, sugar, and sodium added to foods.*
- *Examples include: cream cheese, salad dressing, catsup, mustard, pickles, pickle relish, dips, sauces, and butter.*

### **School Definitions:**

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Elementary Schools</b> | <i>Pre K-Grade 5</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Middle Schools</b>     | <i>Grades 6-8</i>    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>High Schools</b>       | <i>Grades 9-12</i>   |

### **Beverages Portion Sizes**

*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*
- *100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation), and no added sweeteners.*

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*Portion size limitations by school categories:*

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

***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 less than 5 calories per 8 fluid ounces or 10 calories or less per 20 fluid ounces.***
- ***No more than 12 ounce portions of beverages with 40 calories or less per 8 fluid ounces, or 60 calories or less per 12 fluid ounces.***

**School Day**

*School Day means, for the purpose of competitive food standards implementation, the period from the midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.*