



Nutrition Standards explained

The Department's Nutrition Standards are in compliance with federal regulations and benchmarks. Provides an explanation of the kind of foods and beverages that are available to children at our public schools.

Nutrition Standard 1

All reimbursable meals and snacks meet Federal nutrient standards as required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition Program regulations.

School lunches must meet the applicable recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which recommend that no more than 30 percent of an individual's calories come from fat, and less than 10 percent from saturated fat. Regulations also establish a standard for school lunches to provide one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances of protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium and calories.

Minimum Nutrient and Calorie Levels for School Lunches: Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning Approach (School Week Averages)

Nutrients and Energy Allowances	Minimum Requirements			Recommended
	Group II Preschool Ages 3-4	Group III Grades K-3 Ages 5-8	Group IV Ages 4-12 Ages 9 and Older	Group V Ages 7-12 Ages 12 and Older
Energy allowances (calories)	517	633	785	825
Total fat (as a percentage of actual total food energy)	(note 1)	(note 1,2)	(note 2)	(note 2)
Saturated fat (as a percentage of actual total food energy)	(note 1)	(note 1,3)	(note 3)	(note 3)
RDA for protein (g)	7	9	15	16
RDA for calcium (g)	267	267	370	400
RDA for iron (g)	3.3	3.3	4.2	4.5
RDA for Vitamin A (g)	150	200	285	300
RDA for Vitamin C (g)	14	15	17	18

Notes:

1. The Dietary Guidelines recommend that after 2 year of age "...children should gradually adopt a diet that, by about 5 years of age, contains no more than 30 percent of calories from fat."
2. Not to exceed 30 percent over a school week
3. Less than 10 percent over a school week

Nutrition Standard 2

All foods and beverages sold at school or school sponsored events (vending, concession stands, a la carte, fundraisers, student stores, and school parties) comply with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines.

The following items are not provided to students anywhere at school or at school-sponsored functions:

- Foods of minimal nutritional value as defined by U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations;
- All food and beverage items listing sugar, in any form, as the first ingredient, such as candy.
- Foods containing artificial trans fats.

Exceptions can be made for food and beverage items provided at one-time privately catered events such as Prom or Winter Ball. Fund-raising events are not exempt.

MEALS

All reimbursable meals shall fulfill Federal nutrient standards as required by the USDA Child Nutrition Program regulations. All meals sold or served to students at school or at school sponsored functions must comply with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines. Meals should feature fresh and minimally processed fruits and vegetables from local sources to the greatest extent possible.

SNACKS

All snack items sold or served to students anywhere at school or at school sponsored functions, including items sold in ala carte lines and fundraisers or provided in classrooms, must comply with the following criteria based on Institute of Medicine (IOM) standards per portion:

- Calories ≤ 200
- Total Fat ≤ 8 grams (with the exceptions of nuts and seeds)

- Saturated Fat \leq 2 grams
- Trans Fat ZERO
- Sodium \leq 200 mg
- Sugar \leq 8 grams (with the exception of yogurt, having no more than 30 g of total sugars per 8-oz portion)

BEVERAGES

All beverages sold or served to students at school or at school sponsored functions must comply with the current IOM guidelines.

- Water without flavoring, additives, or carbonation
- Low-fat (1-percent) and nonfat milk in 8-oz. portions:
 - Lactose-free and soy beverages are included
 - Flavored milk with no more than 22 g of total sugar per 8-oz. portion
- 100 percent fruit juice
 - 4-oz. portion for elementary/middle school
 - 8-oz. (two portions) for high school
- Caffeine-free, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances (e.g., chocolate milk)

Beverages for high school students (after school only):

- Non-caffeinated, non-fortified beverages with less than 5 calories per portion as packaged (with or without non-nutritive sweeteners, carbonation, or flavoring)
- Sports drinks for student athletes participating in sport programs involving vigorous activity of more than one hour's duration.

Nutrition Standard 3

Nutrition information for products offered in snack bars, a la carte, vending, etc. is readily available near the point of purchase.

This information is easily obtained on food labels, by contacting the vendor or by downloading nutrition information from the manufacturer's website.

Nutrition Standard 4

Food and beverage providers promote positive nutritional messages on school property.

Nutrition Standard 5

Meals feature fresh and minimally processed fruits and vegetables from local sources to the greatest extent possible.

The Department's School Food Service Branch is collaborating with vendors and farmers to ensure the use of fresh and minimally processed fruits and vegetables in all meal programs.

Nutrition Standard 6

The school does not sell any products containing trans fats.

Trans fats occur naturally in some foods, such as meat and dairy products. Artificial trans fats are created by adding hydrogen to vegetable oil. This process is called hydrogenation. Trans fat can be found in foods made with or fried in partially hydrogenated oils.

Trans fat raises your LDL ("bad") cholesterol and lowers your HDL ("good") cholesterol. High intake of saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol increases the risk of unhealthy blood lipid levels, which, in turn, may increase the risk of coronary heart disease.

The major dietary sources of trans fats are listed in decreasing order. Processed foods and oils provide approximately 80 percent of trans fats in the diet, compared to 20 percent that occur naturally in food from animal sources. Trans fats content of certain processed foods has changed and is likely to continue to change as the industry reformulates products.

Food Group	Contribution (percent of total <i>trans</i> fats consumed)
Cakes, cookies, crackers, pies, bread, etc.	40
Animal products	21
Margarine	17
Fried potatoes	8
Potato chips, corn chips, popcorn	5
Household shortening	4

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1390 Miller St. Honolulu, HI 96813

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