



**S**CHOOL  
**N**UTRITION  
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# **National Nutrition Standards Recommendations**



## 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

1. National nutrient standards will reflect what is best for children's present and future health.
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 1/4 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 10% of calories over week
- Trans fat                      Zero grams fat (less than 0.5 grams per serving)

### **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

	Minimum Requirement	Estimated Amount	Rationale
Meat/Meat Alternate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Offer lower fat options at least four days per week (defined as an item with less than 40% of calories from fat)</li> <li>▪ Maintain current crediting for alternate protein products</li> </ul>	1-2 oz. daily	Range of ounces allows for flexibility
Grains/Breads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One half of grain servings should be whole grain choices.</li> <li>▪ 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)</li> </ul> <p><i>Difficulty obtaining these products may require a phased approach to implementation.</i></p>	10-14 servings per week	DGAs recommend one-half of grains/breads from whole grain sources.
Fruits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Three different fruits must be offered each week to ensure variety</li> <li>▪ Only 100% juice, no added sugar, may be offered</li> <li>▪ If only one fruit choice is offered per day, juice may only be offered two times per week as the fruit choice</li> <li>▪ Three servings of fresh fruits and/or raw vegetables shall be offered per week</li> </ul>	½ cup total fruit combination daily	<p>Rounded up estimated amount to phase in daily recommended need (DGAs) and current consumption patterns</p> <p>Rationale for fresh fruits and vegetables – USDA HealthierUS Challenge</p>
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Three different vegetables must be offered each week to ensure variety</li> <li>▪ Two servings of dark green vegetables per week</li> <li>▪ One serving orange/deep yellow vegetables per week</li> <li>▪ Only 100% juice, no added sugar, may be offered</li> </ul>	½ cup total vegetable combination daily	<p>Rounded up estimated amount to meet daily recommended need (DGAs) and current consumption patterns</p> <p>Rationale for fresh fruits and vegetables – USDA HealthierUS Challenge</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three servings of raw vegetables and/or fresh fruits shall be offered per week</li> </ul>		
Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not to exceed 1% milk fat for all milk offered</li> <li>Not to exceed 28 grams of sugar per 8 oz. serving</li> </ul>	8 oz. daily	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.

### Breakfast

	Minimum Requirement	Estimated Amount	Rationale
Meat/Meat Alternate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the requirement for m/ma and grains/breads, allowing flexibility in combining the two components</li> <li>½ oz minimum of m/ma to be considered a serving</li> </ul>	½ – 2 oz. daily	Adds flexibility to menu planning on alternate serving methods.
Grains/Breads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the requirement for grains/breads and m/ma, allowing flexibility in combining the two components</li> <li>Whole grain offered minimum 3 times per week.</li> <li>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)</li> </ul>	1 – 2 servings daily	DGAs recommend one-half of grains/breads from whole grain sources.
Fruits / Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer a variety of choices over a week</li> </ul>	¾ cup total combination daily	Adds flexibility in choices
Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not to exceed 1% milk fat for all milk offered</li> <li>Not to exceed 28 grams of sugar per 8 oz. serving</li> </ul>	8 oz. daily	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.

## Afterschool Snacks

	<b>Minimum Requirement</b>	<b>Estimated Amount</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Meat/Meat Alternate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keep the same requirement for all components with flexibility to offer any two of the four components</li> </ul>	1 oz. daily	Adds flexibility in choices
Grains/Breads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Whole grain offered minimum 1 time per week.</li> <li>▪ 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)</li> </ul>	1 serving daily	DGAs recommend one-half of grains/breads from whole grain sources.
Fruits / Vegetables		¾ cup combination daily when averaged over the week	Adds flexibility in choices
Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Not to exceed 1% milk fat for all milk offered</li> <li>▪ Not to exceed 28 grams of sugar per 8 oz. serving</li> </ul>	8 oz. daily	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.



## **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. These standards are based on recommendations from the Institute of Medicine and Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

#### **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 10 percent of total calories from saturated fats
- Zero trans fat (less than 0.5 grams per serving)
- 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.



## **Tier 2 (Optional for 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 10 percent of total calories from saturated fats
- Zero trans fat (less than 0.5 grams per serving)
- 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 225 calories per 12 oz. portion size
- 100% juice or 100% juice/water blends with carbonation up to 12 oz.

### **For additional information contact:**

**Cathy Schuchart**

Staff Vice President

Child Nutrition and Policy Center

**School Nutrition Association**

700 S. Washington Street, Suite 300

Alexandria, VA 22314

703-739-3900

703-739-3915 (fax)

[cschuchart@schoolnutrition.org](mailto:cschuchart@schoolnutrition.org)