

Vending

Federal law requires every school district to have a local wellness policy. These policies address nutrition education, physical activity, school meals and all other foods and drinks available at school. Since foods and drinks are a part of every school day, local wellness policies can build healthy school environments that support successful students eating smart and moving more. Research shows that children and teens who eat smart and move more focus better and have fewer behavior problems. They also have better math, reading and writing test scores. As families, educators and administrators, you have the chance to put the policy into practice. You can make a difference by encouraging healthy options for fundraising, concessions, school stores, vending, classroom rewards and school celebrations.

Vending machines with healthy options can help improve students' nutrition and allow them to make good food and drink choices. Your local wellness policy can define how vending operates in your school. Too often, foods and drinks sold in vending machines are high in sugar, fat and calories. However, students will buy and eat healthy foods and drinks from vending machines if they are tasty, convenient and affordable. In addition to meeting the requirements of the NC General Statute (115C-264.2), consider having the foods and drinks sold in your vending machines meet the NC Nutrition Standards for à la carte foods and drinks. Price healthy items cheaper than the less healthy options. Talk with local public health experts about grants or other ways to get funding for healthy vending changes. Convince school and community members that vending programs can keep making money and still have healthy food and drink options for students.

Take Action Now

School Board Members

- Does your district's local wellness policy include school vending to support healthy foods and drinks? If not, include it.
- You can write your policy to be the same as, or stronger than, the law Governor Easley signed in August 2005 setting school vending standards.

School Health Advisory Council/School Wellness Committee Members

- Encourage schools to use this handout as a guide for healthy vending food and drink choices.
- Support the implementation of healthy school vending sales.

Principals

- Enforce the district wellness policy for school vending that promotes healthy food and drink choices.
- Consider adopting a stricter policy on vending sales for your school.

PTA Members and Families

- Spread the word to support your school's healthy vending choices.

Vending Food and Drink Ideas

Drinks

- Water
- 1% Low-fat milk - flavored and unflavored < 200 calories
- Nonfat milk - flavored and unflavored < 200 calories
- 100% fruit juice (8 oz.) with no added sweeteners
- 100% vegetable juice

Dairy Foods and Chilled Snacks (< 200 calories/package)

- Low-fat string cheese
- Low-fat cottage cheese
- Low-fat yogurt
- Pudding cups
- Low-fat smoothies

Fruits/Vegetables

(< 200 calories/package)

- Fresh fruit (apples, oranges, grapes)
- Fresh vegetables (baby carrots, celery, cucumbers)
- Dried fruit/fruit chips
- Fresh or canned fruit cups
- Applesauce

Nuts/Seeds

- Nuts (\leq 1 oz. portions)
- Sunflower seeds
- Trail mix
- Corn nuts, plain

Grains (< 200 calories/package)

- Baked potato chips
- Baked tortilla chips
- Animal crackers
- Hard pretzels
- Whole-grain cereal
- Low-fat cookies
- Low-fat sports bars
- Whole grain crackers
- Low-fat muffins
- Mini rice cakes
- Vanilla wafers
- Low-fat/low-sugar breakfast, granola or chewy bars
- Graham cracker bites
- Fig Newtons
- Low-fat popcorn
- Goldfish crackers

Example Vending Policy in North Carolina

Gates County Schools:

No beverage or snack vending will be available in elementary schools to students. For grades 6-8: Vending to students permitted to supplement the child nutrition program. Content may only include: water-any size; low fat or nonfat milk flavored or unflavored (any size \leq 360 calories); 50-100% juice with no added sweeteners \leq 12 oz; and other beverages as approved by USDA and the Winner's Circle Dining Program. Vending (not operated by the child nutrition program) is to be maintained on a timer and only accessible to students after the last bus leaves campus at the end of the academic school day. Machines operated after the academic day must offer: water-any size; 50-100% juice with no added sweeteners \leq 12 oz; sports drinks that contain no more than 100 calories; and 50% of choices for food snacks are items that have no more than 200 calories per portion. Any other vended items must be priced compatible with the healthier choice items and be \leq 50% of all items available. Vending for high school follows the same regulations as middle school except that sports drinks that contain no more than 100 calories are permitted during the day.

For more information on local wellness policy...

www.actionforhealthykids.org
www.nchealthyschools.org
www.nutritionnc.com
www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com

