



School Food and Nutrition

Date of Issue: August 2007
Reviewed/Revised: June 2011, February 2015, January 2018, March 2021
Memo To: All Staff
From: Director of Education

ACCESSIBILITY:

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PURPOSE:

Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Schools have the responsibility to help students and staff to establish lifelong, healthy eating patterns. The establishment of a food and nutrition policy for the schools of Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) will assist schools in achieving the following goals:

- Promote an environment that encourages and supports the development and maintenance of healthy eating habits.
- Provide standards to ensure a variety of nutritious foods and beverages are available to students and staff. This includes: cafeterias in secondary schools, vending machines, school tuck shops/stores, fundraising events, and refreshments served at celebrations and meetings.

The purpose of the nutrition policy is to ensure that a variety of nutritious foods and beverages are promoted and provided to students and staff. Our goal is to create a healthy nutrition environment in all schools of the WCDSB. By increasing the availability of foods of maximum nutritional value, we model healthy behaviour and avoid sending students and staff mixed messages. This policy ensures a supportive environment is created for the school community by clarifying the direction for action and supports the Catholic Graduate Expectations of responsible citizenship and development of a self-directed, responsible life-long learner. Implementation of the policy demonstrates that the school values the health of students and staff.

REFERENCES:

- [Healthy Food for Healthy Schools Act](#) (2008)
- [PPM 150 – School Food & Beverage Policy](#) (October 2010)
- [Ontario School Food and Beverage Policy: Elementary Teacher Resource Guide](#) (2011)
- [Ontario School Food and Beverage Policy: Secondary Teacher Resource Guide](#) (2012)
- [Canada's Food Guide](#) (2019)

FORMS:

- N/A

REPORTS:

- N/A



APPENDICES:

- Appendix A: [Food Classification Examples](#)

COMMENTS AND GUIDELINES:

Communication

- This policy applies to all schools in WCDSB.
- The policy will be available for review in the Staff Policies and Procedures Manual, in the main office of the school, in the secondary cafeteria managers' office and on the board web site.
- All parents, community members working with WCDSB, staff and student groups will be informed of the policy and a copy will be available as above.
- All components should be included in food service agreements between WCDSB and the food service providers.

Standards

Provision or Sale of Foods and Beverages

- All food and beverages sold in cafeterias and vending machines must comply with the Ontario Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum (P/PM) No. 150, 2010.
- Food and beverages with Maximum Nutritional Value and/or food and beverages from the Sell Most category will represent at least 80 per cent of the food available.
- No more than 20 per cent of the food or beverages sold will be from the Sell Less category.
- No food or beverages from the Not Permitted category will be available.
- When food and beverages are sold for catered lunch programs and events (e.g. bake sales, sports events, field trips), those with Maximum Nutritional Value are to be emphasized and no food or beverages from the Not Permitted category are to be sold. Refer to the [Food Classification Examples](#) in Appendix A (APH017-AX).
- When food and beverages are offered (not sold) at school and at offsite events (e.g. sports events and field trips), those with Maximum Nutritional Value are to be available and no food or beverages from the Not Permitted category are to be offered.
- The school principal may designate up to ten days (or fewer, as determined by the school) during the school year as special event days. Schools are encouraged to offer or sell foods or beverages of Maximum Nutritional Value during special event days, but may, if they so choose, offer or sell foods or beverages from the Not Permitted category. School administrators will communicate the dates of special event days to the school community.
- During contract negotiations, the services and menus of cafeterias and vending programs should be negotiated for appropriate items to ensure that a variety of Maximum Nutritional Value food and beverages are available.

Nutrition Education

- Nutrition education is incorporated into appropriate areas of the curriculum for all students in order to develop life-long decision making skills for healthy living.
- Nutrition programs offered will be provided in a safe and welcoming environment reflecting the diversity of the school community, and meet grade-appropriate curriculum expectations.
- The WCDSB will provide resources and opportunities for professional development and encourage staff to have adequate nutrition knowledge (e.g. articles, workshops, reputable websites).

Food as a Reward

- Use of non-food rewards should be encouraged. If food is used as reward, only foods of Maximum Nutritional Value are to be offered.
- School sanctioned contests may use food with maximum nutritional value as prizes.

Classroom and School Celebrations (i.e. class gatherings, dances, BBQs)

- When food or beverages are included as part of a celebration, those with Maximum Nutritional Value are to be emphasized. No food or beverages from the Not Permitted category will be offered or sold for celebrations. Student allergies and cultural requirements should be respected.

School Fundraisers and Special Events

- Only non-food items or food and beverages with Maximum Nutritional Value will be used to raise funds via special fundraising events and ongoing activities.

Food sold in tuck shops

- Food or beverages with Maximum Nutritional Value will be emphasized and no foods from the Not Permitted category will be sold.

Student breakfast/snack program

- A regular student nutrition program is encouraged for all students (i.e. free or reduced-price meals, coordinated with class and bus transportation schedules so that all students can participate). Food of Maximum Nutritional Value will be emphasized and no food from the Not Permitted category will be offered.

School Staff as Positive Role Models

- School staff will be encouraged to model healthy eating behaviour. Youth who see teachers eating healthy food are much more likely to eat well. Staff are encouraged to refrain from consuming food and beverages from the Not Permitted category when students are present.

School Meetings

- No food or beverages from the Not Permitted category are to be served during meetings and those with Maximum Nutritional Value are to be emphasized.
- School personnel are encouraged to use the following guidelines when planning food and beverages for school meetings/events:
 1. Practice safe food handling: Meet the standards for safe food preparation and service. Proper hand washing, food preparation techniques and storage procedures should be followed.
 2. Be environmentally friendly: Minimize waste from food, food packaging, dishes and cutlery when possible.
 3. Promote locally grown products: Choose Region of Waterloo and Ontario grown products whenever possible.
 4. Be fiscally accountable: The money spent on refreshments should attempt to meet as many of the guidelines listed above at the best possible price.

Pricing of Food and Beverages

- Maximum Nutritional Value/Sell Most food and beverages should be comparably/competitively priced with less healthy items. When possible, Maximum Nutritional Value/Sell Most food and beverages should be priced lower than less healthy choices.
- Prices of food should be displayed at point-of-purchase i.e. on the food product and/or on the shelf by the food.
- The cafeteria will not encourage the use of credit.
- Debit transactions should be limited to a minimum purchase of \$3.00 per transaction.

Display of Food and Beverages

- All Maximum Nutritional Value/Sell Most food and beverages must be prominently displayed on front shelves and in an area where they are easy to see.
- All Maximum Nutritional Value/Sell Most food and beverages must be positioned in a way that allows for all patrons to easily access i.e. patrons should not have to leave the main line up to access a healthier item.
- All Sell Less food and beverages should not be prominently displayed i.e. displayed on front shelves/space, at cash register.

Availability of Food and Beverages

- Efforts need to be made to ensure that all Maximum Nutritional Value/Sell Most items advertised on the menu are available daily and that enough of each item is available for purchase daily.

Advertising and Promotion of Food and Beverages

- Only posters that portray nutritious food items should be displayed. Posters are to be visual and include positive messages that appeal to youth.
- Advertise daily nutritious specials over the morning announcements and on video and/or radio advertisements.
- When advertising daily specials that include a side option, only advertise that the daily special includes a healthier side option (for example, a salad or veggies and dip versus French fries).

- Have a large bulletin board or white board located at the entrance of the cafeteria so students and staff can see what the healthier daily option is before they enter the cafeteria.
- Offer incentives for purchasing the healthier options including frequent buyer cards, draws and contests.

Food Safety

- A minimum of one full-time cafeteria employee must be certified in safe food handling.
- It is encouraged that all cafeteria staff receive safe food handling training.

School Nutrition Team

- All schools are encouraged to form a school nutrition team. The team will help the school community promote and support healthy nutrition and lifestyle practices in the classroom, throughout the school and in the home. The WCDSB will provide resources and opportunities to support the school nutrition teams (e.g. meetings and workshops).

Scope of the Food and Nutrition Policy

The WCDSB food and nutrition policy extends to all areas within the school where food and beverages are being sold or are available, including:

- The classrooms (e.g., food experiences, food sampling, celebrations, teaching tools/rewards)
- The broader school setting (e.g., vending machines, fundraising, special food day lunches, staff room)
- School community functions (e.g., recreation activities, parent-teacher nights, school open house events, school council events, meetings)

The food and nutrition policy reflects the importance of positive role-modeling and therefore applies to:

- Students and student organizations
- School staff
- School council
- School volunteers
- Providers of student nutrition programs
- All community members working with WCDSB

Procedures for enforcement

Policies will be enforced in accordance with WCDSB procedures.

Monitoring and review

- The policy will be reviewed every three years, unless otherwise required by legislative changes.
- Additions and amendments to this policy can only take place at a planned meeting with a variety of voices present (staff, administration, parents, students, public health nutritionist) with consensus approval.

Definitions

Healthy Eating

Healthy eating can be defined as the amount and variety of safe and culturally-appropriate food needed to provide the body with all the nutrients required, in adequate proportions. Nutrition is a major environmental influence in physical and mental growth and development in early life (reference: Dixey R, Heindl I, Loureiro I, Pérez-Rodrigo C, Snel J & Warnking P (1999): Healthy Eating for Young People in Europe. A School-based Nutrition Education Guide. Copenhagen: European Network of Health Promoting Schools). Healthy eating contributes to the physiological, mental and social well-being of individuals and should be an integral part of daily student life (reference: World Health Organization (1998). Healthy Nutrition: An Essential Element of a Health Promoting School).

Canada's Food Guide (2019)

Canada's Food Guide is an online suite of resources that better meets the needs of the general public, policy makers, and health professional, based on a solid foundation of evidence and recommendations are aligned with many jurisdictions and trusted health authorities and shifting to provide more actionable advice for Canadians on healthy food choices and healthy eating habits.

These foods meet and exceed Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum (P/PM) No. 150 because they are:

- Part of the food plate in Canada's Food Guide (reference: Health Canada (2011). Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide available at www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)
- Higher in nutrients needed for optimal growth and development (e.g., iron, vitamin D, calcium, vitamin C, vitamin A, protein)
- Higher in fibre (for grain products and whole fruit and vegetables)
- Lower in unhealthy fats (i.e., saturated and trans fats) and
- Usually contain little or no added salt and sugars

Maximum Nutritional Value [Food Classification Examples](#) in Appendix A (APH017-AX)

These foods meet and exceed Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum (P/PM) No. 150 because they are:

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- Higher in nutrients needed for optimal growth and development (e.g., iron, vitamin D, calcium, vitamin C, vitamin A, protein)
- Higher in fibre (for grain products and whole fruit and vegetables)
- Lower in unhealthy fats (i.e., saturated and trans fats) and
- Usually contain little or no added salt and sugars

Sell Most (Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum (P/PM) No. 150 standard)

- Products in this category must make up at least 80 per cent of all food choices and all beverage choices that are offered for sale in the cafeteria and vending machines. They generally have higher levels of essential nutrients and lower amounts of fat, sugar and/or sodium

Sell Less (Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum (P/PM) No. 150 standard)

- Products in this category must make up no more than 20 per cent of all food choices and all beverage choices that are offered for sale in the cafeteria and vending machines. They generally have lower levels of essential nutrients and slightly higher amounts of fat, sugar and/or sodium than food and beverages in the Sell Most category.

Not Permitted [Food Classification Examples](#) in Appendix A (APH017-AX)

These foods are not permitted:

- Contain few or no essential nutrients
- Contain high amounts of fat, sugar and/or sodium (e.g. deep-fried and other fried foods, confectionary)
- Are lower in fibre
- Are usually not part of the food plate groups in Canada's Food Guide
- Products in the category must not be offered or sold in schools