



Administrative Procedure: Healthy Eating in Schools

Preamble

Schools of the Superior North Catholic District School Board have an obligation to promote the health of students while they attend school, and to promote healthy lifestyle practices. Building on an overall plan to help develop healthier lifestyles in our children and youth, the government introduced the Healthy Food For Healthy Schools Act. The Act addresses healthy eating in schools, including dropping trans fat from food and beverages sold in schools.

While classroom teaching provides students with the basic philosophy and rationale for food selection, other food service provides the environment to implement and reinforce what is taught. The school is therefore, an important part of the learning system.

The Superior North Catholic DSB believes one of the most important reasons for the promotion of healthy eating in the school environment is the connection with healthy body image. The development of a realistic body image is critical in childhood and adolescence because it is highly associated with positive levels of self-esteem and with reduced stress levels.

The Superior North Catholic DSB believes what a student eats has a direct impact on his or her academic performance. Students who are poorly nourished will fatigue easily, be less attentive in class, less able to sustain prolonged physical or mental efforts and miss more school due to illness. The result is decreased student receptivity to the learning experience.

The Superior North Catholic DSB believes good nutrition can reduce an individual's risk of certain chronic diseases that are prevalent in our society.

Frequent consumption of high fat food items such as chocolate bars, candy, french fries, potato chips, cakes and doughnuts, is not promoted by the Canada Food Guide. For this reason, availability of these foods should be limited while promoting healthier

food options as outlined in this procedure. The long term goal of the Board is to do everything possible to ensure that each student acquires positive attitudes and decision making skills necessary to make sound nutritional choices.

Procedures

1. All staff members shall encourage healthy eating habit choices among students by promotion of the Canada Food Guide, in a sequential, comprehensive nutrition education curriculum from Kindergarten to Grade 8.
2. Healthy food choices will be encouraged in classrooms, fund-raisers, school meetings and special food days and events.
3. Staff shall encourage students to choose a diet that includes a wide variety of foods (Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum PPM135).
4. Staff shall emphasize the importance of eating cereals, breads and other grain products, vegetables and fruit. Students will be encouraged to choose lower fat dairy products, leaner meats, and food prepared with little or no added fat (Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum PPM135).
5. Students will be encouraged to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight by enjoying regular physical activity and healthy eating.
6. Staff shall emphasize that the key to healthy body weight is a combination of enjoying regular physical activity, healthy eating and a positive self image. Being either too thin or too heavy, may lead to health problems.
7. Students will be encouraged to limit salt and caffeine by adding flavour to foods with spices and herbs, cutting back on foods with high salt content (potato chips, hot dogs, cold cuts like salami and bologna) and choosing beverages such as water, low fat milk and fruit juices instead of cola drinks, coffee and tea.
8. Staff shall monitor the sale of food in the school, to ensure that the school environment promotes positive attitudes to nutritious foods. Eating healthy foods should become part of the culture of a school.
9. Each school will recognize, value, support and encourage parental involvement in making changes to reflect a healthy school nutrition environment.
 - a. School staff through the school council, will provide opportunities annually for parents to be involved in the process of designing and implementing the school food and nutrition plan.
 - b. Schools will include practical suggestions for school lunches and snacks in school newsletters, through collaboration with local Boards of Health.
 - c. Schools will distribute nutrition education materials stressing the advantages of healthy eating behaviours to parents, in collaboration with local Boards of Health.

10. The Board will collaborate with the local Board of Health to develop and enforce policies regarding allergy-safe and safe food environments.
 - a. The Board will ensure all food premises follow food safety policies, with the assistance of public health inspectors.
 - b. Schools are encouraged to make certain that enough time is available for students to wash hands before eating.
 - c. School administrators are to monitor school and classroom nutritional break times, to ensure that students have sufficient time to eat snacks and lunches in a safe environment.
11. All schools shall ensure that the trans fat content of vegetable oil or soft spreadable margarine offered for sale in a school of the Board, or used as an ingredient in the preparation of a food or beverage offered for sale in a school of the Board, does not exceed two percent (2%) of the total fat content.
12. All schools shall ensure that the trans fat content of any food, beverage or ingredient, other than vegetable oil or soft, spreadable margarine offered for sale in a school of the Board, or used as an ingredient in the preparation of a food or beverage offered for sale in a school of the Board, does not exceed five percent (5%) of the total fat content.
13. The requirements regarding trans fat content set out in items 11 and 12 do not apply to schools of the Board, in respect of a food, beverage or ingredient when:
 - a. The trans fat originates exclusively from ruminant meat or dairy products.
 - b. The item is offered for sale to a person who is on a school premises of the Board for a purpose other than school purpose.
 - c. The item is offered for sale at a school on a day that is designated by the Principal of the school, as a special event day for the school.
14. The Principal of a school for the Board, shall solicit the views of the School Council with respect to the designation of special event days for the school.
15. A Principal may designate up to ten (10) school-wide special event days per year when food and beverages sold in the school would be exempt from the trans fat prohibition.

Refer to the resources for [Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide](#).