

Á LA CARTE

New Requirements

School Food Authorities shall limit á la carte foods that do not meet the Nutrition Requirements for School Meals.

- Strive to eliminate foods containing trans fats
- Strive to eliminate pre-fried foods
- Offer whole grains, fruits and vegetables
- Offer low-fat milk choices (1% and skim)
- Offer foods low in sugar, sodium and cholesterol
- Offer foods high in fiber
- Control portions of high-fat condiments or use low-fat condiments

Foundations

Schools should limit unhealthy á la carte foods to maximize participation in the school meals programs and encourage consumption of balanced, nutritious meals.

Children consume between 19% and 50% of their total calories at school. School meals are required to provide healthful foods and beverages, these guidelines should be followed with the á la carte offerings as well.

The Institute of Medicine recommends that the federally reimbursable school nutrition programs be the primary source of foods and beverages offered at a school.

Tips

- Don't compete with school meals programs by offering less nutritious á la carte foods.
- Use your district's wellness policy to set requirements for all competitive foods on campus.
- Follow the basic Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommendation when choosing á la carte foods by providing whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products.
- Offer healthy items at a lower cost than other items.
- Read the Nutrition Facts labels and choose items that fit the new nutrition requirements.
- Teach students appropriate portion sizes by offering á la carte items in appropriate serving sizes. Á la carte serving sizes should not be larger than those in school meals.
- Make a shaker salad for student to purchase á la carte with a small amount of pre-portioned low-fat salad dressing.
- Make cut up veggies and low-fat dip available.
- Offer a single serving of prepackaged nuts for a healthful protein boost.