

Smart Snacks In School

The [Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act \(HHFKA\)](#) of 2010 required the USDA to make some major changes to school meals and the school food environment. School meals started the transformation in 2012. After those were well underway, USDA addressed the issues related to the school food environment. One of the most significant issues was the introduction of nutrition standards for all food sold in school, which has been nicknamed Smart Snacks. These standards are Federal Rules (7 CFR 210.11) that apply to all schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program. The transition to compliance with Smart Snacks was in full effect by July 1, 2014.

The standards apply to all food and beverages sold on school campuses during the school day. This means all a la carte items sold in the cafeteria, as well as foods sold in vending machines, school stores, snack bars, and classrooms must adhere to the standards as set forth in the HHFKA. The school campus is considered to be all areas under the jurisdiction of the school accessible to students. Generally, a teachers' lounge is off limits to students so any vending machine in that area does not need to comply with Smart Snacks if not available for students to purchase food. The school day is defined as midnight the night before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day to be all inclusive of all the variations on school days.

Smart Snacks do not apply to food that is given to students, such as a pizza party that is being provided for a celebration, as long as the exchange of money does not take place. If a teacher hosts a pizza party and charges each student \$2, then the pizza must comply with Smart Snacks. The standards also do not apply to foods brought to school by students for their own consumption.

IN SUMMARY, SMART SNACKS:



- **Apply** to items sold in vending machines, school stores, snack bars, classrooms, and ala carte items sold in the cafeteria during the school day.
- **Apply** to items sold at sports tournaments held on campus during the school day.
- **Do not apply** to activities held on campus after the school day (i.e. sporting events).
- **Do not apply** to off campus field trips held during the school day.
- **Do not apply** to off campus fundraising.
- **Do not apply** to food items brought from off campus during the school day (open campus).

Highlights of the Smart Snacks in School standards include:

- **More of the foods we should encourage.** Like the new school meals, the standards require healthier foods, more whole grains, low-fat dairy, fruits, vegetables and leaner protein.
- **Less of the foods we should avoid.** Food items are lower in fat, sugar, and sodium and provide more of the nutrients kids need.
- **Targeted standards.** Allowing variation by age group for factors such as portion size and caffeine content.
- **Flexibility for important traditions.** Preserving the ability for parents to send their kids to school with homemade lunches or treats for activities such as birthday parties, holidays, and other celebrations; and allowing schools to continue traditions like fundraisers and bake sales.
- **Reasonable limitations on when and where the standards apply.** Ensuring that standards only affect foods that are sold on school campus during the school day. Foods sold at afterschool sporting events or other activities will not be subject to these requirements.
- **Flexibility for state and local communities.** Allowing significant local and regional autonomy by only establishing minimum requirements for schools. States and schools that have stronger standards than what is being proposed will be able to maintain their own policies.

Online Resources

Idaho Child Nutrition Programs Smart Snacks in Idaho Schools

A beneficial site providing resources for Smart Snacks food and beverage standards, policy implementation, USDA guidance, and fundraiser ideas, along with tools for tracking, and exemption requests.

 <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/nslp/smartSnacks.htm>

USDA Team Nutrition Smart Snacks in School Resources

This site provides a wealth of information and related links on Smart Snacks to use for guidance and to address questions and concerns.

 <http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/smartsnacks>

Alliance for a Healthier Generation

Joined by the School Nutrition Association (SNA), the Alliance has put together a helpful site that includes a *Smart Snacks Product Calculator*, that evaluates if a product meets the current nutrition standards based on entry of data from the product label, and the *Alliance Product Navigator*, which allows you to search for and view products that meet Smart Snacks standards.

 https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take_action/schools/snacks_and_beverages/smart_snacks

Cornell University Food & Brand Lab, Offering Healthy Foods at High School Concession Stands

A published study by the prestigious group offering insight and suggestions for healthy foods sold at school concession stands without negative effects on revenue and customer satisfaction.

 <http://foodpsychology.cornell.edu/op/concessions>

Bridging the Gap

Brought about through a partnership between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Center for Digital Information, this online tool provides data on state-specific laws governing school snack foods and beverages.

 <http://foods.bridgingthegapresearch.org/>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Among the vast quantity of information in their organization is a section regarding Health and Academics that spotlights the correlation between good eating habits and success in the classroom.

 http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/health_and_academics



HOW DO THE FOOD AND BEVERAGES SOLD IN YOUR SCHOOL RATE?

Follow the Compliance Decision Trees or use the Alliance for a Healthier Generation [Smart Snacks Product Calculator](#) or [Product Navigator](#) to see if your snacks are compliant with the Smart Snacks Standards.

CLICK HERE
TO GET STARTED >

