

Food and Nutrition Policy – Frequently Asked Questions:

General Policy

1. When will the Food and Nutrition Policy be fully implemented in schools?

June 2009 is the implementation date for all policy directives. School boards, community partners, and departmental staff from Health Promotion and Protection and Education will continue to provide resources and support for policy implementation.

2. Does the Food Policy apply to lunches or snacks brought from home?

No. The Food and Nutrition Policy only applies to food and beverages served and sold by the school. Many parents have the option of choosing healthy items for their children, and we hope they choose to do so most of the time. We also know from research conducted in Nova Scotia, that many families do not have this choice, as they cannot afford to buy healthy foods. This policy is *not* intended as a tool to judge or “police” food and beverages brought from home.

3. How do we get students to stay at school to eat lunch instead of leaving to buy fast food?

Promote the healthy options that your school has and make it affordable for students. Asking students what kind of healthy foods they would like served in the cafeteria and canteen and providing taste tests is a great way to get them involved and supporting foods sold in school.

4. Can we accept minimum foods that have been donated to the school?

No. Schools need to turn down donations of food and beverages that do not fit with the policy. Explain that there is a food and nutrition policy at school and welcome any items that are supportive. Seek out companies that produce healthy products to see if they would like to promote their products and donate these healthy foods to your school.

5. Can food be given out as part a presentation in a class (by a guest speaker or teacher)?

No. Using food as a reinforcer teaches children and youth to eat when they are not hungry and to expect food as a reward for positive behaviour. Alternatives to using food to reinforce good behavior are an important part of creating a healthy school environment.

6. Can we still have coffee and tea in the staff room?

Yes. Coffee and tea can be served in the staff room but not to students. Staff are strongly encouraged to model the Food and Nutrition Policy. This may mean not bringing coffee/tea into the classroom, or using thermal mugs for coffee/tea instead of other predominate packaging.

7. Can students eat what they make in class (i.e. cooking sessions in a Family Studies class)?

Family studies menus need to reflect the policy directives. The policy (Directive 12.3) encourages the integration of nutrition education into other subject areas and activities. What better place to teach students about healthy foods and provide them with the skills to prepare them! It is likely that students would need to taste the food and beverages they make in class.

8. Does the Food and Nutrition Policy apply to curriculum (i.e. what about the Pizza unit in the core French)?

The policy applies to the curriculum and supports the curriculum. A unit on how to make pizza as part of the French core curriculum would also need to reflect the policy directives. The policy (Directive 12.3) encourages the integration of nutrition education into other subject areas and activities. What an opportunity to teach students how to make a healthy version of pizza.

Specific Foods

1. Can schools sell/serve hot dogs in the school?

No. Hot dogs are of Minimum Nutrition and are no longer permitted to be sold or served in schools. As of June 2008 all mixed foods (which hot dogs are considered) from the Minimum Nutrition list (Directive 1.1) are no longer permitted in schools.

2. Can schools serve/sell sports drinks after school during sporting events?

No. Sports drinks like other Minimum Nutrition beverages are not permitted to be sold/served. This also applies to sports drink dispensing vending machines on timers. Water is the recommended beverage for athletes.

3. Can we serve Pizza at our school for lunch?

You can serve pizza that fits with the policy. This includes pizza with multi-grain or whole wheat crust, low fat cheese (18% Milk Fat or less), lean meats (e.g. chicken, lean ground beef, ham) and fruits (e.g., pineapple) and a variety of veggies.

4. What can I do if the cafeteria is serving foods from the Minimum Nutrition list?

We all need to encourage change and take responsibility to model and provide a healthy environment for our students. If you notice that the food being served in your cafeteria is from the Minimum Nutrition list we encourage you to talk with the cafeteria staff, the principal or contact a member of the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board HPS team.

5. Can we serve baked chips in our cafeteria?

Baked chips are typically considered a Moderate Nutrition item. **Moderate Nutrition items can be sold no more than two times per week and make up no more than 30% of choices at one location.**

6. Can we sell/serve ice cream?

No. Ice cream is considered a Minimum Nutrition item. Some Low Fat Frozen Yogurts in a 125 ml or ½ cup serving size fit within the moderate category. Please check the nutrient criteria.

7. How do we transition students to start eating 100% whole wheat bread?

School foodservice staff and volunteers often have many creative ideas. Some begin serving 60% whole wheat bread to students that are used to white bread and then eventually transition to 100% whole wheat bread. Others create sandwiches made with one slice of white bread and one slice of whole wheat or whole grain.

Special Functions

1. What is a Special Function?

A Special Function is a school wide event that may occur once or twice a month and involve the entire school body. Foods of Maximum or Moderate Nutrition need to make up the majority of foods and beverages served and sold. However, foods of Minimum Nutrition may also be included. Special Functions include all in-school celebrations (i.e. parent teacher night, Spring Flings, Halloween party, etc.).

2. Can we serve minimum foods at our monthly class party if we also serve maximum foods?

No. Foods of Minimum Nutrition are only permitted (along side foods of Maximum and Moderate Nutrition) as part of a Special Function. This would not be considered a Special Function because it does not include the entire school. You can serve foods of Maximum and Moderate Nutrition at your class party.

3. Can food from the minimum nutrition list be served at Special Functions?

Schools can serve food from the minimum nutrition list at a special event which involves the entire school **up to twice** a month if the **majority of the food being served is from the Maximum and Moderate Nutrition lists.**

Fundraising

1. Can pizza and pop be sold at our annual school fundraiser which is also a special event?

No. Minimum foods cannot be sold to raise money for the school. If the fundraiser is also a special event like a Spring Fling, Minimum foods can be served, not sold as long as most of the foods available are from the Maximum or Moderate Nutrition list. As per the Food and Nutrition Policy (Directive 1.4) unflavored water, low fat milk (white, chocolate, flavoured and nutritional alternatives, e.g. soy) or 100% juice can be sold/served. For example, pizza with whole wheat or multi grain crust, veggies, lean meat and low fat cheese (18% milk fat or less) along with chocolate milk is a popular choice that can be served/sold.

2. Can a school's fundraiser by selling hot dogs and pop if they are not on the school property?

No. Foods of Minimum Nutrition are not permitted to be used as school fundraisers.

3. Our Home & School has an annual bazaar where vendors rent space to sell goods (homemade baked goods, crafts, chocolate, fudge, etc.) Can we continue this?

No. This does not fit the policy. All fundraising activities must follow the Food and Nutrition Policy guidelines.

4. Can we still sell homemade pies as a fundraiser for our sports team?

No. All fundraising activities must follow the Food and Nutrition Policy guidelines. Pies are part of the Minimum Nutrition list and are not an appropriate fundraiser.