

Northside Independent School District Food Service Department

August 2005

Nutrition Rules for Schools

TDA ISSUES RULES FOR SCHOOLS

The Texas Public School Nutrition Policy issued by the Texas Department of Agriculture became effective August 1, 2004. The purpose of these rules is to help combat childhood obesity and diabetes, since schools are in a powerful position to influence children's lifelong eating habits.

Food from home-Parents may choose the type of food they send to school for their own child, but may not send food or purchase food for other students with the exception of birthday celebrations as addressed under Frequently Asked Questions.

Food at school-Schools may not provide candy of any type to students during the school day. Schools may not provide access to carbonated beverages during the school day. Schools may not sell or give away any food that competes with the school cafeteria during the school day. Outside food and beverages provided for events such as pizza parties, etc. is also considered competitive.

EXEMPTIONS

Certain exemptions are allowed for school nurses and students with special needs. Field trips are also exempted from the policy. Up to three school-wide events may be pre-approved by school officials to serve food brought in that may be normally prohibited. Generally this will be a party in the last hour of the day in the fall, spring and one other event, such as field day.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

What about student birthdays? Student birthday celebrations provided by parents may be held at school at the discretion of the principal. If these celebrations include food, they may not be held in the cafeteria during serving times unless food is purchased in the cafeteria.

Do these nutrition standards apply to fundraising? These standards do apply. No food fundraising is allowed in elementary schools during the school day.

How is a "school day" defined? The school day is defined as beginning with the start of the first breakfast period until the end of the last instruction period of the day (last bell). School activities, athletic functions, etc. that occur after the normal school day are not covered by this policy.

What is the cafeteria doing to comply with the nutrition policy? French fries, which have always been a baked product, will not be served more than one time a week. Portion sizes for all a la carte items is strictly controlled for items sold in the cafeteria. School meals continue to emphasize serving a wide variety of fresh fruit and vegetables, low fat meat and milk.

For additional information go to www.nisd.net/food_service or call the Food Service Department at 397-4512.

