

## **SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY**

The Merton Community School District will practice and promote good nutrition within the school setting.

The district food service program will ensure that all students and staff have access to adequate and healthy food choices on scheduled school days at reasonable prices. Three goals of the food service program are:

- Goal #1 To provide students with well-balanced nutritional choices of food and beverages and ensure all meals are offered through the National School Lunch Program meet and follow all U.S. Government Nutritional Standards. To meet this goal, the district will continually expand and explore menu offerings based on nutritional content and student preferences.
- Goal #2 To assist students in making healthy choices. Reinforce messages about healthy eating and to insure the foods offered promote good nutrition and contribute to the development of lifelong, healthy eating habits.
- Goal #3 To encourage and promote participation in the school lunch program. The food service program will work with the school administration, staff, parents and students to provide information and incentives to promote participation in school lunch. The district will provide a clean and pleasant eating environment for students and staff, with adequate space and appropriate time for eating.

### **A. NUTRITION STANDARDS**

#### **Food**

1. No food item for sale prior to the start of the school day and throughout the instructional day will have more than 30% of its total calories derived from fat.
2. No food item for sale prior to the start of the school day and throughout the instructional day will have more than 10% of its total calories derived from saturated fat.
3. Nuts and seeds are exempt from these standards because they are nutrient dense and contain high levels of monounsaturated fat. Foods high in monounsaturated fat help lower “bad” cholesterol and maintain “good” HDL cholesterol.
4. Encourage the consumption of nutrient dense foods, i.e., whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables.
5. No individual item served by food service as part of a traditional meal, as an ala carte item, or as a snack item may contain more than one third of its weight from added sugar.
6. The food service program will follow the district nutrition standards when determining the items in ala carte sales.

7. Parents are encouraged to provide healthy snacks and treats for student celebrations and other events that adhere to district nutrition standards. District food service can assist parents by providing this service to families at a reasonable cost.
8. Strong consideration should be given to nonfood items as part of any teacher-to-student incentive program. Should teacher feel compelled to utilize food items as an incentive, they are encouraged to adhere to the district nutritional standards.
9. It is recognized that there may be rare special occasions when the school principal may allow a school group to deviate from these guidelines.

**B. GUIDELINES FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGES OFFERED TO STUDENT AT SCHOOL FUNCTIONS INCLUDING:**

**CLASSROOM PARTIES  
CLASSROOM TREATS  
BIRTHDAY TREATS**

The Merton Community School District encourages the use of nutrient dense foods for all school functions and activities. Nutrient dense foods are those foods that provide students with calories rich in the nutrient content needed to be healthy. At any school function (parties, celebrations, feasts, etc.) healthy food choice options should be available. It is suggested food/treat options include:

- Raw vegetable sticks/slices with low-fat dressing or yogurt dip
- Fresh fruit
- Frozen fruit juice pops
- Dried fruits (raisins, banana chips, etc.)
- “Lite” fruit cups
- Trail mix (dried fruits and nuts)
- Dry roasted peanuts, tree nuts and soy nuts (not coconut or palm nuts)\*
- Low-fat meats and cheese sandwiches (use low-fat mayonnaise in chicken/tuna salads)
- Mozzarella cheese sticks
- Homemade party mix (variety of cereals, nuts, pretzels, etc.)
- Crackers
- Baked chips, salsa, and low-fat dip (Ranch, French Onion, bean, etc.)
- Low-fat muffins, granola bars and cookies
- Angel food and sponge cakes
- Flavored yogurt and fruit parfaits
- Jell-O and low-fat pudding cups
- Low-fat ice creams, frozen yogurts, sherbets
- Low-fat and skim milk products
- Bottled or tap water
- 100% fruit juice (small portions)
- Low-fat popcorn
- Animal crackers
- Graham crackers

\*In case of food allergies, please check with classroom teacher

## **C. SUGGESTIONS FOR HEALTHY FOOD AT CONCESSION STANDS/FUNDRAISING**

- High Protein granola bars, energy bars, health bars (e.g. peanut butter, chocolate) – low sugar, high protein versions are best. High sugar versions are just like candy bars.
- Fresh fruit – e.g. fruit kabobs, apples, grapes, oranges, etc (high in fructose sugar but with fiber)
- Veggies and dip (e.g. low fat ranch)
- Low fat string cheese
- Low fat cheese, sausage, and whole grain crackers
- Low fat yogurt (e.g. Gogurts sticks)
- Sliced apples and peanut butter
- Celery stuffed with peanut butter or low fat cheese
- Nuts (almonds, cashews, etc) – beware of peanut allergies
- Trail mix, homemade “gorp” (mixes with low fat items) – packaged versions can be very high in fat

### **CARBS (LIMITED AMOUNTS)**

- Bagel chips and dip (or flavored humus)
- Baked: Cheez-its, Pretzels (avoid baked potato chips and corn chips – high in starch, see below)
- Popcorn with low salt and butter content

### **TREATS**

- Frozen (Gorgurts) yogurt sticks
- Frozen Soy bars e.g. Soy Dream Chocolate sandwiches (higher in protein than ice cream)
- Dark Chocolate (small pieces such as Dove chocolates). (Dark chocolate has health benefits not found in milk chocolate. Up to 3 oz per day can be helpful.)
- Very small sized candy bars – e.g. Halloween sized (sell in small amounts) – only if must have. Very limited amounts. Pick lower sugar candy if possible such as Kit Kat

### **MEALS**

- Subs – on whole grain bread or in a low carb wrap with lots of veggies and meat
- Deli sandwiches e.g. turkey, ham etc. (meat and cheese on whole grain bread or low carb wrap) – fine ground whole grain bread is similar to what they are used to eating e.g. Roman Meal, Butternut
- Salads
- Walking taco – corn chips, taco meat, low fat shredded cheese, lettuce, tomato, taco sauce

### **DRINKS**

- Pure water and Flavored waters (e.g. Fruit 2 O)

- Vegetable juice (e.g. V8), Milk Chugs, Unsweetened lemonade and ice tea

**SPORTING EVENTS / TOURNAMENTS** (when kids need replacement of carbohydrates due to ongoing strenuous exercise)

- Gatorade, Propel (high carb energy drinks) – note water with sugars will not rehydrate bodies like pure water
- Power / Energy bars (lower sugar versions)

**VENDING MACHINES**

- The School Board will approve all vending machines placed within district school buildings or on district-owned property

**ITEMS TO AVOID**

- Large sized, high sugar, content candy
- Soda (high in sugar; diet soda raises other safety concerns) and fruit juice (high in sugar)
- High fat, high carb fried chips such as potato chips, Doritos, Cheetos, etc
- In general avoid high starch items like white flour pasta, bread made with white flour, potatoes, corn and white rice (Starches and white flour converts 100% into sugar and is absorbed faster than table sugar into the blood stream. It can actually make you hungrier and result in overeating)
- Hamburgers, brats and hot dogs

**D. EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT**

The Merton Community School District will promote health and wellness through nutrition and activity education at all levels. This education will include:

- Integration into the 4K-8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum
- Health and wellness education with employees
- Informational campaigns/reminders with students, employees, parents and communities

A district committee, with input from parents, students, employees and community, shall annually conduct a health and wellness needs assessment and make recommendations to the school board for the coming school year.

Adopted: May 15, 2006