



## Frequently Asked Questions – Healthy Foods Legislation

### **When do the new regulations for food and beverage sales in schools come into effect?**

The regulations begin January 2008 for elementary schools and September 2008 for middle and secondary schools.

### **Where can I find a copy of the new regulations?**

The new regulations can be found at: [www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/guidelines\\_sales07.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/guidelines_sales07.pdf)

### **Who will be responsible for enforcing these regulations?**

To clarify, the *Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools (2007)* are a set of minimum standards that school districts are required to implement in their respective schools, as part of the government's directive to remove junk food from school food sales; however, unlike the Tobacco Control Act, the *Guidelines* are not legislation and therefore don't involve regulations and enforcement per se. Each school district will be overseeing the integration of the *Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales* for their respective schools, and is required to report back to the Ministry through their Achievement Contracts. Questions and concerns about implementation of the *Guidelines* within a particular school district should be directed to the district office.

### **Do the regulations apply to the lunches brought from home by students?**

No, the *Guidelines* only apply to food and beverage items that are "sold" to students. They do not apply to food that students bring from home.

### **Will teachers be able to look at the kid's lunches and remove certain foods from their lunch box if they feel they do not meet the regulations?**

Schools can share information about healthy lunches/snacks with students and parents, but teachers should not be removing food items from student lunch boxes on the basis that they do not meet the Guideline requirements.

### **The parents at School XXX whose children are on the senior football team have a BBQ concession going at the football games. Usually smokies are sold. The money raised from the concession sales goes to offset the football fee that has to be paid to cover such things as transport to games. Will the new regulations apply to food sales at sports events (i.e. football games) even though it's mostly for the adult spectators?**

The *Guidelines* apply to any food or beverages sold to students as well as non-students within the school grounds and at school-organized events off the school grounds (e.g., track meets), regardless of the organizing group.

### **Will the new regulations put an end to the bake sale fundraiser because the food is homemade?**

The *Guidelines* will apply to those situations where the food items are being sold to students (e.g., they would not apply to fund-raisers where students are selling chocolate almonds door-to-door, as the customers would not be students). Having said this, the Ministry does not advocate for selling junk food to non-students either, as it sends mixed messages to students. To assist your school with ideas for fundraising without junk food, DASH BC has just released an excellent document entitled *Healthy*



*Fundraising for Schools* that contains some great ideas for fundraising, including examples from various BC schools - see

<http://www.dashbc.org/upload/Healthy%20Fundraising%20for%20Schools.pdf>.

### **Why do the *Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools* allow:**

- Potato chips and corn chips? The key issues are the serving size, and the fat and sodium content. Some chip manufacturers have developed lower sodium, transfat-free versions of chips. They provide some nutrients, and in small portions (or moderate portions for the lower fat versions) they can be an occasional snack. Look for nutrition criteria for chips in the Grain food grouping (corn, wheat, rice chips) and the Vegetable/Fruit grouping (potato, apple chips) of the *Guidelines*.
- French fries? Some, but not all, french fries are allowed. Just like hot dogs and chips, french fries need to be assessed according the nutrition criteria in the *Guidelines* (look in the Vegetables & Fruit food grouping). Baked fries will almost always be healthier choices than deep-fried fries, but the key issues will be the serving size or total calories, and the fat, transfat and sodium content.
- Hot dogs? While most wieners are very high in salt, total fat, or transfat, there is nothing inherently wrong with the concept of hot dogs. In fact, healthier wieners do exist, and manufacturers are likely to develop more. Look for the nutrition criteria for wieners in the Meat & Alternatives food grouping of the *Guidelines*. Look for tips on serving a healthier hot dog in the web resource “Healthier Foods: How To Make Fun-Fast-Food Healthier For Students” at <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/>

### **What about food made in home economics classes?**

The curriculum encourages teachers to use Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating as their nutrition standard. However, if a class is responsible for items being sold to students, then the *Guidelines* should apply.

### **Do the *Guidelines* apply to lunches organized by parent groups?**

Yes, unless the lunches are provided free-of-cost. The *Guidelines* apply to any food or beverages sold to students within the school grounds and at school-organized events off the school grounds, regardless of the organizing group.

### **Why aren’t the criteria for fat set lower?**

Children are not yet fully grown and their brains and cells need a greater proportion of fat than adults’ do. Also, fat is found in many healthy foods. Allowing foods with moderate fat content helps schools to encourage children to take a holistic approach, rather than a fat phobic approach, to healthy eating. All the nutrition criteria together – not just fat alone – help to screen out less healthy items.

### **Where can schools get help to implement the *Guidelines*?**

There are a variety of places for schools to get help.

- Many schools have formed successful teams that focus on nutrition, to plan and implement changes. The teams can have a diverse membership with administrators, teachers, parents, students, and vendors, etc.
- Ask within your Parent Advisory Committee if there are parents with an interest in health that could help.



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- Your vendor may be able to advise you as to how the items on their stock list fit into the *Guidelines*.
- Check out the Making It Happen school food resources (videos, tips, handouts) at <http://www.knowledgenetwork.ca/makingithappen>
- Your local Health Unit's Community Nutritionist or Public Health Nurse can be a great source of assistance.

### **Where can I find additional information?**

The Ministry of Education have recently released two Healthy Schools Network newsletters for October that have some great information and resources. The October Special Edition in particular is all about the new School Food Guidelines Support Initiative and the new supports that are now available for implementing the *Guidelines*. The newsletters can be found at:

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/hsnetwork/newsletters.htm>.

Check out these websites for more information and ideas:

- BC Healthy Schools Network: <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/hsnetwork/>
- Ministry of Education, Healthy Schools: <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/>
- Dash BC: Directorate of Agencies for School Health: <http://www.dashbc.org/default.asp>
- ActNow BC: <http://www.actnowbc.ca/EN/home>
- BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation: <http://www.aitc.ca/bc/snacks/>