

## NUTRITION STANDARDS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

### (A) Minimum Standards for School Meals are as follows:

(1) Meals served must be consistent with the current edition of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Federal Regulations as approved for North Carolina and State Board of Education Policy on Nutrition Standards for School Meals.

(2) When averaged over the week, reimbursable meals will contain 20-35% of calories from fat, and  $\leq 10\%$  total calories from saturated fat. Trans fat and sodium levels will be monitored regularly and kept as low as possible.

(3) In addition to the above, the following standards shall apply:

(a) Reimbursable meals will contain no more than 200 mg cholesterol when averaged over breakfasts and lunches for the week.

(b) Food preparation methods for all foods will be limited to baking, roasting, broiling, boiling, and steaming.

(c) A minimum of 1 daily serving of whole grain products will be offered; whole grain foods will be increased gradually to a minimum of 8 servings per week as market availability of whole grain products increases to supply menu needs\*.

(d) Four fruits and/or vegetables will be offered daily. Fruits and vegetables may be canned, frozen, fresh, or dried with preparation methods limited to baking, roasting, broiling, boiling, and steaming. Dark green, deep yellow or orange fruits or vegetables will be offered 3 or more times per week. Fresh fruits or vegetables will be offered at least 4 times weekly at breakfast and/or lunch.

(e) Legumes will be offered at least 1 time per week.

(f) All milk choices will be 1% or less fat.

### (B) Minimum Nutrition Standards for *A la Carte* Foods and Beverages

(1) If local policy allows *A la Carte* food and beverage choices, the following options may be offered:

(a) In addition to items offered as a part of the reimbursable meal, *A la Carte* items must meet the following criteria:

- (i)  $\leq 35\%$  total calories from fat, excluding seeds and nuts,  $\leq 10\%$  total calories from saturated fat,  $\leq 1\%$  total calories from trans fat,  $\leq 35\%$  added sugar by weight
- (ii) Any item in the same serving size as offered that day as part of the reimbursable meal with a limit of one additional entrée portion
- (iii) Single serving dairy products containing  $\leq 200$  calories,  $\leq 35\%$  total calories from fat,  $\leq 10\%$  total calories from saturated fat,  $\leq 1\%$  total calories from trans fat, and  $\leq 35\%$  added sugar by weight
- (iv) Nuts and seeds ( $\leq 1$  oz portion)
- (v) Single serving yogurt or frozen yogurt

(b) Canned, frozen, fresh, or dried fruits and vegetables found in the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* with preparation methods limited to baking, roasting, broiling, boiling, and steaming

(c) Water

(d) All milk choices will be 1% or less fat

(e) 50% or more fruit juice with no added sweeteners ( $\leq 8$  oz portion)

(f) 100% frozen fruit products with no added sweeteners ( $\leq 8$  oz portion)

(C) Minimum Standards for After School Snack Programs

(1) All After School Snack Programs (ASSP) administered by NC DPI shall meet the meal pattern requirements specified by the US Department of Agriculture.

(2) All foods and beverages available to students enrolled in the ASSP shall meet the same criteria required for *A la Carte* foods and beverages.

(D) Local Child Nutrition Programs shall implement these nutrition standards in all elementary schools no later than the first day of the 2008 school year.

(E) The Child Nutrition Services Section of the Department of Public Instruction shall review the nutrition standards for elementary schools annually and shall modify the standards as needed based on several criteria, including, but not limited to, current science, best practices in the food and beverage industry, and the availability and affordability of new foods and beverages.

(F) The Child Nutrition Services Section of the Department of Public Instruction shall monitor the progress of each local school administrative unit toward achieving the nutrition standards and shall provide technical assistance and training as needed to assist local school administrative units in implementing the nutrition standards. Each local Child Nutrition Program shall submit nutrient analyses of menus planned for the months of October and March annually; the analyses will be used to assess progress towards achieving the standards.

(G) The Child Nutrition Services Section shall report annually on the progress of each local school administrative unit to the State Board of Education.

(H) Students who have special nutritional needs that are in conflict with the nutrition standards will be exempt from the standards. Each student's special needs must be addressed through a medically-recognized document provided by a health care professional. When the child's documented nutritional need differs from the nutrition standards, the Child Nutrition Program will comply with a documented plan or other specific instructions.

\* A variety of whole grain products may not be readily available in all school districts; efforts to meet the daily target of whole grain foods will be contingent upon market availability.