

School Wellness Policy FAQ Document - 2018-2019

(updated 8/24/18)

Q: *What brought about this change?*

A: Since passing of the [Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act](#) in 2010, the updated legislation added new regulations for implementation, evaluation, and public reporting on progress of local school wellness policies. As part of this process, the district re-evaluated its current wellness policy based on the feedback provided by the Department of Public Instruction.

Q: *Isn't this new policy taking a positive experience away from students and families?*

A: The district continues to strive to be a safe, healthy, and welcoming environment for all of our students. By celebrating birthdays and special occasions through food practices, we have been excluding students from a variety of cultural, economic, and medical backgrounds within our classrooms. In honoring students and celebrating special occasions through non-food practices, we are embracing all students while also reducing the risk of allergic reactions or unintended medical issues taking place.

Q: *Does the new policy impact what my child may bring to school for cold lunch?*

A: No. Students may still bring their own items as before for lunch. The policy only impacts distribution of food items for consumption by other students.

Q: *What are other ways that my child can be recognized on his or her birthday?*

A: The following examples illustrate a variety of ways students may be recognized on his or her birthday:

- Birthday child gets to choose a game for the whole class to play. For older children the birthday child could lead the game if he or she chooses.
- Bring in a book from home to read to class
- Additional computer time
- Be "VIP of the week": Make a timeline of your life, have your parents read to the class one day, and have other students interview you about your favorite things.
- Get a card from the class. All the students sign it saying what they like most about the student.
- Be a helper in another classroom
- Read morning announcements
- Sit with friends
- Have lunch or breakfast in the classroom
- Play a favorite game or do puzzles
- Show and tell
- Fun physical activity break
- Certificate, trophy, ribbon, plaque
- Listen to music or a book
- Read outdoors or have class outdoors
- Extra art, music or reading time

- Earn points or play money to spend on privileges or non-food items
- Commendation certificate or letter sent home to parents by teacher or principal
- Trip to treasure box filled with non-food items, e.g., stickers, pencils, erasers, bookmarks, school supplies

Q: *How does the updated policy impact the selling of food items during the school day?*

A: All food items sold during the school day (defined by the DPI as starting at midnight the day before school and continuing through 30 minutes after end of the day dismissal) must meet the criteria established through the [Smart Snack Calculator](#). Please also see the following resources:

- [A Guide to Smart Snacks in Schools - USDA, July 2016](#)
- [Smart Snacks Recipe Analyzer Tool](#)

Q: *Does the updated policy impact food items sold at school functions such as games, dances, etc.?*

A: As long as the sale of the item(s) takes place after 30 minutes following the end of the school day and prior to midnight the day before a school day during a school function, The Smart Snack Calculator requirements do not apply. Per policy language, organizations are still encouraged to follow the nutritional guidelines established within the policy but are not required to do so. Language from the policy is as follows: *“All AASD concessions for sale at school activities during school and non-school hours are expected to provide a minimum of one healthy option that follows the AASD Student Nutrition Standards in each of four categories: entrée, beverage, snack and candy. Healthier alternatives/versions of all concessions options are also encouraged.”*

Q: *What is the Smart Snack Calculator and how do we use it?*

A: The Smart Snack calculator takes the guesswork out of correctly applying the nutritional guidelines. Simply enter the product information, answer a few questions, and it will determine if it meets the guidelines. *The only exception to the calculator is diet drinks.* Those are not allowed under our policy. [Smart Snack Calculator](#)

Q: *Can students share their snack with other students who don't have one?*

A: This is not a practice that would be encouraged as it increases the likelihood of unintended health outcomes taking place and decreases the consistency of the policy's implementation.

Q: *Does this policy only impact birthday treats?*

A: No, the policy impacts all distribution of food items for consumption by students during the school day.

Q: *Is school breakfast and lunch provided through ARAMARK in compliance with the smart snack calculator?*

A: Yes. ARAMARK not only follows the School Wellness Policy guidelines but also follows the national guidelines in place for districts providing meals to students. These guidelines are even more strict than what is in place within the School Wellness Policy.

Q: Can families bring in non edible birthday items to be distributed?

A: Yes, families can still bring in non edible items for special occasions. With that said, we will continue to focus on honoring students through activities that are not centered on “an item” or gift so that we are truly following best practices in how we recognize students by reducing unnecessary financial burdens on families.

Q: Our school has some days where our grade levels have a Heritage Feast. Parents bring in food for all the students to share at Lunch time. Are we still able to do this or does each parent need to check to see if it fits our policy?

A: Bringing in food items as part of a Heritage Feast would no longer be permitted under the School Wellness Policy as non-food practices would need to be utilized for special occasions.