

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STUDENT NUTRITION SERVICES POLICY – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) will operate under a new Student Nutrition Services Policy starting with the 2006-2007 school year, in order to comply with the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004. Food and Nutrition Services provides these questions and answers to assist the community in understanding the changes.

SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

1. What is the AACPS Student Nutrition Policy?

On July 12, 2006, AACPS adopted a Wellness Policy to promote a healthy environment in schools. The Student Nutrition Services Policy is a component of the Wellness Policy and encourages schools to promote a healthy school environment in regard to food and beverages available to students during the school day. All schools in the United States that participate in the federally funded National School Meals Program are required to have a wellness policy in place by the start of the 2006-2007 school year.

2. How was the Student Nutrition Policy developed?

During school year 2005-2006, a committee comprised of representatives from Food and Nutrition Services, Budget and Finance, Instruction, parents, students, teachers, principals and the Department of Health diligently examined wellness issues in the total school environment and crafted a policy to comply with the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004. The policy was developed using, as a basis, the Comprehensive School Health Program developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Eight important areas of school wellness were identified: Health Education, Physical Education, Health Services, Family and Community Involvement, Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services, Health Promotion of Staff, Healthy School Environment, and Nutrition Services. Policies existed or were in the process of revision for the first five categories. New policies were developed for Staff, School Environment, and Nutrition, in addition to an overall Wellness Policy. All policies were subject to a detailed review process by the Policy Review Committee, Board of Education, and community prior to approval.

3. What is the National School Meals Program?

This is a federally funded program which includes the National School Breakfast and School Lunch Programs. Anne Arundel County Public Schools annually signs a School Nutrition Program Agreement with the Maryland State Department of Education to ensure compliance with the rules and regulations stipulated within the agreement.

4. What is COMAR?

COMAR is the Department of Health's Code of Maryland Regulations. COMAR codes and regulations may be accessed through the following web link: <http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/>. Code number 10.15.03 pertains to Food Service Facilities. Anne Arundel County Department of Health provides guidance relating to this code. For specific questions, contact the Anne Arundel County Department of Health at 410-222-7238.

5. What is a licensed food service facility?

It is a facility that has been issued a valid food service license from the Department of Health. This license is not transferable. The license encompasses the kitchen operations and the adjoining cafeteria of the facility.

6. How do I obtain a Temporary Food Service License?

If required, complete a food service permit application two weeks prior to the event and submit to the Anne Arundel County Department of Health, Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD 21401. For specific questions, contact the Anne Arundel County Department of Health at 410-222-7238. The application may be downloaded at the following web link: http://www.aahealth.org/envhlth_licenses.asp#special.

7. What are Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV)?

Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value include, but are not limited to:

Soda water (includes soda), water ice, chewing gum, candy-coated popcorn, and certain candies including hard candy, jellies and gums, marshmallow candies, fondant, licorice, and spun candy.

Basically, food with 5% of the daily value of at least one of the specified nutrients (protein, vitamin A, ascorbic acid, niacin, riboflavin, thiamin, calcium, and iron) is considered to have nutritional value and, thus, is not considered a FMNV.

Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value cannot be sold or donated from 12:01am until the end of the instructional day. This is a federal regulation.

8. Where can I access important wellness/nutrition information and forms?

Wellness Policy: <http://www.aacps.org/aacps/boe/board/newpolicy/tableofcontents100.asp>

Student Nutrition Policy: <http://www.aacps.org/aacps/boe/board/newpolicy/tableofcontents700.asp>

Food and Nutrition Services Website/ Kitchen Use Application: <http://www.aacps.org/aacps/boe/studt/foods/lunch.asp>

Anne Arundel County Department of Health Temporary Food Service Facilities Guidelines: <http://www.ahealth.org/a2z.asp?id=105>

SECTION B: EVENTS/ REWARDS/ SNACKS/ FOOD FROM HOME/ FUNDRAISING

1. Can school clubs/ parent groups bring snacks/ refreshments to classrooms for celebrations?

Yes, however, the Wellness Policy encourages families and staff to find alternatives to food for these types of celebrations in order to give students a consistent message throughout the school environment. Snacks/ refreshments must meet policy guidelines regarding Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value. All foods made available through school sponsored activities shall meet COMAR guidelines regarding the preparation, handling, storage, and serving of food. Parents should purchase pre-packaged, store bought items for these events.

2. May all children in the classroom share the snacks/ refreshments that a parent brings from home?

This must be discussed with the classroom teacher to determine if allergies or medical restrictions need to be considered in the snack/ refreshment selection.

3. Can food be used in the classroom for incentives and rewards?

Yes, however, the food must meet policy guidelines regarding Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value. It is highly recommended that teachers not use food in this way, but rather find non-food alternatives.

4. Can food be prepared and cooked in the classroom, as part of the curriculum, under the guidance of teachers?

Yes, but the food prepared and cooked must be a part of the curriculum.

5. Can school clubs/ parent groups have a fundraising event, such as a bake sale, on school premises?

Food items may not be sold as a fundraising activity from 12:01 am until after the end of the instructional day. Food sold to the public must be prepared in a licensed facility. Organizations shall meet COMAR guidelines regarding the preparation, handling, storage, and serving of food. Contact the Anne Arundel County Department of Health to determine if a Temporary Food Service License is required.

6. Can food that has been stored, prepared, and cooked in an unlicensed location be served to students in a licensed school cafeteria?

No. However, such groups are invited to apply for use of Food and Nutrition Services' kitchen facilities, in accordance with guidelines provided by Anne Arundel County Public Schools' "Community Use of School Facilities" Handbook. School principals maintain a copy of the handbook in their school office. The Kitchen Use Application may be downloaded at the following web link: <http://www.aacps.org/aacps/boe/studt/foods/lunch.asp>. The Anne Arundel County Department of Health may also be contacted for a Temporary Food Service License.

7. Can school clubs/ parent groups serve food prepared and/ or cooked in the cafeteria dining area without obtaining a temporary license?

No. The Food and Nutrition Services' license encompasses both the cafeteria kitchen and the cafeteria dining area. The license obtained by the Office of Food and Nutrition Services for this site is not transferable to outside caterers or groups applying for use of the facility. The organization must apply for a Temporary Food Service License through Anne Arundel County Department of Health.

8. Can school clubs/ parent groups prepare food in the licensed school kitchen and sell the food in locations outside of the school cafeteria?

No. The license obtained by the Office of Food and Nutrition Services for this site is not transferable to outside caterers or groups applying for use of the facility. The organization must apply for a Temporary Food Service License through Anne Arundel County Department of Health.

9. Can school clubs/ parent groups sponsor events in the cafeteria for breakfast/lunch?

Yes, however, food for these events must be purchased through the Office of Food and Nutrition Services. Contact the Office of Food and Nutrition Services at 410-222-5900 for additional information.

10. Can school clubs/ parent groups sponsor a lunch that occurs in a school location other than the cafeteria?

Yes, however, the food cannot be for sale. In addition, the lunch event cannot be scheduled until after the end of the last lunch period. The food must meet policy guidelines regarding Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value. All foods made available through school sponsored activities shall meet COMAR guidelines regarding the preparation, handling, storage, and serving of food. Contact the Anne Arundel County Department of Health to determine if a Temporary Food Service License is required.

11. Do the regulations restrict food that parents provide for their child to eat at school?

No. Parents may provide food of their own choice for their child's consumption at school.

SECTION C: VENDING/ SALES

12. Who can school clubs/ parent groups contact regarding the food and beverage products sold in vending machines?

Contact the school office.

13. When can students have access to vending machines?

All vending machines shall have and use a timing device to automatically prohibit access to the vending machines from 12:01 am until the end of the instructional day. Vending machines that are not accessible to students are exempt from the above limitations.

14. Do the above regulations apply to vending machines or school stores located outside of the cafeteria area?

Yes. Only vending machines that are not accessible to students are exempt from the above limitations.

15. Can vending machines which contain only milk/ water be operative during the school day?

No food or beverage offered for sale on school premises shall compete with the National School Meals Program from 12:01 am until after the end of the instructional day.

16. Can food/ beverage items be sold at student stores?

No food or beverage offered for sale on school premises shall compete with the National School Meals Program from 12:01 am until after the end of the instructional day.

17. Do the regulations apply to food/ beverage items sold after the end of the instructional day?

No. However, school clubs/ parent groups shall meet COMAR guidelines regarding preparation, handling, storage, and serving of food and beverage. Contact the Anne Arundel County Department of Health to determine if a Temporary Food Service License is required.

SECTION D: REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

1. How do the regulations apply to teachers or other school staff?

Food/ beverage items available to school staff are not bound by the regulations in this policy, as long as they are located in an area that is not accessible to students. However, the policy recommends that school staff set the example for students to provide a consistent message of healthy eating habits.

2. Do regulations apply to student testing days and early arrival or dismissal days?

Yes. School breakfast and lunch service will be provided in all schools. No food or beverage offered for sale on school premises shall compete with the National School Meals Program, from 12:01 am until after the end of the instructional day.

3. How will schools be monitored for compliance with these regulations?

The school principal, or designee, shall ensure compliance.

For more information, contact the Office of Food and Nutrition Services at 410-222-5900.