

Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in B.C. Schools

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview	Page 1
The Goal.....	Page 3
Minimum Standards	Page 3
Implementation.....	Page 4
The Guidelines	Page 5
Appendix A	Page 17
1. Understanding Ingredient Labels	
2. Understanding Nutrition Facts Panels	
Appendix B	Page 19
Strategy For Change	
Step 1: Develop Partnerships	
Step 2: Develop Policy	
Step 3: Develop Transition Plans	
Step 4: Develop and Implement Marketing Mechanisms	

Overview

As part of its increasing commitment to health and education, the Province announced an action plan in November 2004 to help make BC students the healthiest and most physically active in Canada. The plan's varied components are primarily focused on schools, consistent with a global movement that recognizes two key facts:

- healthy children learn better, and
- schools can directly influence students' health.

Provincial nutritionist Lisa Forster-Coull and other B.C. nutritionists developed the food and beverage sales guidelines with input from parents, teachers, school trustees, administrators, doctors, dietitians, dental hygienists and school food and beverage suppliers.

The guidelines have also been informed by a province-wide study¹ of school food sales and policies which found that, although many BC schools offer healthy choices, overall the foods and drinks sold in schools tend to be high in calories and low in nutrients.

The study also found that things are improving. More than 50 percent of BC schools taking part in the study had already implemented one or more policies supporting good nutrition, and more than 80 percent of reporting districts had a district-wide nutrition policy in place, under development or planned.

These guidelines are intended to help maintain that positive momentum, given that:

- students, on an average school day, consume about one-third of their calories at school, and a significant amount of that is purchased on site; and
- good nutrition can promote brain development; increase immune function; raise self-esteem; reduce anxiety, depression and hyperactivity; increase attendance; increase cognitive development; and reduce the risk of health problems such as those associated with obesity.

¹ Findings from the study are presented in the *School Food Sales and Policies Provincial Report*. The report is available online at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health

The guidelines apply to foods and beverages sold to students in all school locations, including vending machines, school stores and cafeterias, and at fundraisers and other special events. They support broader policies around school nutrition by dividing foods and beverages typically sold in schools into four categories:

Not Recommended	Choose Least	Choose Sometimes ✓ ²	Choose Most ✓✓
<p>These items, including candies and drinks where sugar is the first ingredient, or the second ingredient after water, tend to be highly processed, or have very high amounts of sweeteners, salt, fat, trans fat or calories relative to their nutritional value. These foods must be eliminated in school food sales by 2009.</p>	<p>These items, including such things as fries, tend to be low in key nutrients such as iron and calcium and highly salted, sweetened or processed. These foods should make up 10% or less of food choices available for sale in B.C. schools.</p>	<p>These items, including such things as fruit canned in light syrup, represent choices that are moderately salted, sweetened or processed. They should account for 40 – 50% of foods and beverages sold in B.C. schools.</p>	<p>These items, including whole grain breads and fresh vegetables, tend to be the highest in nutrients, the lowest in unhealthy components, and the least processed. They should account for 50% or more of foods and beverages sold in B.C. schools.</p>

Along with general information and examples for each category, the guidelines offer detailed criteria to clarify which specific items fit where.

For example, potato chips could fit in any of the categories – depending on their nutritional value:

- those with 5 grams of fat or less, and less than 150 mg of sodium per serving would be in the *Choose Most* category; this is consistent with recommendations in Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating which emphasizes whole grains and lightly salted or sugared choices;
- those with 5 – 10 grams of fat, or between 150-300 mg of sodium, would be in the *Choose Sometimes* category because they are moderately salted and processed;
- those with 10 – 15 grams of fat, or between 300-600 mg of sodium, would be in the *Choose Least* category because they’re highly salted and/or high in fat; and
- those with more than 0.2 g of trans fats, or with more than 15 grams of fat or 600 mg of sodium would be in the *Not Recommended* category.

Appendix A provides further information and resources to help users understand ingredient and nutrition labels.

² For healthiest food options, choose foods that meet the criteria established in the Choose Sometimes and Choose Most categories.

Goal

The goal of the guidelines is to maximize students' access to Choose Most and Choose Sometimes options, minimize access to Choose Least options, and phase out Not Recommended items. This is consistent with the Province's goal to eliminate the sale of unhealthy foods and beverages in BC schools by 2009.

Minimum Standards

By 2009, schools and districts will be required to ensure that, of the foods and beverages sold in schools:

- at least 50 percent are in the Choose Most category;
- 40 to 50 percent are in the Choose Sometimes category; and
- no more than 10 percent are in the Choose Least category; this acknowledges that healthy, active children can usually enjoy small amounts of these choices without jeopardizing their health.

Foods in the Not Recommended category are to be eliminated from schools by 2009.

Under the guidelines, a school that has 10 slots in a vending machine could fill five slots with products from the Choose Most category, four with Choose Sometimes products and one with Choose Least foods and beverages. Products from the Not Recommended group would not be offered to students.

The Checkmark System ✓

In an effort to assist students in making informed choices about nutrition, the report recommends schools and school districts implement a checkmark system at the point of sale, such as on the front of a vending machine slots or on a menu board.

Checkmarks ✓ are universal symbols of excellence. In the school food context, checkmarks may be interpreted by students as identifying healthier choices for their learning and growth.

For example,

✓✓ **Choose Most** foods may be symbolized by two checkmarks.

✓ **Choose Sometimes** foods by one checkmark.

The checkmarks ✓ can be used to draw a student's attention towards healthier choices. The lack of symbolization for the 'Choose Least' and 'Not Recommended' categories does not mean "do not eat", it just means that schools are not promoting or marketing these choices to students.

Implementation

Schools and districts are encouraged to work with students, teachers, parents and others to develop strategies for implementing these guidelines and meeting the minimum standards above. Many schools have found the following four-step approach effective in promoting healthier learning environments for students:

1. Develop partnerships with key stakeholders, including students, teachers, parents, public health professionals, caterers and vendors to determine the best ways to promote healthier choices in the school environment.
2. Develop policies to influence such things as the types of food sold on site and the types of food sold at fundraising events. Involve students and parents in policy making and communicate the policies effectively.
3. Develop transition plans to guide the change process and give all affected parties time to adapt.
4. Develop and implement marketing mechanisms to further encourage healthy choices. Marketing mechanisms may include such things as making healthier choices more plentiful, more visible and less expensive, compared to their less healthy counterparts.

Appendix B provides a more detailed overview of this approach to implementation.

For additional resources, visit the Ministry of Education's Healthy Schools website: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/.

For additional support with nutrition information, contact your local community nutritionist or call Dial-a-Dietitian, toll free, at 1-800-667-3438. In Greater Vancouver, call 604-732-9191.

**Guidelines For Food and Beverage Sales In BC Schools
Nutrition Criteria for Each Food Grouping**

	Not Recommended	Choose Least	Choose Sometimes ✓	Choose Most ✓ ✓
<p>Food Grouping:</p> <p>Grains Grains must be the first or second ingredient (not counting water)</p> <p>Grain ingredients may include: - flours made from wheat, rye, rice, potato, soy, millet, etc. - rice, pasta, amaranth, corn, quinoa, etc.</p>	<p>Some seasoned breads, commercial pancakes, biscuits, etc.</p> <p>Very high fat/sugary/salty baked goods like some crackers, muffins, cakes, cookies, squares, pastries, danishes, croissants – especially if big</p> <p>Most seasoned noodle mixes</p> <p>Most seasoned rice mixes</p> <p>Some sugary cereals</p> <p>Most saltier grain and corn snacks, baked or fried (cereal mix, wheat chips, tortilla chips, popcorn, cheesies, etc.)</p>	<p>Medium sized baked items like some crackers, muffins, cakes, cookies, squares, doughnuts, pastries, danishes, croissants</p> <p>Some instant noodles (not enriched or containing fats)</p> <p>Some seasoned rice mixes</p> <p>Some sugary cereals</p> <p>Some fried grain and corn snacks (cereal mix, wheat chips, tortilla chips, popcorn, cheesies, etc)</p>	<p>Many enriched breads, buns, bagels, tortillas, English muffins, pancakes, etc</p> <p>Some small baked items such as sliced loaves or muffins, cookies, crackers</p> <p>Most pastas (including those with added egg, spinach or tomato)</p> <p>Most pasta salads</p> <p>Other rice, rice noodles and wraps</p> <p>Most cereals</p> <p>Some small bags of fried grain and corn snacks (cereal mix, wheat chips, tortilla chips, popcorn, cheesies, etc)</p>	<p>Many whole grain breads, buns, bagels, tortillas, English muffins, pancakes, etc</p> <p>Some small baked items with whole grains, fibre, fruit or nuts, such as sliced loaves or muffins, cookies, crackers</p> <p>Most whole grain pastas</p> <p>Brown/wild rice</p> <p>Some whole grain cereals, cereals with fibre, fruit or nuts</p> <p>Some small bags of baked whole grain and corn snacks (cereal mix, wheat chips, tortilla chips, popcorn, etc)</p>
<p>Nutrition Criteria</p>	<p>ANY of the following: Calories: more than 400 Fat: 15 g or more Saturated fat: more than 5 g Trans fat: 0.2 g or more Sodium: more than 450 mg Sugars: more than 28 g Sugars: are 1st ingredient AND there is less than 2% iron (0.28 mg)</p>	<p>ANY of the following: Calories: 300-400 Fat: 10-15g Sugars: 16-28 g Iron: less than 4 % (0.56 mg) Sugars: are 1st ingredient AND there is 2-20% iron (0.28-2.6 mg)</p>	<p>ANY item with: Fat: less than 10 g Sugars: may be 1st ingredient IF there is more than 20% iron (2.6 mg) AND any item that passes the Least and Not Recommended, but does not pass the Most criteria May be artificially sweetened</p>	<p>ANY item that: passes the Not Recommended, Least, and Sometimes criteria AND has Fibre: 2 g or more</p>
<p>Foods high in starches and sugars (natural or added) can leave particles clinging to teeth and put dental health at risk. Grain choices of particular concern include some cereals, granola bars, crackers, cookies and chips (corn, wheat, rice, etc). The BC Dental Public Health Committee suggests eating these clingy foods only at mealtimes, and choosing at snack time grain choices that clear quickly from the mouth. For more information on how food and beverage choices can affect dental health, see www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health</p>				

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**Guidelines For Food and Beverage Sales In BC Schools
Nutrition Criteria for Each Food Grouping**

	Not Recommended	Choose Least	Choose Sometimes ✓	Choose Most ✓✓
<p>Food Grouping:</p> <p>Vegetables & Fruit</p> <p>A vegetable or fruit must be the first or second ingredient, not counting water</p>	<p>Pickles (see Condiments & Add-ins Food Grouping)</p> <p>Fries: if moderately salted, or medium/large size, or if fried in fat containing trans fat</p> <p>Most candy and chocolate coated fruit</p> <p>Most potato/vegetable chips, some fruit chips (baked or fried), especially saltier flavours</p>	<p>Some canned vegetables, including regular sauerkraut</p> <p>Fries: small portions of deep fried potatoes, may be lightly salted</p> <p>Coated/breaded & deep fried vegetables</p> <p>Some jarred salsa (sodium)</p> <p>Some fruit gummies with pureed fruit as 1st ingredient</p> <p>Some bags of fruit chips</p> <p>Many small bags of potato/vegetable chips, salted (baked or fried)</p>	<p>Most fresh/frozen/dried vegetables & fruit, raw, cooked, moderately seasoned/dressed</p> <p>Most canned vegetables in broth, including low sodium sauerkraut</p> <p>Fruit canned in light syrup</p> <p>Fries: baked frozen fries (without trans fats), may be lightly salted</p> <p>Vegetables, breaded and baked</p> <p>Avocado – ¼ to 1/3</p> <p>Some jarred salsa</p> <p>Some small bags of fruit chips</p> <p>Some very small bags of potato/vegetable chips, very lightly salted (baked or fried)</p>	<p>Most fresh/frozen/dried vegetables & fruit, raw, cooked, lightly seasoned/dressed</p> <p>Canned vegetables or fruits (in water, juice)</p> <p>Fries: baked fresh potato wedges or slices, may be tossed in oil</p> <p>Fresh salsa, some jarred salsas</p> <p>Some frozen fruit bars made with pureed fruit</p> <p>Some small bags of fruit chips or unsalted potato/vegetable chips (usually baked)</p>
<p>Nutrition Criteria</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>Fat: 15 g or more</p> <p>Trans fat: 0.2 g or more</p> <p>Sodium: more than 600 mg</p> <p>Sugars: are 1st ingredient</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>Fat: between 10-15 g</p> <p>Sodium: between 300-600 mg</p> <p>Sugars: both the 2nd & 3rd ingredients are sugars</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>Fat: 5 - 10 g</p> <p>Sodium: less than 300 mg</p> <p>Sugars: are 2nd ingredient</p> <p>AND any item that passes the Least and Not Recommended, but does not pass the Most criteria</p> <p>May be artificially sweetened</p>	<p>ANY item that:</p> <p>passes the Not Recommended, Least, and Sometimes criteria</p> <p>AND has ALL of the following:</p> <p>Fat: 5g fat or less, and</p> <p>Sodium: less than 150 mg</p>
<p>Foods high in sugars and starches can leave particles clinging to teeth and put dental health at risk. Vegetable/fruit choices of particular concern include fruit leathers, dried fruit, and chips (potato or other). The BC Dental Public Health Committee suggests eating these clingy foods only at mealtimes, and choosing at snack time foods that clear quickly from the mouth, such as fresh/canned/frozen vegetables or fruit (raw or cooked). For more on how food and beverage choices can affect dental health, see www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health</p>				

Allergy awareness: these guidelines are not intended to address food allergy concerns in schools.

**Guidelines For Food and Beverage Sales In BC Schools
Nutrition Criteria for Each Food Grouping**

	Not Recommended	Choose Least	Choose Sometimes ✓	Choose Most ✓✓
<p>Food Grouping:</p> <p>Vegetable & Fruit Juices</p> <p>A vegetable or fruit juice or puree must be the 1st ingredient, not counting water, and make up more than 50% of the volume</p>	<p>Most “drinks”, “blends” “cocktails”, and “beverages”</p> <p>Most fruit smoothies made with any Not Recommended ingredients</p> <p>Slush drinks and frozen treats with added sugars (see “Candies, Chocolates, etc” food grouping)</p>	<p>Some nectars or juice blends</p> <p>Seasoned vegetable juice</p> <p>100% juice fortified with multivitamin/minerals</p> <p>Most fruit smoothies made with any Choose Least ingredients</p> <p>Slush drinks and frozen treats with concentrated juice</p>	<p>100% juice (fruit, low sodium vegetable, or combination)</p> <p>100% juice fortified with only calcium AND/OR vitamin C</p> <p>Most fruit smoothies made with any Choose Sometimes ingredients</p> <p>Slush drinks and frozen treats made with Choose Sometimes items</p>	
<p>Nutrition Criteria</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>Juice content: less than 50%</p> <p>Size: more than 600 mL</p> <p>Trans fat: 0.2 g or more</p> <p>Sodium: more than 600 mg</p> <p>Caffeine: 25 mg or more</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>Juice content: between 51-99% OR juice is concentrated for slushies</p> <p>100% juices fortified with more than vitamin C and/or calcium</p> <p>Fat: more than 5 g</p> <p>Sodium: 400-600 mg</p> <p>May be artificially sweetened</p> <p>Caffeine: more than 15 mg and less than 25 mg</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>100% juice, no added sugars or sweeteners (may be diluted with water), may be fortified with Vitamin C AND/OR calcium</p>	<p>NO criteria.</p>

Many health professionals are concerned about excess consumption of sugars (natural and/or added) in juice, drinks and frozen treats.

The BC Community Nutritionists Council School Food Advisory Committee suggests that portion sizes of these be limited to:

- 250 mL or less for elementary schools
- 360 mL or less for middle/secondary schools

The BC Dental Public Health Committee recommends choosing plain water more often than juice. 100% juice and other fruit drinks contain sugars and acids (natural or added) that dissolve tooth enamel when sipped frequently. To avoid prolonged exposure to these sugars and acids, they suggest that only plain water be allowed in classrooms except at designated eating times. For more information on how food and beverage choices can affect dental health, see www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health

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**Guidelines For Food and Beverage Sales In BC Schools
Nutrition Criteria for Each Food Grouping**

	Not Recommended	Choose Least	Choose Sometimes ✓	Choose Most ✓✓
<p>Food Grouping:</p> <p>Milk-based Foods Milk must be the first or second ingredient; cream is NOT considered a milk ingredient</p>	<p>Most cream cheese & light cream cheeses & spreads (see “Condiments & Add-ins” food grouping for more information)</p> <p>Some candy flavoured ice creams & frozen yogurt</p> <p>Frozen ‘yogurt’ not based on milk ingredients (see “Candies, Chocolates, etc” food grouping)</p> <p>Most regular sized sundaes</p>	<p>Some higher fat cheeses</p> <p>Some processed cheese slices & spreads</p> <p>Some puddings/custards, etc.</p> <p>Most candy flavoured or rich ice creams & frozen yogurts</p>	<p>Some sweet yogurts</p> <p>Yogurt with artificial sweeteners</p> <p>Many puddings/custards, etc, including those with artificial sweeteners.</p> <p>Small portions of some ice creams & frozen yogurts – simply-flavoured (vanilla, chocolate and strawberry)</p>	<p>Most regular and light cheeses, cheese strings</p> <p>Some processed cheese slices</p> <p>Most yogurt, plain or simply-flavoured</p> <p>Some puddings/custards, etc</p> <p>Small portions of some ice cream & frozen yogurts – simply-flavoured (vanilla, chocolate and strawberry)</p>
<p>Nutrition Criteria</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>Calories: more than 400</p> <p>Fat: 20g or more</p> <p>Trans fat: 0.4 g or more, per 8 g of protein</p> <p>Sodium: more than 600 mg</p> <p>Sugars: are the 1st ingredient</p> <p>Calcium: less than 4 % (44 mg)</p> <p>Caffeine: 25 mg or more</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>Calories: 250 - 400</p> <p>Fat: 15 - 20 g</p> <p>Sodium: 400 - 600 mg</p> <p>Sugars: 36 g or more per 175 mL</p> <p>Calcium: 5% or less for every 100 mg sodium</p> <p>Caffeine: more than 15 mg and less than 25 mg</p>	<p>ALL of the following:</p> <p>1st ingredient must be a milk ingredient (excluding cream)</p> <p>Sugars: Between 20-36 g per 175 mL</p> <p>AND any item that passes the Least and Not Recommended, but does not pass the Most criteria</p> <p>May be artificially sweetened</p>	<p>ANY item that passes the Not Recommended, Least, and Sometimes criteria,</p> <p>AND</p> <p>1st ingredient must be a milk ingredient (excluding cream)</p> <p>Sugars: 20g or less per 175 mL</p>

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**Guidelines For Food and Beverage Sales In BC Schools
Nutrition Criteria for Each Food Grouping**

	Not Recommended	Choose Least	Choose Sometimes ✓	Choose Most ✓ ✓
<p>Food Grouping:</p> <p>Milk-based Beverages Milk must be the first or second ingredient <i>Fortified soy drinks contain protein and calcium and may be assessed in this food grouping.</i> See “Other Beverages” for other fortified drinks (e.g. rice, potato based] and <i>non-fortified</i> soy drinks)</p>	<p>Many milks containing coffee products or other caffeine ingredients, especially larger portions</p> <p>Some regular eggnogs</p> <p>Some hot chocolate mixes made with water (See “Other Beverages”)</p>	<p>Most candy flavoured milks</p> <p>Some milks containing tea products (eg. Chai)</p> <p>Smoothies made with Choose Least ingredients</p>	<p>Some flavoured fortified soy drinks</p> <p>Most basic flavoured milks</p> <p>Yogurt drinks</p> <p>Many small milkshakes made with milk and ice-cream</p> <p>Smoothies made with Choose Sometimes ingredients</p> <p>Many regular egg nogs</p> <p>Most hot chocolates made with milk</p>	<p>Plain, unflavoured milk (skim, 1%, 2%, whole) and fortified soy drinks</p> <p>Many milks modified with fatty acids</p> <p>Decaffeinated tea/coffee/lattés</p> <p>Smoothies made with Choose Most Ingredients</p> <p>Some ‘lite’ eggnogs</p> <p>Some hot chocolates made with milk</p>
<p>Nutrition Criteria</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>Size: more than 600 mL</p> <p>Calories: more than 600</p> <p>Fat: more than 15 g per 250 mL</p> <p>Trans Fat: more than 0.4 g per 250 mL</p> <p>Sodium: more than 600 mg</p> <p>Sugars: are the 1st ingredient</p> <p>Caffeine: 25 mg or more</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>Calories: 400 - 600</p> <p>Fat: 10 - 15 g per 250 mL</p> <p>Sugars: more than 36 g per 250 mL</p> <p>Caffeine: more than 15 mg and less than 25 mg</p>	<p>ALL of the following:</p> <p>1st ingredient must be a milk ingredient (excluding cream) (Fortified soy drinks are exempt from this requirement)</p> <p>Sugars: Between 20-36 g per 250 mL</p> <p>AND any item that passes the Least and Not Recommended, but does not pass the Most criteria</p> <p>May be artificially sweetened</p>	<p>ANY item that passes the Not Recommended, Least, and Sometimes criteria,</p> <p>AND</p> <p>ALL of the following:</p> <p>1st ingredient must be a milk ingredient (excluding cream) (Fortified soy drinks are exempt from this requirement)</p> <p>Sugars: 20 g or less per 250 mL</p>

Large portions of milk beverages can affect a student’s appetite for other healthy foods.
The BC Community Nutritionists Council School Food Advisory Committee suggests that portion sizes of milk and milk beverages be limited to:

- 250 mL or less for elementary schools
- 360 mL or less for middle/secondary schools

To avoid prolonged exposure to the added sugars found in sweetened milk beverages, the BC Dental Public Health Committee suggests that only plain water be allowed in classrooms except at designated eating times. For more information on how food and beverage choices can affect dental health, see www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health

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**Guidelines For Food and Beverage Sales In BC Schools
Nutrition Criteria for Each Food Grouping**

	Not Recommended	Choose Least	Choose Sometimes ✓	Choose Most ✓✓
<p>Food Grouping:</p> <p>Meat & Alternatives</p> <p>A meat or meat alternative must be the first or second ingredient (excluding nuts and seeds)</p> <p>Meat and meat alternatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - beef, pork, poultry, fish - game meats - eggs - soybeans, legumes, tofu <p>See the “Nuts & Seed Mixes or Bars” category for guidelines on these items</p>	<p>Many products deep fried in hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils or in shortening</p> <p>Some wieners with more filler than meat</p>	<p>Most cold cuts & deli meats – turkey ‘loaf’, pepperoni, bologna, salami</p> <p>Some seasoned chicken or tuna salads</p> <p>Some breaded and fried chicken/fish/meat</p> <p>Most regular wieners/sausages</p> <p>Fattier pepperoni/chicken sticks</p> <p>Most smokies/bratwurst</p>	<p>Some marinated poultry</p> <p>Some fish canned in oil</p> <p>Marbled or fatty meats</p> <p>Cold cuts (lean), ham</p> <p>Marbled or fatty game meats</p> <p>Some chicken or tuna salads</p> <p>Some breaded and baked chicken/fish/meat</p> <p>Some lean wieners, sausages</p> <p>Lean pepperoni/chicken sticks</p> <p>Jerky (lean, seasoned)</p> <p>Some egg salads</p> <p>Some refried beans</p>	<p>Chicken, turkey</p> <p>Fish, seafood, fresh or canned in water/broth</p> <p>Lean meat (beef, bison, pork, lamb)</p> <p>Lean game meats and birds (venison, moose, etc)</p> <p>Some chicken or tuna salads</p> <p>Some lean wieners</p> <p>Jerky (plain)</p> <p>Eggs and some egg salads</p> <p>Tofu</p> <p>Legumes (beans, lentils, peas) and most legume salads</p> <p>Dal</p> <p>Falafel</p> <p>Some refried beans</p>
<p>Nutrition Criteria</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>Calories: more than 400</p> <p>Fat: more than 20 g</p> <p>Saturated Fat: more than 10 g</p> <p>Trans Fat: 1 g or more</p> <p>Sodium: more than 800 mg</p> <p>Iron: less than 1%</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>Fat: more than 16 g per 60 g portion</p> <p>Saturated Fat: 8 - 10 g</p> <p>Sodium: 600 - 800 mg</p> <p>Protein: 5 g or less</p>	<p>ANY item with:</p> <p>Fat: 12 - 16 g per 60 g portion</p> <p>Sodium: 400 - 600 mg</p> <p>AND any item that passes the Least and Not Recommended, but does not pass the Most criteria</p>	<p>ANY item that passes the Not Recommended, Least, and Sometimes criteria,</p> <p>AND</p> <p>ALL of the following:</p> <p>Fat: less than 12 g per 60 g portion</p> <p>Sodium: less than 400 mg</p>

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**Guidelines For Food and Beverage Sales In BC Schools
Nutrition Criteria for Each Food Grouping**

	Not Recommended	Choose Least	Choose Sometimes ✓	Choose Most ✓✓
<p>Food Grouping:</p> <p>Nuts & Seed Mixes or Bars</p> <p>Peanuts, nuts or seeds must be the first or second ingredient</p>	<p>Most chocolate or 'yogurt' covered nuts</p>	<p>Other nut/seed bars and mixes (e.g. sesame snap bars)</p>	<p>Nuts/seed bars and mixes with nuts/seeds as the first ingredient, may contain candy, 'yogurt', or chocolate if sugars are not the second and third ingredients</p> <p>Some dessert tofus</p>	<p>Nut/Seed bars and mixes with nuts/seeds as first ingredient, and no candies or chocolate</p> <p>Peanut butter</p> <p>Other nut/seed butters, e.g. tahini</p>
<p>Nutrition Criteria</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>Calories: more than 400</p> <p>Trans fat: 0.2 g or more</p> <p>Sodium: more than 400 mg</p> <p>Sugars: are the 1st ingredient AND item has more than 250 calories</p>	<p>ANY of the following:</p> <p>Calories: 300 - 400</p> <p>Sodium: 300 – 400 mg</p> <p>Sugars: are the 1st ingredient AND item has 250 or fewer calories</p>	<p>ANY item that passes the Least and Not Recommended, but does not pass the Most criteria</p> <p>Sugars: are the 2nd + 3rd ingredients</p> <p>May be artificially sweetened</p>	<p>ANY item that passes the Not Recommended, Least, and Sometimes criteria</p> <p>AND</p> <p>ALL of the following:</p> <p>Sodium: less than 200 mg</p> <p>Sugars: are neither the 1st nor 2nd ingredient</p>
<p>Nut and seed mixes or bars containing dried fruit, sugars, crackers or other sugars/starches (natural or added) can leave particles clinging to teeth and put dental health at risk. The BC Dental Public Health Committee suggests eating these clingy foods only at mealtimes, and choosing at snack time foods that clear quickly from the mouth, such as plain nut/seed choices (may be savoury seasoned).</p> <p>For more information on how food and beverage choices can affect dental health, see www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health</p>				

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Nutrition Criteria for Each Food Grouping**

	Not Recommended	Choose Least	Choose Sometimes ✓	Choose Most ✓✓
Food Grouping: Mixed Entrée Foods	Some pizzas, e.g. with double cheese Some pastry based pizza pockets Some meat pot pies <i>Note: Some trans fats occur naturally in meats like beef, lamb, goat, deer, moose, elk, buffalo</i>	Most sandwiches or short submarine sandwiches made with deli or processed meats Some pizzas, e.g. meat lovers Some personal size pan pizzas Some pastry based pizza pockets Some meat pot pies Some sausage/Vegetable Rolls Some pasta with a cream based sauce Many frozen entrees	Most sandwiches, short submarine sandwiches, and burgers made with lean roasted meats (turkey, chicken, beef), but few vegetables Some cheese or meat pizzas Some pizzas with ½ the amount of cheese Pizza bagels Baked pizza pockets, pizza pretzels Some meat pot pies Some sushi Pilaf (rice and meat) Some pasta with a milk based sauce Some curries with few vegetables Hard tacos with meat or bean filling Some frozen entrees	Most sandwiches, short submarine sandwiches, and burgers made with lean meats (turkey, chicken, beef) and plenty of vegetables – whole grain breads/buns are preferred Some pizzas with vegetables Most stir fries, stews Most sushi Pilaf (with vegetables) Most pasta with vegetable based sauce (may have meat) Chili, some curries Burritos (bean or meat) Soft tacos filled with Choose Most ingredients Falafel in pita with tomatoes & tzatziki Some frozen entrees
Nutrition Criteria	ANY of the following: Calories: more than 1,000 Fat: more than 30 g Saturated Fat: 12 g or more Trans Fat: more than 1 g Sodium: more than 1,400 mg Iron: less than 3%	ANY of the following: Calories: 700 - 1,000 Fat: 20 - 30 g Saturated Fat: 10 - 12 g Sodium: 1,000 - 1,400 mg Sugars: more than 24 g	ANY item that passes the Least and Not Recommended, but does not pass the Most criteria	ANY item that passes the Not Recommended, Least, and Sometimes criteria AND Ingredients: contains vegetables or fruits within the first 3 ingredients (not counting water)

Allergy awareness: these guidelines are not intended to address food allergy concerns in schools.

**Guidelines For Food and Beverage Sales In BC Schools
Nutrition Criteria for Each Food Grouping**

	Not Recommended	Choose Least	Choose Sometimes ✓	Choose Most ✓✓
Food Grouping: Soups Includes dry, canned and fresh	Many canned soups, broth or milk based	Most instant soups, plain or seasoned Some borscht if saltier Many canned soups, broth or milk based	Some soups without meat, or beans/lentils Some borscht if low in salt Most milk-based soups Some low-sodium canned soups	Some soups made with meat or beans/lentils Some borscht if it includes meat or beans/lentils Some milk-based soups Some low-sodium canned soups made with meat or beans/lentils
Nutrition Criteria	ANY of the following: Fat: 15 g or more Trans Fat: 0.2 g or more Sodium: more than 900 mg Iron: less than 5%	ANY of the following: Fat: 10 - 15 g Sodium: 600 - 800 mg	Iron: 5 - 10% ANY item that passes the Least and Not Recommended, but does not pass the Most criteria	ANY item that passes the Not Recommended, Least, and Sometimes criteria, AND 1st ingredient must be a food group food (not counting water)
Food Grouping: Candies, Chocolates, etc.	Most regular packages	Most very small packages of candies/chocolates Very small portions of frozen novelties not based on milk or fruit ingredients Very small portions of dessert gelatins	None	None
Nutrition Criteria	Calories: 100 or more Sugar: 16 g or more Caffeine: 25 mg or more	Calories: fewer than 100 Sugar: less than 16 g May be artificially sweetened Caffeine: less than 25 mg	No qualifying criteria	No qualifying criteria

Candies, chocolates, etc. that are high in sugars and starches (natural or added) can leave food particles clinging to teeth that can put dental health at risk. The BC Dental Public Health Committee suggests eating these clingy foods only at mealtimes, and choosing at snack time foods that clear quickly from the mouth.
For more information on how food and beverage choices can affect dental health, see www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health

Allergy awareness: these guidelines are not intended to address food allergy concerns in schools.

**Guidelines For Food and Beverage Sales In BC Schools
Nutrition Criteria for Each Food Grouping**

	Not Recommended	Choose Least	Choose Sometimes ✓	Choose Most ✓✓
<p>Food Grouping:</p> <p>Energy Bars</p> <p>Includes meal replacement bars, sports bars and snack bars</p>	<p>Super-sized bars Low protein bars</p>	<p>Bars with sugars as 1st ingredient Artificially sweetened bars Many “low-carb” bars</p>	<p>Most bars made with little whole grain, nuts, seeds, fruit</p>	<p>Some bars made with whole grains, nuts, seeds, fruit</p>
<p>Nutrition Criteria</p>	<p>ANY of the following: Calories: more than 300 Trans Fat: 0.2 g or more Protein: less than 4 g Caffeine: 25 mg or more</p>	<p>ANY of the following: Calories: 250 - 300 Fat: 10 g or more Protein: 4 - 6 g Sugars: are 1st ingredient Sugars: are 2nd + 3rd ingredient Caffeine: more than 15 mg and less than 25 mg</p>	<p>ANY item that passes the Least and Not Recommended, but does not pass the Most criteria May be artificially sweetened</p>	<p>ANY item that passes the Not Recommended, Least, and Sometimes criteria AND Fibre: 2 g or more</p>

Energy bars high in sugars and starches (natural or added) can leave food particles clinging to teeth that can put dental health at risk. The BC Dental Public Health Committee suggests eating these clingy foods only at mealtimes, and choosing at snack time foods that clear quickly from the mouth.

For more information on how food and beverage choices can affect dental health, see www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health

Allergy awareness: these guidelines are not intended to address food allergy concerns in schools.

**Guidelines For Food and Beverage Sales In BC Schools
Nutrition Criteria for Each Food Grouping**

	Not Recommended	Choose Least	Choose Sometimes ✓	Choose Most ✓ ✓
Food Grouping: Other Beverages (Non-Juice/ Non-Milk based)	Most drinks with sugars as the 1 st ingredient (not counting water) – e.g. iced teas, fruit ‘ades’, pops Most caffeinated drinks (e.g. regular tea, coffee, colas, and drinks with guarana, yerba, yerba maté) Most sport drinks* Most unfortified flavoured rice, soy or potato drinks Most hot chocolate mixes made with water	Water (flavoured or not) with artificial sweeteners or minimally sweetened Diet soft drinks and non-carbonated drinks (decaf) Most unfortified plain soy or potato drinks Some fortified flavoured (and most unfortified plain) rice drinks	Most fortified flavoured potato drinks and some fortified rice drinks Some unfortified soy drinks	Water, plain Sparkling/carbonated water or water with added flavours (no sugar or artificial sweeteners) Soda water Fruit/mint flavoured decaf, unsweetened teas Decaffeinated tea or coffee Most fortified plain potato drinks (see “Milk Beverages” for <i>fortified</i> soy drinks)
Nutrition Criteria	ANY of the following: Size: more than 600 mL Calories: more than 300 Trans Fat: 0.2 g or more Sodium: more than 300 mg Sugars: more than 16 g per 250 mL Sugars: more than 8 g per 250 mL portion IF there is less than 5% calcium (55 mg) per 250 mL portion Caffeine: 25 mg or more	ANY of the following: Sugars: 8 - 16 g per 250 mL portion IF there is 5 - 20% calcium (55-220 mg) per 250 mL <u>OR</u> Sugars: up to 8 g per 250 mL portion IF there is less than 5% calcium Caffeine: more than 15 mg and less than 25 mg Artificially sweetened AND there is less than 20% calcium (220 mg) per 250 mL portion	ANY item that passes the Least and Not Recommended, but does not pass the Most criteria Sugars: 8 - 16 g per 250 mL portion IF there is at least 20% calcium (220 mg) per 250 mL portion <u>OR</u> Sugars: up to 8 g per 250 mL portion IF there is 5 - 20% calcium (55-220 mg) per 250 mL portion Artificially sweetened IF there is at least 20% calcium (220 mg) per 250 mL	ANY of the following: Water, plain Sparkling/carbonated/flavoured waters (no sugars or artificial sweeteners) OR Sugars: up to 8 g per 250 mL portion IF there is at least 20% calcium (220 mg) per 250 mL portion

* Sport/electrolyte drinks are not recommended for routine sale in schools. However, the BC Community Nutritionists Council School Food Advisory Committee suggests that middle/secondary schools can make these drinks available for students participating in endurance or performance sports.

“Other beverages” may provide excess liquid calories, caffeine, artificial sweeteners, or acids and often displace healthier food/beverage choices in students’ diets. The BC Community Nutritionists Council School Food Advisory Committee suggests that portion sizes of “other beverages” (except plain and sparkling water) be limited to: 250 mL or less for elementary schools and 360 mL or less for middle/secondary schools.

The BC Dental Public Health Committee suggests choosing plain water more often than “other beverages”. Whether they contain sugars or not, almost all “other beverages” contain acids (natural or added) that may dissolve tooth enamel when sipped frequently. To avoid prolonged exposure, the committee recommends that only plain water be allowed in classrooms except at designated eating times. For more information on how food and beverage choices can affect dental health, see www.bced.gov.bc.ca

Allergy awareness: these guidelines are not intended to address food allergy concerns in schools.

**Guidelines For Food and Beverage Sales In BC Schools
Nutrition Criteria for Each Food Grouping**

	Not Recommended	Choose Least	Choose Sometimes ✓	Choose Most ✓ ✓
Food Grouping: Condiments & Add Ins	Condiments or add-ins containing trans fat (from hydrogenated & partially hydrogenated oils, or from vegetable shortening) AND more than 0.2 g trans fat per serving		One or two condiments can be used to enhance the flavour of Choose Most and Choose Sometimes items: Herbs & Seasonings, garlic, pepper (no added salt): no limit Soy sauce: 2 - 3 mL Hot sauce: 5-10 mL Table salt: ¼ - ½ mL Soft margarine, butter: 5 – 10 mL Cream cheese or processed cheese spread (regular/lite): 5 - 15 mL Sour cream: 15 - 30 mL Cream: 5 - 15 mL Whipped cream (from cream): 15 - 30 mL Low fat spreads, dips, dressings: 5 - 15 mL Regular spreads, dips, dressings: 5 - 10 mL Oil for sautéing or dressing: 5 - 10 mL Ketchup, mustard, pickles, relishes, olives: 10 - 15 mL Horseradish: 10 - 45 mL Jarred salsa, sauerkraut: 10 - 30 mL Salad toppers (eg. bacon bits): 5 - 10 mL Sugars/honey: 5 - 10 mL Artificial sweeteners: 1 packet	

Allergy awareness: these guidelines are not intended to address food allergy concerns in schools.

Appendix A

1. Understanding Ingredient Labels

Every product has an ingredient list. For small bulk items, it might be on the carton rather than the individual package. Ingredients are listed in descending order -- as you read through the list, the amounts by weight get smaller and smaller. Usually the first 3 - 5 ingredients (not including water) tell you the most. Artificial sweeteners and caffeine don't weigh very much so they are usually near the end of the ingredient list.

Milk Ingredients: Milk needs to be the first ingredient for the Milk-based Foods and Milk-based Beverages categories.

Look for these words:

- Milk (whole/2%/1%/skim, non fat)
- Evaporated Milk
- Skim Milk Powder
- 'Milk Ingredients', Milk Solids (may be modified)

Trans fats are strictly limited in the Guidelines. If there is no Nutrition Facts label, these words in the ingredient list give you an idea of how much trans fat might be in the product:

- Shortening
- Margarine (not all have trans fat)
- Partially hydrogenated oil

Artificial sweeteners: Artificial sweeteners are safe for children and adolescents to consume in the amounts provided in foods and beverages. The Guidelines allow artificial sweeteners when they are used to sweeten a nutritious food. Look for these names in the ingredient list:

- Splenda (Sucralose)
- Nutrasweet (Aspartame, Sweet'n Low, Sugar Twin)
- Acesulfame Potassium (Ace-K)
- Cyclamate (Sugar Twin, Sucaryl)
- Sugar alcohols (maltitol, sorbitol, xylitol, etc, also polydextrose, hydrogenated starch hydrolysates, isomalt)

(Note: Some foods are sweetened with stevia. Stevia is an herb that is not approved by Health Canada.)

Sugars can be from many sources and in many forms. Look for these words on the ingredient list for added sugars:

- “ose” words: sucrose, fructose, dextrose, maltose, etc
- syrups: cane syrup, rice syrup, corn syrup, maple syrup, etc
- concentrated fruit juice (used to sweeten many products other than 100% fruit juice, but adds very few nutrients to the products)
- Honey, Molasses

Salt can be from these sources, but check the Nutrition Facts Label for total sodium:

- Salt, Sea Salt
- Sodium
- Sodium chloride
- Soy sauce
- MSG (monosodium glutamate)
- Baking soda, baking powder

Caffeine is listed as an ingredient only if it is *added* to something. Coffee drinks would not list caffeine as an ingredient, but cola drinks would. If the following ingredients are present, caffeine levels may exceed the Guidelines:

- Caffeine
- Coffee (*not* coffee flavouring)
- Tea (black or green)
- Maté, Yerba Maté
- Guarana

For more help in reading ingredient lists and determining caffeine content, contact your local Community Nutritionist or call Dial-A-Dietitian at 604-732-9191 (toll free in BC at 1-800-667-3438).

2. Understanding Nutrition Facts Panels

The Nutrition Facts panel is used to classify a food or beverage as 'Choose Most', 'Choose Least', 'Choose Sometimes', or 'Not Recommended'. Most foods and beverages are required to have a Nutrition Facts panel by December 12, 2005. Small manufacturers have until December 12, 2007. For small bulk items the panel might be on the carton rather than the individual package.

Compare this amount to the size of the package being sold. Is it the same or is it smaller, bigger?

In the Guidelines, the amount of a nutrient allowed is always based on the total package size you are selling (unless otherwise specified). In this example, if the package was 250 mL, it would contain twice what the Nutrition Facts Label shows, e.g. 36 g of carbohydrate.

Sodium mg/portion sold is restricted for many of the food groupings.

The % refers to the proportion of the total recommended daily amount for someone with the highest needs.

Nutrition Facts			
Per 125 mL (87 g)*			
Amount	% Daily Value **		
Calories 80			
Fat 0.5 g	1 %		
Saturated 0 g + Trans 0 g	0 %		
Cholesterol 0 mg			
Sodium 0 mg	0 %		
Carbohydrate 18 g	6 %		
Fibre 2 g	8 %		
Sugars 2 g			
Protein 3 g			
Vitamin A	2 %	Vitamin C	10 %
Calcium	0 %	Iron	2 %

This is the TOTAL amount of fat.

This is where you can find the amount of trans fat in a product. Some meats and milk products have low amounts of naturally occurring trans fats.

Naturally occurring sugars (like those from fruit or milk) are shown *together* with added sugars.

For more help in interpreting Nutrition Facts panels or items without a Nutrition Facts panel, contact your local community nutritionist or call Dial-A-Dietitian toll free at 1-800-667-3438. In Greater Vancouver call 604-732-9191.

For more information on reading nutrition fact labels and ingredient lists:
http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/label-etiquet/index_e.html

Strategy for Change

The Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools are one tool for promoting healthier learning environments. To maximize their impact, you may want to use them as part of a broader strategy for change. Many schools have had good results from following the four steps outlined below.

Step 1: Develop Partnerships

Key stakeholder groups, including students, teachers, parents, public health professionals, caterers and vendors, meet to determine the approaches best suited to the needs of the school and its students. The *School Food Sales and Policies Provincial Report* found that BC schools that have formal groups focused on nutrition offer more healthy choices and are more likely to implement policies encouraging healthy eating at school.

Partners share information on:

- the impact of nutrition on student health and learning;
- the influence of the school environment on food selection;
- what makes an item a healthy choice; and
- marketing strategies to affect healthy choices.

School food and nutrition resources can be found on these websites:

- About School Health and Nutrition Programs in BC www.dashbc.org
- Eat Well, Play Well www.dietitians.ca/child
- Making It Happen: Healthy Eating At School www.knowledgenetwork.ca/makingithappen

"Schools should be offering the best of everything, not the worst." Margo G. Wootan, Nutrition Policy Director, Centre for Science in the Public Interest

Step 2: Develop Policy

BC schools are in various stages of developing and implementing policies that influence such things as the types of foods sold on site, the types of foods sold at fundraising events, and students' access to foods and beverages during the course of the school day.

Student and parent involvement is critical in developing such policies, if they are to be effective. Policies are also more effective when communicated clearly to staff, students and parents. Communication can take place through:

- student, staff and family handbooks and/or newsletters;
- staff orientation and meetings;
- student orientation;
- announcements at school events; and
- community meetings.

Examples of existing school food policies can be found on the BC School Trustees' Association website at: <http://www.bcsta.org/policy/polindex.htm>

Step 3: Develop Transition Plans

Healthy food policies provide direction that can translate into practice over time. Transition plans give schools appropriate time to allow students, parents and other key stakeholders to learn about and adapt to changes. They also provide time to work with vendors on product changes and give manufacturers time to reformulate and repackage products. Some schools may also need a transition phase to honour existing contracts.

Healthy beverage choices can be offered without delay, as there is a wide variety already available. Healthy snacks for vending machines are available but not as plentiful, so more time may be needed for manufacturers to provide different options.

As in policy development, student and parent involvement is critical in developing workable transition plans to achieve sustainable change.

Step 4: Develop and Implement Marketing Mechanisms

When promoting healthier food and beverage choices to students, schools can consider these marketing mechanisms:

Variety

Providing a variety of healthy food and beverage choices encourages consumption of healthier food products.

Stocking

Healthier food choices should be more plentiful and more visible than less healthy choices. Vendors and caterers are a good source of information and can assist schools in finding healthier products. Vending machines can make healthier beverage options more visible by placing these at eye level. Cafeterias can also display healthier food more prominently.

Marketing

In secondary schools, there are many examples of business teachers and student councils undertaking marketing campaigns to promote healthier products in school stores, vending machines and cafeterias. In elementary schools, newsletters have been effective in communicating healthy eating campaigns to parents.

Pricing

Price is the most important factor in helping students make healthier choices. Where healthier items cost less, students are more likely to choose them over their more expensive, less nutritious counterparts. The School Food Sales and Policies Provincial Report found that schools under-use this strategy. It also identified a number of other opportunities for action that schools may wish to consider.

A decreased profit margin on healthier products can be compensated by raising the prices of less healthy products. BC schools using this strategy have not reported an overall loss of revenue.