

FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions Nevada's School Wellness Policy

What is a school wellness policy?

A school wellness policy is one of the official policies that guide each school district in promoting students' healthy lifestyles. The policy educates and promotes student participation in healthy eating, physical activity, and general wellness.

The requirement for a Local School Wellness Policy was established in 2004, when Congress passed the Child Nutrition and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act. This required that all schools participating in the National School Lunch Program create local school wellness policies by school year 2006–2007.

In 2010 Congress passed new provisions for local school wellness policies. These included modifications to implementation, evaluation, and public reporting on the progress of local school wellness policies. They required each school participating in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program to develop a local school wellness policy to promote student health, and address the issue of childhood obesity.

How was Nevada's School Wellness Policy developed?

Nevada's School Wellness Policy was developed by a diverse group. The Nevada Department of Agriculture brought together representatives from a variety of community groups, including representatives from the Nevada Department of Education, Nevada Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Nevada Association of School Administrators, school food service directors, Nevada Association of Health, PE, Recreation and Dance, Nevada State Education Association, American Heart Association, University of Nevada faculty, Food Bank of Northern Nevada, Nevada Association of Student Councils, and

local health districts. The group met three times during the spring of 2014 where issues were discussed until consensus was reached on the final policy.

Why are my child's snack food options changing at school?

Childhood obesity is one of the most serious public health challenges in the United States. Overweight and obese children are likely to stay obese into adulthood. This puts them at increased risk for a number of diseases like diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, coronary heart disease, and more. It is the goal of the new policies to improve healthy food choices, while promoting nutrition education and physical activity.



How is nutrition being monitored at school by the Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards?

The Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards cover all foods and beverages sold or given away on the school campus during the school day (defined as the period from the midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day). Any food or beverages sold in the following locations (but not limited to) must meet the Smart Snacks

Contact

▶ Food and Nutrition Division

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Nutrition Standards:

- School stores
- Bake sales
- Snack bars
- Vending machines

The requirements for foods brought to school to be given away and shared do not apply to foods sent to school with children for them to consume, such as packed lunches from home.

What are the new standards for food and beverages?

Food: There are standards that apply to all foods sold or given away to students on the school campus during the school day. Food items must meet calorie, sodium, fat, and sugar limits which apply to all grade levels. In addition, food items must be whole grain-rich, have a fruit, vegetable, dairy, or protein food as the first ingredient, or contain at least ¼ cup fruit and/or vegetable. The Nevada Department of Agriculture has created an approved Smart Snacks list, available online, to assist with selecting allowable products.

Beverages: Milk and water are allowable at all grade levels. Additional beverages are allowed at the high school level. All beverages sold on the school campus during the school day must be non-carbonated. There are no restrictions on the sale of any allowable beverage at any grade level during the school day on campus.

Caffeine: All foods and beverages in elementary school and middle school must be non-carbonated and caffeine-free, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally-occurring caffeine substances (i.e. chocolate milk). Caffeine is permitted at the high school level, at the discretion of the local school district.

Chewing gum: Sugar free chewing gum is exempt from the food standards and may be sold or given to students at the discretion of the school district.

Can I send my child to school with treats/snacks to share that do not meet the Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards?

Each school district must establish which special occasions or holidays they will allow foods that exceed the nutrition parameters of Smart Snacks. Instances may include observances of state or national holidays, birthdays, or additional similar occasions. School organization meetings or pep rallies are not considered special occasions.

Is my student allowed to sell snacks that do not meet the Smart Snacks standards as a fundraiser?

All fundraisers (or business enterprises) on the school campus during the school day must meet the Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards. If a student is selling food or beverage

DID YOU KNOW?

The Nevada School Wellness Policy is endorsed by:

- The Nevada Department of Education
- The Nevada Parent Teacher Association
- The University of Nevada, College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources, and
- The Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Food Security.
- Nevada Dietetic Association.,

items that do not meet the Smart Snacks standards, they are still able to do so, but only outside the school day or off the school campus. Fundraisers that sell items that are intended to be consumed outside of school will still be allowed (i.e. frozen cookie dough or pizza).

How will local school wellness policies be monitored?

School districts will be required to report annually on the implementation of the local school wellness policy. This information will be made available on the Nevada Department of Agriculture's website.

How can I access more information on school wellness policies in my area?

Each school district must retain basic records on their wellness policy. The Nevada Department of Agriculture offers more information and documents online: <http://nutrition.nv.gov/Programs/Wellness/>

What resources and training materials are available for school wellness coordinators?

The USDA offers a website to help all school districts meet the new school wellness standards. Resources include nutrition guidelines and best practices, research reports, grants and funding opportunities and more. Visit: <http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/local-wellness-policy-resources>.

