



Eastern Townships School Board

Healthy Eating in School Guidelines

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Introduction

This guideline document is intended as a reference to be used by school personnel, students and parents in their decision-making with respect to which foods to serve and sell in school/centres and at their activities, and for the purposes of fundraising. 4 appendixes are included, with the 4th being a tool for school/centre administrators to use when evaluating the quality of the food services offered in their school/centres. This is recommended to be done annually.

Philosophy

The Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB) recognizes that healthy eating and regular physical activity positively impact young people's health, development and well-being as well as their educational success.

The ETSB is committed to providing staff, students and the school/centre community with supportive environments in which to promote and educate about healthy nutrition, food choices and physical activity with the ultimate goal of fostering a foundation for a healthy life of learning.

School Food Service Healthy Eating Guidelines¹

The following guidelines define the qualitative and quantitative requirements of foods to be offered in the different food services of the school board (cafeteria, vending machines, etc).

1. Offer a variety of foods and give priority to foods of good nutritional value

- 1.1 Offer meals from the four food groups of Canada's Food Guide (**Appendix 1**): Fruits and Vegetables, Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives, and Meat and Alternatives
- 1.2 Prepare a main course including a side portion of at least one vegetable
- 1.3 Provide a variety of fruits and vegetables
- 1.4 Provide a variety of 100% fruit juice (no added sugar) and vegetable juice in addition to milk and water
- 1.5 Provide a variety of grain products (e.g. rice, bread, pasta, couscous, bulgur, quinoa, millet) preferably whole grain
- 1.6 Offer a choice of desserts and snacks made with fruit, milk products and whole grain products (**Appendix 2**)
- 1.7 Reduce the fat content of meats
- 1.8 Favour low-fat or non-fat cooking methods, such as steaming, baking, braising, poaching, grilling or roasting
- 1.9 Avoid products containing saturated or hydrogenated fat

2. Eliminate foods of low nutritional value from all school food supplies

- 2.1 Eliminate sugar-sweetened & artificially sweetened (diet) soft drinks as well as sugar-sweetened beverages
- 2.2 Eliminate products in which sugar or a sugar-substitute is the first ingredient listed
- 2.3 Eliminate French fries
- 2.4 Eliminate frying or deep-frying, and avoid commercial or pre-fried breaded foods

3. Fundraising, special events, school trips

Food service guidelines apply to fundraising, special events, school trips, field trips, etc. (**Appendix 2**)

¹ Adapted and translated from Commission scolaire du Val-des-Cerfs. *Cahier des charges services alimentaires*. Octobre, 2010

4. Menu in Food Services Offered in Schools and Centres

- Menus must respect evaluation criteria found in **Appendix 4**
- Menus should be approved by the school principal, in collaboration with the school board nutritionist (if available), no later than May 31st of each school year.
- Cyclical menus should be planned based on a minimum of four weeks and approved by the school principal.
- Any menu changes should be approved by the school principal and announced with minimal delay.
- Prices of meals and snacks should be clearly posted in the school cafeteria.
- Any exemptions should be verified by the school principal, in collaboration with the nutritionist (if available).

Number of portions recommended from each food group for a complete meal

Age	Children 4-8	Children 9-13	Children 14-18	Children 19-50
Fruits and Vegetables	1-2	2	2-3	2-3
Grain products	1-2	2	2	2
Milk and Alternatives	1	1-2	1-2	1
Meat and Alternatives	½	½-1	1	1

4.1 Canada Food Guide Portions (Appendix 2)

Food Group	A portion equivalent to	Specifications
Fruits and Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 125 ml (1/2 cup) raw, cooked, frozen or canned fruits or vegetables ▪ 125 ml (1/2 cup) fruit or vegetable juice ▪ 250 ml (1 cup) salad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasize dark green and orange vegetables - Serve fruits and vegetables with little or no fat, sugar, and salt
Grain Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 slice bread or ½ bagel ▪ ½ pita or ½ tortilla ▪ 125 ml (1/2 cup) of cooked rice, pasta, or couscous ▪ 30 g of cold cereal or 175 ml (3/4 cup) of hot cereal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasize grain products with 2 or more grams of fibre per serving

Milk and Alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 250 ml (1 cup) of milk or enriched soya beverage* ▪ 175 g (3/4 cup) yogurt ▪ 50 g (1 ½ oz) of cheese ▪ 125 ml pudding made with milk** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasize milk products containing 2% milk fat (M.F.) or less
Meat and Alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 75 g (2 ½ oz) of meat, fish, poultry ▪ 175 ml (3/4 cup) of cooked legumes ▪ 2 eggs ▪ 30 ml (2 Tbsp) peanut butter ▪ 60 ml (1/4 cup) nuts or seeds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use lean meats - Avoid deli meats high in fat and salt

*200 ml portion of milk often found in schools does not respect CFG portion but is acceptable

**Although the 125 ml pudding made with milk does not technically correspond to a “Milk and Alternatives” portion, it is considered an adequate dessert that provides a good source of calcium as long as it is prepared with milk.

4.2 Other recommendations

- A serving of soup must be 175 ml (3/4 cup)
- A sandwich and a salad-meal must contain a minimum of 60 g (2 oz) of protein
- Maximum serving size for juice in both primary and secondary schools: 384 ml

5. Vending Machines

5.1 Primary Schools

No vending machine should be allowed in the cafeteria or in any other area accessible to students

5.2 Secondary Schools

Vending machines are authorized. However, the contents are subjected to the nutrition policy. A list of foods/beverages to go in the vending machines needs to be approved by the nutritionist (**Appendix 2**)

APPENDIX 1 –CANADA’S FOOD GUIDE – found at:

www.hc-sc.ca/index-eng.php

APPENDIX 2

Evaluation and classification of snack foods and desserts

A colour coding classification system is used to evaluate and categorize snacks and desserts including those found in vending machines. This classification system is not used for main meals, soups, side vegetables and home-made desserts.

All foods must be categorized as “health promoting”

Colour Code	Rating	
Green	Excellent choice	Foods that are health promoting
Yellow	Good choice	
White	Occasional choice	Foods that are NOT health promoting
To eliminate	Needs to be removed	

- Foods coded green should be consumed the most often
- To classify foods according to the colour code, foods have been regrouped under different categories :
 1. Fruits and vegetables
 2. Milk and Alternatives
 3. Nuts, seeds, dried fruit and dried legumes
 4. Drinks (except milk and alternatives)
 5. “Other foods”

General Guidelines

- a) Foods coded green that have a sodium content between 250 and 480 mg per serving are coded **YELLOW**
- b) Certain foods of low nutritional value need to be removed immediately:

- Products that have sugar or the equivalent* as the first ingredient. When the first ingredient is followed by a list of ingredients in parentheses, it's the first ingredient in the parentheses that is considered.

Example: oat flakes (glucose, oat flakes...)

In this example, sugar (or glucose) is the first ingredient.

***Equivalents to sugar:**

-glucose	-honey	-malt syrup
-fructose	-brown sugar	-fruit juice sweetener
-dextrose	-molasses	-inverted sugar
-sucrose	-corn syrup	-Maltodextrine
-lactose	-maple syrup	-etc.
-maltose	-rice syrup	

- Products with a sodium level greater than 480 mg per serving
- Drinks containing added sugar with the exception of milk and alternatives: pop or soft drinks, fruit cocktail, fruit punch, sport drinks, energy drinks, etc.

1. Fruits and vegetables

Criteria	Colour Code
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh vegetables and salad 	Green
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh fruit, canned fruit with no added sugar, apple (or other fruit) sauce with no added sugar, dried fruit with no added sugar*, fruit bar with no added sugar 	Green
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruits canned in light syrup, dried fruit with added sugar, apple (or other fruit) sauce with added sugar, fruit bars with added sugar 	Yellow
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruits canned in regular syrup 	White
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All foods that are fruit or vegetable based whereby the first ingredient is sugar 	To eliminate

*Dried fruit sticks to teeth which can promote dental cavities. Despite their good nutritional value, it is advised to not offer them on their own (ex. Raisin boxes or dried cranberries). However, they can be easily included in recipes or mixed with other foods.

2. Milk and Alternatives

This category includes milk, yogurt, yogurt beverages and milk alternatives. Soya beverages have to be enriched with calcium and vitamin D.

Cheese is automatically coded green with the exception of cheese curds which should not be offered due to high sodium content.

One portion of milk, yogurt beverage and milk alternative corresponds to 250 ml.

Criteria	Colour Code
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 % M.F. or less for milk and milk alternatives • 3.5% M.F. or less for yogurt <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 g sugar or less per serving 	Green
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 2% M.F. for milk and milk alternatives • More than 3.5% M.F. for yogurt <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 g sugar or less per serving 	Yellow
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 2% M.F. for milk and milk alternatives • More than 3.5% M.F. for yogurt <p>AND/OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 30 g sugar per serving 	To eliminate

3. Nuts, seeds, dried fruit and dried legumes

One portion corresponds to 55 g.

Criteria	Colour Code
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuts, seeds, dried fruit or dried legumes without pieces of candy or chocolate or yogurt coating AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250 mg or less of sodium per serving 	Green
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuts, seeds, dried fruit or dried legumes without pieces of candy or chocolate or yogurt coating and where sugar is the 2nd or 3rd ingredient OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 250 and 480 mg sodium per serving 	Yellow
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuts, seeds, dried fruit or dried legumes where some contain pieces of candy or are coated with chocolate or yogurt AND/OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sugar is the 1st ingredient AND/OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 480 mg or more of sodium per serving 	To eliminate

4. “Other foods”

This category includes grain products, cereal bars, snacks that are fruit-based, chips and chocolate.

Products are evaluated according to a points system found on the following page. In addition, the advice of a nutritionist is often necessary to evaluate certain products.

Please note:

- Muffins and cookies should not exceed 70 g.
- Oven baked chips, pretzels, popcorn and other similar snacks cannot be coded green given their low nutritional value. They should not be offered in primary schools. At best, they can be coded **YELLOW**.

Evaluation Criteria for “Other Foods”²

Criteria	Product Point Allocation
Total Fat	
3.0 g or less	3
3.1 g to 6.0 g	2
6.1 g to 8.0 g	1
8.1 g to 9.0 g	0
9.1 g to 11.0 g	-1
More than 11.0 g	-10
Saturated and Trans Fat	
1.4 g or less	5
1.5 g to 2.0 g	4
2.1 g to 2.5 g	3
2.6 g to 3.0 g	2
3.1 g to 3.5 g	1
3.6 g to 5.0 g	0
More than 5.0 g	-1
Fibre	
6.0 g or more	4
4.0 g to 5.9 g	3
2.0 g to 3.9 g	2
1.0 g to 1.9 g	1
0.0 g to 0.9 g	-2
Sugar	
Sugar is 1 st ingredient on the ingredient list	-15
Sugar is the 2 nd or 3 rd ingredient on the ingredient list	-3
Sugar is not among the first 3 ingredients listed	0

Classification	
8 to 12 points	green
4 to 7 points	Yellow
0 to 3 points	White
Less than 0 points	To eliminate

² Ministère de l'Éducation, du loisir et du Sport (MELS). “Healthy Vending Machines” Information pamphlet #2. Going the Healthy Route at School, Framework Policy on Healthy Eating and Active Living, 2007. http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/sections/viragesante/index_en.asp?page=pamphlets

5. Drinks

This category excludes milk, yogurt beverages and milk alternatives. Among all the types of drinks, regular water is considered the best choice.

One portion corresponds to 125 ml.

Criteria	Colour Code
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink with no added sugar or artificial sweetener (ex.: water, mineral water, 100% juice) <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250 mg or less of sodium per serving 	Green
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 250 and 480 mg sodium per serving 	Yellow
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beverage containing added sugar (ex. Regular pop, fruit cocktail, sport drink, energy drink, etc) <p style="text-align: center;">AND/OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinks with artificial sweetener <p style="text-align: center;">AND/OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 480 mg or more of sodium per portion 	To eliminate

Compliance

Given that the current document constitutes Guidelines and not Policy, it remains the prerogative of the school administrator when it comes to compliance, and for the allowance of exceptions for special occasions (Halloween, Christmas, etc)

APPENDIX 3

Fundraising Guidelines

The ETSB recommends that fundraising activities carried out in the name of their schools do not rely on selling food items. The ETSB recommends that alternative fundraising options are developed, and this section will list some examples. Please refer also to the 7 'Fiches' on school fundraising guidelines developed by the Secretary Generals of all the school boards in the Monteregie and Estrie (sent with these guidelines in March 2014).

If a school decides to use food items as fundraising material, it is the position of the ETSB that only items listed in these guidelines as green or yellow be sold for this purpose.

Alternate Fundraising Ideas

'Schools have a wide range of non-food and healthy food fundraising options to choose from, and experience shows that these options can raise as much or even more money than junk food sales.' Center for Service in the Public Interest

Ideas that promote physical activity

Items:

- Ball caps, hats or tuques
- Frisbees
- Skipping ropes
- Pedometers
- Sports equipment

Ideas that promote the arts

Items:

- Art
- Greeting cards
- Handcrafts
- Music
- Homemade jigsaw puzzle

Ideas that promote the environment

Items:

- Reusable bags
- Plants
- Egg carton garden
- Seeds
- Bags of compost or earth

Ideas that promote your school

Items (with school logo):

- Baseball caps
- Flags
- First aid kits
- Water bottles
- Windshield brushes
- T-shirts
- Stationary

APPENDIX 4 - Criteria for Evaluation of Menus³

School: _____ Caterer _____

IN GENERAL:

	YES	NO	Comments / Progress
The menu has at least a 4-week cycle (or more than 20 days)			
The menu offers a variety of foods and dishes that help students to develop their taste buds			
Priority is given to dark green, orange and red vegetables			
The quantity of sugar is reduced in commercially prepared dishes and menu items			
The quantity of fat is reduced in commercially prepared dishes and menu items			
Priority is given to low-fat or nonfat cooking methods			
French fries, frying or deep frying, and commercial or pre-fried breaded foods are eliminated			
Products containing saturated or hydrogenated fat are avoided			
Products with sugar listed as the first ingredient are eliminated			
Desserts and snacks high in sugar and fat (pastries, cakes, pies, donuts, ice cream) are not offered			
Sugar-sweetened and artificially sweetened soft drinks and beverages are eliminated			
Sodium reduced versions are used when possible (vegetable/tomato juice, crackers)			
Herbs, spices and other seasonings are used to season food in preference to salt or monosodium glutamate. For example, onion or garlic powder is substituted for onion or garlic salt.			
The menu is evaluated by a dietitian / nutritionist			

³ Guide d'application du volet alimentation: Pour un virage santé, 2008

THE MENU OFFERS EACH WEEK :

	YES	NO	Comments / Progress
A varied selection of meat and alternatives			
A variety in how food is cooked and prepared (cuts of meat, mixed dishes, grilled, in a sauce, casserole, etc)			
Fish that is unfried and unbreaded			
Legumes and tofu in different forms			
A variety of grain products (rice, pasta, couscous, bread, quinoa)			
Priority to grain products high in fibre			
At least one milk-based dessert (pudding, flan, yogurt, tapioca)			
At least one fruit-based dessert			
Grain-based desserts (banana bread, oatmeal muffins, cookies, granola bars) that are low in fat and have whole grains			

THE MENU OFFERS EACH DAY :

	YES	NO	Comments / Progress
Meals that include foods from each of the 4 food groups			
A main meal that respects approximately the following proportions : 50% vegetables, 25% meat and substitutes, 25% starch			
A source of protein in adequate amount according to age (See Table 5, chapter 3)			
At least one vegetable accompanying each main meal			
Desserts and snacks made with fruit, milk products and whole grain products			
Milk			
A variety of beverages : 100% pure fruit juice, vegetable and tomato juice, enriched (calcium and vitamin D) soya and rice milk, flavoured milk (less than 30 g sugar per 250 ml)			
A large variety of milk products (yogurt, yogurt drinks, cheese)			

Menu evaluated by Sara Creighton-Wiebe, consulting nutritionist for the Eastern Townships School Board

Date: _____