

# K-5 Standards

## **43-168 Nutrition Standards for Elementary Schools (K-5) School Food Service Meals and Competitive Foods.**

(Statutory Authority: Students Health and Fitness Act, 2005 S.C. Acts 59 (to be codified at S.C. Code Ann. § 59-1-310) and S.C. Code Ann. § 59-5-60 (2004))

### **I. School Meals**

Federal law-specifically, the National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. § 1758(f), the National School Lunch Program (7 C.F.R. § 210.10), and the School Breakfast Program (7 C.F.R. § 220.8)-regulates the nutritional quality of foods served in the nation's school meal programs. For a school meal program to receive USDA subsidies, school meals must meet nutrition standards for saturated fat, vitamins, minerals, protein, calories, and portion sizes.

A. School food service meals should be made attractive to students by appealing to their taste preferences and meeting their cultural needs. Therefore, school districts must:

1. Offer a choice of entrées at lunch-a minimum of two in elementary (K-5) schools (one choice may be an entrée salad).
2. Encourage input regarding the selection of food items in elementary (K-5) schools to be offered in the school meal programs by promoting and encouraging student and parent participation in taste-testing events, in menu-review panels, and in online recipe reviewing.
3. Require that school cafeteria managers meet with student advisory committees in grades four through five a minimum of twice each year.
4. Allow students to purchase at à la carte prices additional servings of any food item that is part of a reimbursable school meal (serving sizes should be comparable to those of the meal components).

B. School food service meals should not only provide the optimal nutrition that students need for growth, development, and academic achievement but should also support the development of healthful eating behaviors in students, including their learning to eat a variety of foods.

Therefore, school districts must:

1. Offer a minimum of two milk choices (1 percent fat and nonfat milk) for all grade levels at breakfast and lunch. Whole milk is no longer required by USDA regulations.
2. Offer a low-fat meal choice (30 percent or less of calories from fat) at every meal.
3. Provide low-fat and nonfat salad dressings.
4. Provide information on calories, percentages of fat, and serving sizes of school meal items to help children select appropriate portions of food.

5. Offer a minimum of four choices of fruits and vegetables daily, including fresh fruits and vegetables in season, in elementary (K-5) schools (salad bars or prepackaged salads may be included). Students can take two to four servings based on the school district's discretion.
6. Offer whole-grain foods in all programs in elementary (K-5) schools, whenever possible, to meet bread and cereal requirements.
7. Encourage preschool, kindergarten, and elementary students to try a variety of foods by serving the full reimbursable meal.