

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Bureau of Budget and Fiscal Management

August 6, 2008

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Revision to 2008-09 Nutritional Standards for Competitive Foods

TO: Chief Administrators
Food Service Directors/National School Lunch Program Contact

FROM: Vonda Fekete, M.S., R.D., L.D.N.
State Director, Child Nutrition Program

Over the past school year, schools have expressed concern regarding a portion of the A la Carte Foods/Snack section of the Nutritional Standards for Competitive Foods in Pennsylvania Schools for the School Nutrition Incentive (SNI). Due to the challenges expressed with implementing and monitoring this section, and potential unintended nutritional consequences, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has decided to remove the following paragraph in the A la Carte Foods/Snack section:

In addition to the reimbursable meal, elementary a la carte items will be limited to one item, which cannot duplicate the reimbursable meal, except for fruits or vegetables. In middle and high schools, only one exempted component a la carte item can duplicate another item sold to the student, except for fruits or vegetables.

As a result, students will be able to purchase an additional amount of a la carte food items. We strongly encourage schools to continue to evaluate their reimbursable meal options to ensure the majority of selections on a daily and weekly basis are health promoting.

The removal of this portion of the standards will permit more schools to implement the nutritional standards. If you would like to begin implementing the standards in building(s) that were not previously implementing them, instructions are below:

- If you are currently not implementing the nutrition standards in ANY buildings, complete a revised Wellness Policy Amendment Form. The form is located at http://www.pde.state.pa.us/food_nutrition. Follow the link to the School Nutrition Incentive Program. Check Number 1 to indicate that you will be implementing the Nutrition Standards in at least one building. Send the form to the address on the form. Also, change your Sponsor Application and Site Information on PEARS to indicate which buildings will be implementing the standards. Do not submit this form or change PEARS until you are fully implementing the Nutrition Standards in the respective buildings. If we receive this form by the 14th of the month, you will be able to receive the supplemental reimbursement for the entire month. If we receive the form on the 15th of the month or after, you will be eligible for the reimbursement for the following month.

- If you are currently implementing the Nutrition Standards in at least one building, and would like to add buildings, change your Site Information on PEARS to indicate which buildings will now be implementing the standards. Please contact the COMPASS/PEARS Help Desk with any PEARS related questions at 1-888-877-1306.

A few other cosmetic changes were made to the Nutrition Standards document, but they do not change the content of the standards. Year One of the standards has been deleted since it no longer applies. Portions of the a la carte food and beverage, vending beverage, and school store beverage sections were re-worded to help make them easier to understand. Again, the content has not changed, only the wording has been simplified.

A copy of the revised nutrition standards is on PEARS Form Download, School Nutrition Incentive Section, PDE181. A copy is also posted on the PDE Food and Nutrition website at www.pde.state.pa.us/food_nutrition. Follow the link to the School Nutrition Incentive Program.

Please contact Evelyn Arnold (earnold@state.pa.us) or Diane Kraft (dkraft@state.pa.us) if you have any questions.