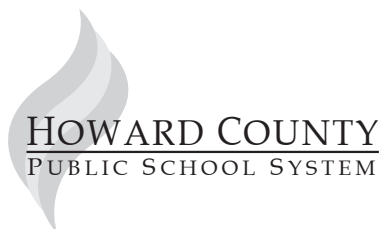


Healthy Kids Healthy Schools



The Board of Education of Howard County believes schools have a responsibility to help students develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Therefore, the school system has taken steps to promote student wellness through nutrition education, physical education, increased physical activity, and by offering nourishing foods and beverages to students during the school day.

SAFESchools



Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools

What Schools Are Doing

Recent studies have raised concerns about childhood obesity and the lack of physical fitness in school-aged children. The Howard County Public School System addresses these issues through a three-pronged approach to student wellness, which includes nutrition education and physical education, increasing activity during the school day, and limiting the number of foods of minimal nutritional value available in schools.

Nutrition Education

Nutrition education is included in health education each year for all students in prekindergarten through Grade 8, and in a health education program in Grades 9-12. Nutrition education is also included in other appropriate curricular areas.

Physical Education and Other Physical Activity

A physical education program is provided each year for all students in prekindergarten through Grade 8. Additionally, each elementary school provides daily recess. Each middle school provides an extracurricular physical activity program, such as clubs and intramurals, and supervised physical activity during lunch shifts as time permits.

In Grades 9-12, program offerings are provided that enable students to meet graduation requirements and to select physical education electives. The high school interscholastic athletic program provides students with opportunities to participate in a variety of sports.

In addition, staff are encouraged to incorporate physical activity into classroom instruction whenever possible.

Healthy Eating During the School Day

Each day school is in session, the HCPSS Food and Nutrition Service Department offers breakfast in many schools and lunch in all schools. No foods or beverages are sold or given without charge to any student until after the end of the last lunch period, except through the Food and Nutrition Service Programs.

All school meals meet the nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and are prepared in accordance with federal, state and local laws, including safety and sanitation standards set by the Health Department's Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points plans and guidelines.

Lunch periods are at least 30 minutes in length, except on shortened days when lunch shifts may be compressed. Schools provide students with an opportunity to wash their hands before and after eating meals or snacks.

Beverages offered in school cafeterias during the school day are limited to:

- Flavored and unflavored water
- Flavored and unflavored milk
- 100% fruit/vegetable juice
- Beverages containing at least 10% fruit/vegetable juice and 100% vitamin C

In addition, students have access to water throughout the school day. This may include access to water fountains, permission to carry water in clear containers, and opportunities to purchase water from vending machines operated by the Food and Nutrition Service Department.

All vending machines, except those operated by the Food and Nutrition Service Department and those in the teachers lounge, are equipped with timing devices that prohibit use from midnight until the end of the school day.

Food and beverages are not to be used as a reward, withheld as punishment, used for celebrations or used as an educational tool except as defined in the curriculum for Family and Consumer Sciences and Academic Life Skills, or when specified in a student's Individual Education Program (IEP). Schools are encouraged to develop alternatives to the use of foods and beverages in these situations.

Healthy Eating as Part of School Activities

Foods of minimal nutritional value* may not be sold or given without charge to students during the entire school day. This includes:

- Sodas
- Artificially flavored drinks containing no pure juices
- Water ices
- Chewing gum
- Hard candy
- Jellies and gums
- Marshmallow candies
- Fondant
- Licorice
- Spun candy
- Candy coated popcorn

With the approval of the principal, students may have candy other than that listed above for special occasions. However, school activities involving foods or beverages not provided by Food and Nutrition Service Programs are limited to one designated day per month.

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Such activities must take place after the end of the last lunch period and

May not involve:

- Foods or beverages of minimal nutritional value.
- Foods that might cause allergic reactions in students with food allergies, such as peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, milk, wheat, soy and eggs. (See: *HCPSS Guidelines for Management of Students with Severe Food Allergies.*)

But may involve:

- Food prepared commercially in licensed facilities such as pizza, ice cream, snacks, and candy other than that of minimal nutritional value*.
- Breads, cakes, cookies and brownies prepared in private homes or unlicensed facilities, as long as they are not the cream-filled type.

Groups sponsoring special events during the school day (such as picnics, field days, parties, fairs, and festivals) must adhere to this policy, and must consult with the School Food and Nutrition Service Department for guidance when planning such events.

Healthy Eating After School

After the end of the school day, vending machines in schools may offer the following beverages:

- Flavored and unflavored water
- Flavored and unflavored milk
- 100% fruit/vegetable juice
- Beverages containing at least 10% fruit/vegetable juice and 100% vitamin C
- Iced tea, sports drinks and sodas may be offered only in middle and high schools and may comprise no more than 50% of the vending machine selections.

* Minimal nutritional value is established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In the case of artificially sweetened foods, it refers to a food that provides less than five percent of the Reference Daily Intakes (RDI) for each of the eight specified nutrients per serving. For all other foods, it refers to a food that provides less than five percent of the RDI for each of the eight specified nutrients per 100 calories and less than five percent of the RDI for each of eight specified nutrients per serving.

The Howard County Public School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation or disability in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs. For more information, contact the Equity Assurance Office of the Howard County Public School System at 10910 Route 108, Ellicott City, MD 21042, or call 410.313.6654.

HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

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