



Guide to the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy (TPSNP) for Elementary Schools

FMNV/Candy:

The TPSNP prohibits the sale or distribution of FMNV (Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value) and all forms of candy at any time by anyone or any organization, anywhere on school premises during the school day.

The nutrition policy does not restrict a student from bringing such items to school, under a parent's supervision, as long as the student is not selling or providing the items to other students.

Snacks:

Elementary classrooms may allow one nutritious snack per day under the teacher's supervision. The snack may be in the morning or afternoon but may not be at the same time as the regular meal periods for that class. The snack may be provided by the school food service, the teacher, parents, or other groups and should be at no cost to students. Prepackaged snacks must comply with the fat and sugar limits of the TPSNP and must be single-size servings. All snacks (homemade and prepackaged) may not contain any FMNV or consist of candy or dessert type items (cookies, cakes, cupcakes, pudding, ice cream or frozen desserts, etc).

Other than the one nutritious snack per day, as above, parents may only provide foods for the entire class on the occasion of their child's birthday or one of the three designated school event days.

Schools and parents may provide one additional nutritious snack per day for students taking the **TAKS tests**. As with classroom snacks, TAKS snacks must comply with the limits outlined in the TPSNP.

TDA has produced, posted on the squaremeals.org Web site, and widely distributed its brochure, "**Suggestions for Nutritious Snacks**," but it is not intended to be a comprehensive list. TDA has not specified what qualifies as a nutritious snack other than that it must meet the Nutrition Standards specified in the TPSNP. Generally, a snack would be considered nutritious if it is less than 200 calories, less than 30 percent fat, high in protein and high in vitamins and minerals.

Field Trips:

The nutrition policy does not apply to students who leave campus for campus-approved field trips. A school official must approve the dates and purposes of the field trips in advance.

Instructional Use of Food:

Students may consume foods prepared in the classroom for instructional purposes as long as they are not FMNV or candy. Teachers may also use foods not prepared in class for instructional purposes as long as they are not FMNV. The TPSNP states these situations should be occasional, not routine. Foods prepared in the classroom for instructional purposes (to include Home Economics-type classes) may not be sold or provided to other students or classes (as they are considered a competitive food).

Fundraisers:

Elementary schools are prohibited from conducting fundraisers that sell food or beverages for consumption during the school day.

Pizza parties, etc:

The intent of the policy is to encourage the consumption of nutritious, well-balanced meals and to limit the availability of high-fat items during the school day. There has been confusion about pizza or other foods being served at school parties. Schools may not allow alternative meals (pizza, BBQ, sandwiches, etc.) to be provided to students in competition with meals made available by the school food service department under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

FMNV and Authorized Exempt Events

(1) School Event Days:

Students may be given FMNV, candy items, or other restricted foods during the school day for up to three different events each school year to be determined at the campus level. The three exempted events must be approved by a school official and scheduled for the same three dates in the school calendar. During these events, FMNV may not be given during meal times in the areas where school meals are being served or consumed, and regular meal service (breakfast and lunch) must continue to be available to all students in accordance with federal regulations.

The TPSNP provisions concerning fat content, sugar content, and portion size under Nutrition Standards do not apply to foods provided to children in situations that fit under the policy's "FMNV and Policy Exemptions" provisions, however, the TDA encourages educators to consider themselves stewards of their students' health and to consider the nutritional consequences of any food they provide students at any time.

(2) Birthday parties:

Foods that are otherwise prohibited by the nutrition policy are exempted from policy restrictions during classroom birthday parties.

Parents or guardians may bring any food they want for their child's classroom birthday party.

TDA recommends that parties be held after the classroom's lunch period (the class celebrating the birthday) so the party does not spoil the students' appetite for a nutritious meal.

A school may adopt stricter policies as it relates to birthday parties, other celebrations, or the three designated event days.

(3) Class or School cultural heritage event for instructional or enrichment purposes:

Foods served during these events would be exempt from the policy, however, FMNV may not be served during meal periods in the areas where school meals are being served or consumed, and regular meal service (breakfast and lunch) must continue to be available to all students. The heritage or enrichment event must be officially scheduled and a part of the written curriculum and included with activities other

than food that go beyond routine teaching activities. Because each situation is a special case, TDA relies on education professionals to make good faith decisions that will support the intent of the TPSNP.

The TPSNP does not address whether foods that are provided to students during authorized exempt events should be prepackaged or not. Individual schools and/or districts are authorized to establish their own local policies (within the parameters of the TPSNP) concerning what foods may or may not be allowed, and/or in what form they may be.

For Additional Information/Helpful Tips / Resources: www.squaremeals.org or call toll free (888) TEX-KIDS

New Tool Available! The Nutrition Education of Texas (NETx) Program provides teachers with a new tool to help children understand healthy concepts that will last a lifetime while they learn core subjects. The program provides flexible and dynamic lesson plans and educational nutrition materials free of charge to Texas educators. Check it out at <http://netx.squaremeals.org>. This Web site offers a world of engaging material tied directly to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) objectives, and is designed to reinforce key concepts, such as eating a variety of foods and being physically active.

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