

Competitive Foods Guidelines for K-12 Schools



The following table summarizes the criteria a competitive snack food or side item must meet in order to qualify under the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Competitive Foods Guidelines. The Guidelines utilize information included on a product's Nutrition Facts panel. The rows of the table provide examples of snack foods and side dishes. The columns are the criteria these foods must meet. Entries of "n/a" indicate that a criterion is not applicable to that type of food.

(For additional information, please see the notes on the next page.)

						CALORIE OR PORTION LIMITS			
	EXAMPLES	35-10-35	0G TRANS FAT	SODIUM	MIN # OF REQUIRED NUTRIENTS	ELEMEN. SCHOOL	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL	
Fruits and vegetables ¹	Fresh fruits & veggies	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	no limit	no limit	no limit	
	Dried fruit with no added sugar	see notes	n/a	n/a	n/a	150 cal.	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	Fruit in own juice	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	150 cal.	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	Fruit in light syrup	✓	✓	230 mg	1	150 cal.	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	Fruit in heavy syrup	✓	✓	230 mg	1	150 cal.	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	vegetables w/ sauce	OR	✓	✓	480 mg	1	100 cal.	100 cal.	100 cal.
		OR	✓	✓	480 mg	2	150 cal.	150 cal.	150 cal.
	Fried vegetables	✓	✓	230 mg	1	150 cal.	180 cal.	200 cal.	
100% frozen fruit bar	✓	✓	230 mg	1	150 cal.	180 cal.	200 cal.		
Dairy and eggs ²	Yogurt, drinkable yogurt, cottage cheese, etc.	✓	✓	480 mg	1	150 cal.	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	Cheese	see notes				1.5 oz.	1.5 oz.	1.5 oz.	
	Frozen yogurt, ice cream	✓	✓	480 mg	1	150 cal.	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	Egg	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 egg	1 egg	1 egg	
Snacks ³	Baked goods, bars, candy, chips, crackers	✓	✓	230 mg	1	150 cal.	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	Nuts & seeds	see notes	✓	230 mg	1	150 cal.	180 cal.	200 cal.	
	Trail mix	see notes	✓	230 mg	1	150 cal.	180 cal.	200 cal.	
Soups ⁴	All soups	OR	✓	480 mg	1	100 cal.	100 cal.	100 cal.	
		OR	✓	480 mg	2	150 cal.	150 cal.	150 cal.	

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Notes

Fruits and vegetables¹ Dried fruit must contain 0g fat as labeled

Dairy and eggs² Cheese must be reduced fat or part skim. All other dairy products must be non-fat or low fat

Snacks³

Nuts and seeds (includes nut butters): No total or saturated fat limit, but 35% sugar by weight limit required.

Fruit and nut products (commonly known as trail mix): No total fat limit, but must meet the following requirements:

- The items found in the combination product include only fruit, and nuts and/or seeds.
- The product contains no added sweeteners.

Column Details

35-10-35: Foods with a “√” in the “35-10-35” column must provide no more than 35% of calories from total fat, no more than 10% of calories from saturated fat or up to 1 gram, and be no more than 35% sugar by weight.

0g trans fat: Foods with a “√” in the “0g trans fat” column must have 0 grams trans fat.

Sodium: Entries in the “sodium” column are the maximum amount of sodium permitted.

Minimum # of required nutrients: The “1” or “2” in the “minimum # of required nutrients” column refers to how many nutrients from the following list are required:

2g fiber; or \geq 5g protein; or \geq 10% DV of Vitamin A, C, E, folate, calcium, magnesium, potassium or iron; or 1/2 serving (1/4 cup) of fruit or vegetables.

Calorie or portion limits all schools: Calories are limited to 100 calorie portions for foods other than vegetables with sauce and soups that meet the 35-10-35, 0g trans fat, and sodium criteria but fail to meet the minimum number of required nutrients criteria. Cheese and egg are limited to portion size.

Time of Day

These Guidelines shall apply to items sold on school grounds or at school activities during the regular and extended school day when events are primarily under the control of the school or third parties on behalf of the school. The extended school day is defined as the time before or after the official school day that includes activities such as clubs, yearbook, band and choir practice, student government, drama, sports practices, intramural sports, and childcare / latchkey programs. These Guidelines shall also apply to food supplied by schools during official transportation to and from school and school sponsored activities, including but not limited to field trips and interscholastic sporting events where the school is the visiting team except as specified herein.

These Guidelines do not apply to school sponsored or school related bona fide fundraising activities that take place off of school grounds and not in transit to and from school. Nor do they apply to booster sales at school related events where parents and other adults are a significant part of an audience or are selling food as boosters either during intermission or immediately before or after such events. These school related events frequently occur during evenings and weekends. Examples of these events include but are not limited to interscholastic sporting events, school plays, and band concerts.

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