

	POLICY NO: 5.6
Adopted	2018
Projected Review Date	2027
Revisions	2023, 2025

POLICY: NUTRITION

PURPOSE:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) believes in the development of healthy school environments that support student learning and success by encouraging students, educators, and parents/guardians/caregivers to choose healthy food that reflect cultures and food traditions.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- HWDSB schools foster healthy nutrition environments that support good mental health around food, without focussing on weight or dieting, support the wellness of students and staff in line with the current edition of Canada's Food Guide.
- Schools include healthy foods that reflect cultures and food traditions, meet religious accommodations and provide options for vegetarians and vegans.
- Schools with student nutrition programs follow the *Student Nutrition Program Nutrition Guidelines (2020)* developed by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.
- All schools and educational programs follow provincial legislation relating to nutrition and any other pertinent legislation.
- Schools and educational programs take into consideration the following when food or beverages are sold or provided in schools:
 - Offer, when available and when possible, food and beverages that are produced in Ontario.
 - Be environmentally aware and reduce the amount of single use plastic.
 - Avoid offering food or beverages as a reward or an incentive for good behaviour, achievement or participation.
 - Include and celebrate a diversity of cultures and food traditions.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

- Schools promote healthy eating and safe food practices for planned events and classroom activities by following the nutrition standards in PPM 150.
- Schools will communicate the Ministry of Education Policy (PPM 150), the HWDSB Nutrition Policy and Procedure annually to parents/guardians/caregivers, students and the community.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Chief Executive Officer

TERMINOLOGY:

Food: Includes both foods and beverages. *Food Service Provider:* Private, for-profit company that contracts to sell food and/or beverages.

Fundraising: Any voluntary contribution, sale of goods or services, or event, which is organized and conducted to generate funds. Fundraising may occur within the school or outside of the school.

Healthy Eating: Eating the recommended types and amounts of food as per Canada's Food Guide, which includes choosing foods from the Sell Most and Sell Less categories, as defined below, more often.

Healthier Food Preparation: Cooking methods that require little or no added fat or sodium, such as baking, barbequing, broiling, grilling, microwaving, poaching, roasting, steaming, or stir-frying.

Not Permitted for Sale: Products in this category contain few or no essential nutrients and/or contain high amounts of fat, sugar, and/or sodium (e.g., deep-fried and other fried foods, confectionery). Food and beverages in this category may not be sold in schools. See [PPM 150 Appendix Nutrition Standards for Ontario Schools](#).

Nutrition Standards for Foods: Food is divided into *Vegetables and Fruit*, *Whole Grains*, *Protein Foods*, following Canada's Food Guide. There are also "Mixed Dishes" for products that contain more than one major ingredient (e.g., pizza, pasta, soup, salads, and sandwiches), and "Miscellaneous Items," for items that are to be used in limited amounts (e.g., condiments, sauces, dips, oils, and dressings) and for confectionery, which is not permitted for sale (e.g., candy, chocolate). To determine whether a specific product may be sold in schools, it is necessary to read the information on the food label – particularly the Nutrition Facts table and the ingredient list – and compare this information with the nutrition criteria.

Nutrition Education: As outlined in the Ontario Curriculum (e.g., Health and Physical Education: Healthy Eating, Family Studies: Food and Nutrition).

School Generated Funds: Funds that are raised and collected in the school or broader community in the name of the school or by a school or parent-administered group, including school councils.

School Tuck Shops and Canteens: Small retail operations within a school that sell food, beverages and other items, usually for fundraising purposes.

Sell Less (< 20%): Products in this category may have slightly higher amounts of fat, sugar, and/or sodium than foods and beverages in the "Sell Most" category. They must make up no more than 20 percent of all food choices that are available for sale in all venues, through all programs, and at all events. The same requirement applies to beverage choices. See [PPM 150 Appendix Nutrition Standards for Ontario Schools](#).

Sell Most (> 80%): Products in this category are the healthiest options and have higher levels of essential nutrients and lower amounts of fat, sugar and/or sodium. They must make up at least 80 percent of all food choices that are available for sale in all venues, through all programs, at all events. The same requirement applies to beverage choices. See [PPM 150 Appendix Nutrition Standards for Ontario Schools](#).

Special Event Days: A day designated by the principal of the school on which food and beverages sold in schools are exempt from the nutrition standards outlined in PPM 150 and this policy.

Student Nutrition Programs: A breakfast, early morning meal, snack or lunch program offered by the school for all students which are funded by a combination of financial resources, including parent/guardian contributions, local community fundraising, and provincial funding. These programs attempt to increase food availability, while also aiming to promote healthy eating and provide a positive social atmosphere for all students and staff. Schools with student nutrition programs will follow the Student Nutrition Program Nutrition Guidelines developed by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

ACTION REQUIRED:

General:

All schools in HWDSB comply with provincial legislation relating to nutrition including the Healthy Food for Healthy Schools Act, School Food and Beverage Standards (PPM 150) and other pertinent legislation. This policy covers food and beverages sold to students during the school day, at school venues, at all programs including catered lunch programs and at school or board sponsored special events and at sports events.

This policy does not apply to food and beverages that are:

- Offered free in schools to students unless they have been purchased with school-generated funds.
- Brought from home or purchased off school premises.
- Available for purchase during field trips off school premises.
- Sold in schools for non—school purposes (e.g., sold by an outside organization that is using the gymnasium for a non-school-related event).
- Sold for fundraising activities that occur off school premises.
- Sold in staff rooms.

Notwithstanding the above, the guidelines for food sold, served and brought to school as detailed in HWDSB Medical Health Supports Policy 5.5: Supporting Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions Procedure apply to all schools.

Schools and Classrooms:

Schools must ensure that all school hospitality programs, tuck shops and canteens sell foods that comply with the standards outlined in PPM 150 and this policy.

School principals, vice-principals and board employees planning school or educational events, such as Meet the Teacher and Open House, will model good nutrition by selling foods that comply with the nutrition standards as outlined in PPM 150 and this policy unless the day has been designated a special event day.

Food and beverages purchased with school generated funds for distribution to students within the school comply with the nutrition standards in PPM 150 and this policy.

HWDSB recognizes that special event days take place periodically throughout the year. The principal of the school shall engage with school council and students, where appropriate, for the designation of special event days, if any, for the school. The maximum number of special event days in the school year for a school is ten (10). School principals will communicate the dates of special event days to the school community at the beginning of the school year. Although special-event days give greater flexibility with food and beverages, schools are encouraged to offer healthy options that meet the nutrition standards or non-food-related items.

Sporting events, such as tournaments or meets, sell food and beverages that comply with the nutrition standards of PPM 150 and this policy.

School and board employees will inform community partners, vendors, service providers and funders of the nutrition standards in PPM 150 and this policy.

Cafeterias:

Cafeterias in all schools will sell foods that comply with the nutrition standards in PPM 150 and this policy. Food and beverages must be prepared, served, and stored in accordance with Regulation 493/17, "Food Premises," under the Health Protection and Promotion Act. When negotiating food service contracts with food service providers for cafeterias or schools (e.g., catered lunch providers), HWDSB will use the Request for Proposal (RFP) process and will include the following:

- Use of locally grown and produced foods wherever possible.
- Use of whole foods.
- Schools include healthy foods that reflect cultures and food traditions, meet religious accommodations and provide options for vegetarians and vegans.
- Posting of nutritional information of all foods sold or served.

In addition, the Procurement and Risk Services Department will provide a copy of this policy to food service providers and review it with them to ensure compliance.

Fundraising:

It is recommended that the sale of non-food items be selected for fundraising purposes. The sale of foods that do not comply with the nutrition standards as outlined in PPM 150 and this policy for fundraising purposes is not permitted in the school.

Communication and Education:

Schools will communicate the Ministry of Education policy (PPM 150), HWDSB's Nutrition Policy and Procedure annually to parents/guardians/caregivers, students and the community and provide guidelines and suggestions for foods to be served to students for lunches, snacks, and school celebrations. Each school is encouraged to recognize, value and support parent/guardian/caregiver and student involvement in making changes which reflect a healthy school environment, including the valuing of nutritional foods that represent cultural diversity.

Schools may choose to develop additional guidelines in a School Nutrition Policy in consultation with their school council, and/or with a Home and School Association or other parent/guardian/caregiver organizations, if they exist.

In addition to the required nutrition education as outlined in the Ontario Curriculum, opportunities to promote healthy eating and safe food practices should be considered for planned events and classroom activities.

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Intended Outcome	Assessment
Schools promote healthy eating and safe food practices for planned events and classroom activities.	Communication to parents will be measured through the annual Parent Voice survey.
Schools will communicate the Ministry of Education policy (PPM 150), the Nutrition Policy and Procedure annually to parents/guardians/caregivers, students and the community.	A yearly audit of randomly selected schools, through review of school agenda and website.

REFERENCES:

[Bill 8 – Healthy Food for Healthy Schools Act, 2009](#)
[Policy/Program Memorandum No. 150; School Food and Beverage Policy – Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010](#)
[Health Protection and Promotion Act., Regulation 493/17 Food Premises](#)
[Food and Beverage Policy Standards at Ontario Schools](#)
[Canada's Food Guide, 2019](#) and Resources
 School Food and Beverage Policy Guides, 2022
[School Nutrition Program Nutrition Guidelines, 2020 – Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services](#)

Revision 2025 – Template Migration