

**Date of issue** March 2024

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**Subject** **SCHOOL FOOD AND BEVERAGE**

**References** [Policy 4260 – School Food and Beverage](#)  
[APM A1420 – Management, Response and Administration of Medication to Students with Life Threatening and Non-Life Threatening Medical Conditions](#)  
[Healthy Food for Healthy Schools Act, 2008, S.O. 2008, c. 2 - Bill 8](#)  
[Ministry of Education – School Food and Beverage Policy and Program Memorandum 150 \(PPM 150\)](#)  
[Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act, Food Premises Regulation \(O. Reg 493/17\)](#)  
[Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit](#)

**Contact** School Services

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## 1. Purpose

All Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) schools, school board offices, and continuing education centres are required to ensure that food and beverages available to staff and students meet the requirements set out in Policy 4260 - School Food and Beverage.

Food and beverages that are sold or provided on school board property fall under the directions in this administrative procedures memorandum (APM).

A healthy school environment enhances student learning and success and enhances students' social and emotional well-being. Schools have an important role to play in helping students lead healthier lives, including teaching students the skills to make healthy food choices and reinforcing those lessons through school practices.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 **For school purposes** – Any activities that are organized by the school, school board, volunteers, or staff associated with the school are considered to be for school purposes (e.g., sports events, pep rallies, parent/guardian-teacher conferences, school council meetings).
- 2.2 **Special-event day** – Events that occur on occasion (as opposed to on a regular basis), are considered special (e.g., graduation celebrations, parent/guardian-teacher conferences, track and field events, or a single special event).
- 2.3 **For sale** – Applies to all food and beverages sold in all venues (e.g., cafeterias, vending machines, tuck shops/canteens, hospitality), through all food fundraisers (e.g., catered lunches, milk fundraisers), and at all events (e.g., sports events).

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- 2.4 **Provision/provided** – Applies to food and beverages distributed at no cost, typically in classroom experiences, for celebrations and events, and through nutrition programs (e.g., breakfast and snack programs).
  - 2.5 **Sell most** (80 per cent) – Products in this category are the healthiest options and generally have higher levels of essential nutrients and lower amounts of fat, sugar, and/or sodium. They must make up at least 80 per cent of all food and beverage choices that are available for sale or provided in all venues, through all programs, and at all events.
  - 2.6 **Sell less** (20 per cent) – Products in this category may have slightly higher amounts of fat, sugar, and/or sodium than food and beverages in the **sell most** category. They must make up no more than 20 per cent of all food and beverage choices that are available for sale or provided in all venues, through all programs, and at all events.
  - 2.7 **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. Food and beverages in this category must not be sold or provided in schools.
  - 2.8 **School-managed agreements** – Schools may make arrangements with local suppliers or vendors (such as a local restaurant or local source of fresh food) for the sale of food and beverages for special-event days only.
  - 2.9 **Staff room** – In all facilities in the SCDSB, it is understood that rooms may be designated as a staff room, where staff and adult visitors are the primary occupants. All staff rooms are considered exempt from the standards for food and beverages as outlined in Policy 4260 – School Food and Beverage and this APM.

### 3. Relevant legislation

- 3.1 **Healthy Food for Healthy Schools Act, 2008, S.O. 2008, c. 2 - Bill 8 Subsection 8(1) of the Education Act** authorizes the Minister of Education to create policies, guidelines, and regulations governing nutritional standards for food and beverages sold or provided on school premises.
  - 3.1.1 The Ministry of Education School Food and Beverage Policy Program Memorandum No. 150 (PPM 150) outlines the nutrition standards for food and beverages sold or provided in publicly-funded elementary and secondary schools in Ontario or in connection with a school-related activity.
- 3.2 **Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act, Food Premises Regulation (O. Reg 493/17)** sets out the food safety requirements, standards, and exemptions for food premises, vending machines, catering vehicles, etc.
- 3.3 Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services [Student Nutrition Program Guidelines](#) and [Nutrition Guidelines](#) provide guidance for food and beverages provided in student nutrition programs (SNP) (e.g., breakfast and snack programs).

#### **4. School food and beverage responsibilities**

In accordance with Policy 4260 - School Food and Beverage, all SCDSB staff have a responsibility to implement and ensure that food and beverages sold or provided comply with the policy.

- 4.1 The superintendent of education shall annually review their schools' School Food and Beverage Planning and Tracking Form (FORM A7675 - 1).
- 4.2 Principals shall:
  - 4.2.1 be aware of and ensure nutritional standards are met for food and beverages that are sold or provided in all venues (e.g., cafeterias, vending machines, tuck shops/canteens, hospitality), through all programs (e.g., catered lunches, breakfast programs, snack programs), and at all celebrations and events (e.g., sports events).
  - 4.2.2 annually complete and submit to the superintendent of education the School Food and Beverage Planning and Tracking Form (FORM A7675 - 1) by Oct. 15, or prior to the date of the special event. This form summarizes the food and beverages sold or provided for up to 10 special-event days. These days are exempt from the *Healthy Food for Healthy Schools Act*. This plan will include consultation with school council and other applicable stakeholders (e.g., student council). School principals may request support from a public health dietitian from the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) at 1-877-721-7520;
  - 4.2.3 upon request, share the standards of Policy 4260 - School Food and Beverage with members of the school community (staff, students, school council members, and parents/guardians).
  - 4.2.4 adhere to the standards of APM A1420 – Management, Response, and Administration of Medication to Students with Life-threatening and Non-Life-threatening Conditions to reduce risks for all students who suffer from severe, life-threatening allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to certain food and beverages; and
  - 4.2.5 only utilize vendors secured through a central agreement with the SCDSB for all lunch fundraisers.
- 4.3 Business Services shall:
  - 4.3.1 ensure that food service companies selling food and beverages through a centrally-managed food service agreement comply with Policy 4260 - School Food and Beverage;
  - 4.3.2 ensure receipt of Annual Letter of Compliance (FORM A7675 - 2) from each contracted food service company, where applicable.

#### **5. Centrally-managed agreements**

- 5.1 The regular provision of lunch fundraisers will be provided only by a vendor secured through a central agreement with the SCDSB.
- 5.2 Business Services will refer contracted food service providers to the environmental systems coordinator on the incorporation of the principles of the '3 R's' – reduce, reuse, recycle; specifically, packaging used in the sale and distribution of food in the SCDSB (including cafeteria packaging and serving materials). Packaging shall

be reusable whenever possible, and if not, must be recyclable or compostable under the current waste diversion programs in place.

- 5.3 Business Services will ensure compliance by consulting with the SMDHU regarding nutrition and/or food safety concerns that arise throughout the duration of the food service agreements.

## **6. Fundraisers**

- 6.1 It is recommended that non-food items be selected for school fundraising purposes.
- 6.2 Schools will include at least one physical activity event in the annual fundraising plan (e.g., dance-a-thon, fun walks/runs, rope jumping, bowl-a-thon, cross-country ski-a-thon).

## **7. Food safety standards**

- 7.1 Food and beverages that originate from an inspected facility (e.g., restaurant, grocery store, or school cafeteria) can be served in a school setting. Homemade food and beverages will not be permitted to be sold or provided during the school day due to the potential of unforeseen allergens impacting students with allergies.
- 7.2 When preparing food on site, schools will comply with the food safety standards outlined in the Ontario Food Premise Regulation 493/17.
- 7.3 In areas where food is prepared, handled, or stored, hand-washing facilities must be provided. These facilities must include hand-washing basins equipped with potable hot and cold water under pressure, soap, and air-dryers or disposable hand towels.

## **8. Nutritional breaks and environmental concerns**

- 8.1 All schools should provide at least 15 minutes to eat during nutritional breaks, excluding the time needed to get dressed for outdoors.
- 8.2 It is the responsibility of the principal to take reasonable steps to ensure the environment in which students eat is clean (washed and/or disinfected routinely) and safe (free of physical hazards).
- 8.3 Schools will encourage and provide time for hand-washing whenever food is consumed.

## **9. Nutrition education for students, parents/guardians, and staff**

- 9.1 Staff are expected to provide nutrition education to students in accordance with the Ontario Health and Physical Education Curriculum and additional credible Canadian resources including:
- 9.1.1 Ophea, [www.ophea.net](http://www.ophea.net);
- 9.1.2 [SMDHU staff and teacher resources](#); and,
- 9.1.3 [Canada's Food Guide](#).

- 9.2 Schools are encouraged to access reliable Canadian healthy eating resources and information to educate parents/guardians and the wider community about nutrition. Visit the [SMDHU](#) website and/or call Health Connection at 1-877-721-7529 for suggestions.
- 9.3 All staff are encouraged to involve students in promoting key messages related to healthy eating (e.g., announcements, posters, class presentations).
- 9.4 Schools will include information regarding nutrition in school-to-home communications (e.g., newsletter, link on website) to support parents/guardians and staff in locating credible nutrition information.
- 9.5 Schools/staff will take reasonable efforts to create inclusive environments that respect diversity and equity related to eating and teaching about food and nutrition. The diversity of students and staff must be taken into consideration in order to accommodate religious and/or cultural needs. Visit the [SMDHU](#) website and/or call Health Connection at 1-877-721-7529 for suggestions.

**First issued** June 2011  
**Revised** December 2011, January 2016, February 2019, March 2024

**Issued under the authority of the Director of Education**

**SCHOOL FOOD AND BEVERAGE SPECIAL EVENT PLANNING AND TRACKING  
FORM**

**To be completed and submitted to your superintendent by Oct. 15**

**School name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Principal:** \_\_\_\_\_

Schools may plan a total of up to 10 special-event days within each school year and are encouraged to consider fewer days where possible. These days may not be transferred from one year to another or from one school to another. These days are exempt from the *Healthy Food for Healthy Schools Act*.

	Date	Special Event	Comments Food/Beverage Sold	Lead Staff / Volunteers
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

SAMPLE

**ANNUAL LETTER OF COMPLIANCE –  
CENTRALIZED FOOD SERVICE CONTRACT PROVIDERS**

Food and beverages sold or provided through contracted services (e.g., cafeterias with contracted services, hospitality programs, vending contracted services) must comply with the Ontario Food Premise Regulations (O. Reg 493/17) and the Ministry of Education School Food and Beverage Policy and Program Memorandum 150 (PPM 150).

Company name:

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Address:

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Contact name:

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Business email  
address:

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Business phone  
number:

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Cellphone number:  
(will not be posted on  
SCDSB website)

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Venues/program/events that food and/or beverage is supplied for:

- Cafeteria
- Vending machines
- Hospitality program

We/I, the above named Food Service Provider, have read and understand the requirements of the Ministry of Education PPM 150 and related nutrition standards as well as O. Reg 493/17.

We/I have assessed the products that we are selling in Simcoe County District School Board school(s) against the requirements of Policy 4260 - School Food and Beverage and confirm that:

- At least 80 per cent of all food choices and at least 80 per cent of all beverage choices offered for sale in any venue, program, or event that we supply are from the **sell most** category.
- No food or beverages at any venue, program, or event that we supply will be from the **not permitted for sale** category.
- Our premises are regularly inspected for food safety by the appropriate public health authority.

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Company name *(please print)*

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Authorizing name *(please print)*

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Authorizing signature

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Date

Send signed and dated letters of compliance to:

Business Services  
Simcoe County District School Board  
1170 Highway 26  
Midhurst, Ontario  
L9X 1N6