

BRAZOS ISD NUTRITION POLICY

The Brazos Independent School District has implemented the guidelines of the new Texas Public School Nutrition Policy as mandated by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) into its breakfast, lunch and snack programs.

With assistance from parents, school food service personnel and representatives of the food industry, TDA developed the nutrition policy to help address obesity and other dietary issues among Texas schoolchildren. This policy will significantly impact the food and beverage offerings that were previously available to BISD students.

More than 35 percent of Texas schoolchildren are considered overweight or obese. TDA cites studies showing that these dietary problems can often lead to more severe life-long health problems such as Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and stroke, hypertension, high blood pressure, gallbladder disease, asthma and certain cancers. To address these problems, TDA created the new policy to promote a healthier environment in public schools.

Under the provisions of the nutrition policy, the district or any other school organization cannot offer or provide access to items considered to be “competitive foods,” which are defined by TDA as “any foods or beverages made available to students that compete with the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program and/or the After School Snack Program.”

Thus, students’ access to vending machines will be greatly affected as a result. Middle school students’ will no longer have access to vending machines until after the final lunch period while high school students must keep all items purchased in vending machines away from areas where meals are served.

Additionally, Texas school districts have been instructed to reduce or eliminate foods of minimal nutritional value, or FMNV, depending on grade-level. Guidelines were also established with regard to serving portions and meal preparation.

The following is a list of key changes to BISD meal programs at each campus level.

For elementary schools:

- No food or beverage except unflavored water can be served to students during the school day except those from the school food service department.
- The school day is defined as the start of the first breakfast period until the last bell.
- Snacks for special events may be purchased from food service provided they are served and consumed during a meal period in the cafeteria and meet the nutrition guidelines.
- Elementary classrooms may allow one nutritious snack per day under the teacher’s supervision. The snack may be provided by the teacher, parents, school food service, or other groups and should be at no cost to the students. No FMNV or dessert type items are allowed.
- No entree item may exceed 23 grams of fat with the exception of one time per week.

For middle schools:

- No foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) or candy can be made available to students until after the end of the last class.
- No competitive foods are allowed 30 minutes before or after meal periods anywhere on campus.
- Any competitive food made available to students must meet the nutrition standards listed in the policy.
- Field trips and other off campus events occurring during the school day are not subject to the policy.
- No entree item may exceed 23 grams of fat with the exception of one time per week.

For high schools:

- No FMNV or competitive foods during meal times in areas where reimbursable meals are served and/or consumed.
- Students may not take food purchased in the cafeteria or snack bar to the vending area.

- No beverages (other than milk) available in vending machines may contain more than 30 grams total sugar per 8 fluid ounce serving.
- Any competitive food made available to students must meet the nutrition standards listed in the policy.
- No entree item may exceed 23 grams of fat with the exception of one time per week.

FMNV and policy exemptions:

- School Nurses: The policy does not apply to school nurses using FMNV during the course of providing health care to individual students.
- Accommodating Students with Special Needs : Special Needs Students whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) plan indicates the use of FMNV or candy for behavior modification may be given these items.
- School Events – Up to three different events determined by school officials as part of school policy and included on the school calendar.
- TAKS, EOC, or STAAR Test Days : Schools and parents may provide one additional nutritious snack per day for students taking TAKS, EOC, or STAAR test.
- Instructional Use of Food in the Classroom: For instructional purposes, teachers may use foods in the classroom as long as the food items are not considered FMNV or candy. The food must be consumed in the classroom and may not be given or sold to other students or classes.
- Field Trips : School-approved field trips are exempt from the policy.
- Athletic, UIL, Band and Other Competitions: The nutrition policy does not apply to students who leave campus to travel to athletic, UIL, band or other competitions.

[More information](#)

For more information about the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy, visit online at www.agr.state.tx.us. Please direct all questions to the Texas Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Division, P.O. Box 12847, Austin TX, 78711 or call 512-463-2076. Questions via e-mail may be submitted to healthykids@agr.state.tx.us.